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Correspondence.

For the Colonia Farmer.

RURAL TOPICS.

DEEP TILLAGE.

Some men write on this subject as if the land of every farm were alike, and all susceptible of being plowed a foot deep, or up to the plow beam, with a certainty of producing large crops. But every farmer should be his own judge of how deep his land should be plowed. If the fertile, surface soil is so deep that the lower stratum of it has never been turned up to the light of day, it would be well to give it an airing once in three or four years; but if the plow, as it is ordinarily used, goes down to a sub-soil which has no fertility in it, it would be bad management to plow deeper unless the land be well manured; and in such a case an inch or two of the infertile subsoil may be turned up, and the result will be that the next time the land is plowed the fertile surface soil will be an inch or two deeper than it was before, and by again turning up a little of the subsoil and manuring the land, a farmer may greatly improve his farm where the surface soil is too shallow to produce large crops. The old rule:

"Plow deep while sheeps sleep, And you'll have corn to sell and keep" was undoubtedly written by a "book farmer," as corn growers call those plowing generally, without any of the cold subsoil to be turned up. There are many farms where the soil is light; and the fertile, surface soil not over six inches deep; and it would almost ruin the land to follow the advice that some men give of "deep plowing." Such lands, however, can be greatly benefited by increasing the depth of plowing them by degrees, if manured freely.

PULVERIZATION OF SOIL.

Some farmers are in the habit of plowing their lands when in an improper condition, and the soil bakes in hard lumps which no harrow can pulverize; and often the plowing is badly done, when the land is in a good condition to plow, and the harrowing is not thorough; and the result is that the growing crops find no room among the clods to take root, and a poor yield, while in the next field, perhaps, a neighbor has a splendid crop on the same kind of soil. If we could have our soils pulverized just as they should be to produce the greatest possible crops, they should be as fine as meal; and it is very important that lands should be well plowed, and well harrowed, as a good crop may often be grown on poor land, merely from having put in the best possible condition for a crop. The beneficial effects of pulverization are attributable to the increased permeability of the soil to rain and air; oxygen, carbonic acid and ammonia of the air, have a great effect in decomposing the organic and in disintegrating the inorganic matter of the soil and rendering them available as food for plants, while it allows the rain water to act on a greater surface.

VALUE OF ROOT CROPS.

For many years the farmers of the United States have been told of the importance of growing more root crops to feed their stock in winter, as mangolds, carrots and turnips. They have been told that in England, larger than the State of New York, that more roots are grown than in the whole of the United States, yet our farmers are slow to learn their value. Probably the trouble is in not knowing that to do with two or three thousand bushels of these roots in the fall, having no cellar to put them in. Farmers, building barns, should at ways have warm frost-proof cellars under them to store roots in, but as the cellars were not built, do the next thing, and build a root house near your barn, four or five feet below the surface of the ground. Call it a root cellar if you please, roof it, bank it up, and make it frost-proof, and here put your roots. Another way is to bury them in the field in rows about ten feet wide, five feet high, and as long as you please—on the surface of the ground. Bury half of root crop, and potatoes, by covering with straw and a foot of earth outside, and the end of a row may be kept open, but well protected, so that a load of roots can be taken from the pile at any time when not too cold. Some farmers in England claim to have grown 2,000 bushels of mangolds per acre. A writer says: "One pound of first quality hay contains about six times as much nitrogen as a pound of roots, and as nitrogen is the principal basis by which the value of food may be determined chemically, the root is that 1 pound of hay, in nutritive ingredients, is worth 6 pounds of roots. However, food in the green state is worth more than when dry. Grass will produce nearly twice as much

milk or fat as hay, and I claim the same advantage for roots over hay, and consider them worth at least 15 cents per bushel when hay is \$20 per ton—2,000 bushels per acre, at 15 cents, gives us \$300, against \$110 for hay. Deducting \$40 for extra labor on roots, we have a balance of \$150 in favor of the latter."

HOW TO PRESERVE EGGS.

Among all the discoveries of the present century there is nothing new in preserving eggs. The old method of packing them on their small ends in a vessel and then filling it with lime-water is still practiced. The lime-water should be salted, as a quart of salt to a pailful of lime-water, which is made by slacking some lime, than add water enough to have it sufficiently thin to run among the eggs freely; and when it has settled, turn off the clear liquid, add the salt, and it is ready for use. Eggs preserved in this way six months or longer are not as good as fresh eggs, and there is no way to keep them that time and be as good as those that are freshly laid. But a better way for preserving eggs in small quantities as for family use, is to take fine salt and pack the eggs in it in layers, the small ends down, filling up the space between the eggs with salt. Keep the vessel in a dry place, or the salt will become moist. Eggs may be thus kept six to nine months, and they will be as good as it is possible for them to be by any known preservation.

HONEY BEES.

A well-known bee-keeper in New York State says that he obtained last season from 132 families, or stocks, five tons of honey. Many of the statements in the papers about the quantity of honey obtained by different men are not reliable; but this man I think has not exaggerated much, as he is a skilled bee-keeper. How was it done? In the first place these were undoubtedly selected hives from a much larger number. Secondly, the location in "non-swarming" hives, by which the laborers of two or three times the numbers of bees in a hive were secured in one hive. Thirdly, he probably used a honey extractor, by which he obtained considerable quantities of honey. Fourthly, he resided in a very fine locality for bees. This is 75 lbs. per hive, worth perhaps 15 cents per pound, or \$11.25 per hive, a part being strained honey that sells for 10 to 12 cents per lb. in New York, and comb honey at 18 to 20 cents. But this statement shows that bees are profitable in skillful hands, if the locality be a good one for them.

ROUND BONE FOR CATTLE.

Farmers have often noticed cows in pasture licking bones that are there found. This occurs in consequence of the food of such cows not containing the full quantity of the phosphates that they require. The bones of animals are largely composed of lime and phosphoric acid, these being derived from the food they eat. Grass contains a certain amount of phosphate which comes from the soil; and if a pasture be allowed to remain in grass many years, the grass will become so deficient in phosphate, that cows will feel the need of it; hence they are seen licking bones, as they must have a supply of phosphate to prevent, or rather to make good, the constant waste that is going on in the animal system. Pastures that are plowed once in six to ten years, well manured, and re-seeded to grass will continue to supply in the grass all the phosphate that cows require; but when this is not done, it is now the practice of our most advanced farmers to feed their cows a little bone meal, a spoonful in a meal, or bran mash, once or twice a week. If this is not done it may result in what is called the "bone disease," which comes from a lack of phosphate in the animal system. This ground bone meal is kept for sale by dealers in fertilizers, and sells by the barrel at about \$2 per 100 lbs. What is not needed for your crop, giving out its virtues to vegetation for several years before its good qualities are all exhausted.

THE GARDEN.

Beans, melons and squashes may be planted as late as June 1st, and will produce good crops. The succession of peas and green corn should not be neglected. Plant corn every two weeks till July, and peas till the middle of June, and they should be planted considerably deeper in hot weather than in the spring. Good crops may be grown in rows three feet apart without any bushing, but they yield better by bushing. Make the drills so wide the peas will cover a width in the drills about three inches wide. Winter cabbage should not be set before July 1st, and it should not be grown two years in succession in one place. If your current bushes are

attacked by worms, as they are in many localities, while heliothis is a sure remedy. A spoonful dissolved in a pail of water and sprinkled upon the bushes from a water-pot will be effective, but be careful that this solution does not go upon your strawberries in fruit, as it is a strong poison. You can kill the slugs on your dwarf pear trees by the use of this current worm remedy. Paris green operates in about the same way. When you have done cutting your asparagus it should be allowed to go to seed, and not disturbed till fall. It is advisable to grow all your own seeds, and then you have what you can depend on. A part of a row of peas should be saved for seed, or a few hills of corn, and a single cabbage, carrot, beet, parsnip, turnip, &c., will supply all the seed needed in an ordinary garden. Tomatoes are much benefited by bushing them to keep the vines off the ground. Cut back about two feet when they are set, and stick down four or five when your tomatoes begin to need support, quite close to the plants, and you will see how finely the plan operates. If you have celery plants, it is not necessary to set them in trenches, as was the old custom, but they may be grown on the surface of the ground; and at the proper time the earth may be banked up against them, as is done by market gardeners by running a double mould-board plow between the rows. In working your garden "take time by the forelock," and don't allow the weeds to get ahead of you. A clean, well cultivated garden is an ornament to a place, and the garden is generally an index to the habits of its owner.

Selections.

Diphtheria Among Poultry.

The poultry in England have been suffering from what was thought a new and strange disease, but which turned out to be identical with diphtheria of the human subject. Some of our Canadian poultry fanciers tell of what they have noticed a similar disease among their fowls. A medical correspondent of the London *Livestock Journal* gives a valuable article the gist of which follows:—

Without going too profoundly into the scientific, I may say that this is an exactly similar disease to the same of the human subject. The symptoms are the same, the effects are the same, the pathological changes are the same; for in the human race, as well as in poultry, we get an exudation of fibrinous deposit, which spreads rapidly, and frequently blocks up the windpipe; and in fact, the name itself is derived from a Greek word which means a skin, or a covering of skin, and we see, thrown out over the whole of the mouth, tongue, windpipe, and gullet? So my reason for giving it the name of diphtheria is because I can see no difference whatever in either its symptoms, causes, effects, or changes, from the disease which has been named such ravages amongst the members of the human race.

Symptoms.—These are first very much like the primary symptoms of croup—viz., apparent lassitude, debility, sometimes giddiness; the bird is seen moving about as if dazed, and frequently tucked under its wing, feathers ruffled, and, on closer examination, the bird falters in its gait; it has lost the brightness of eye, comb shrunk and pale. On handling, the breast-bone is extremely prominent, and what was a heavy plump bird a few days since is now a mere skeleton. The eyes are more or less suffused, and the eyelids congested; sometimes there is profuse discharge from the nostrils, not at first fatal, but as the disease advances it becomes horribly offensive, and the nostrils become blocked up, causing the bird to keep its mouth open to breathe. On opening the bird's mouth there are seen patches of yellowish-white lathery deposit. This is the false membrane of diphtheria. Sometimes the birds get diphtheritic patches on their feet and combs. As in the human subject the disease shows itself in the skin as well as in the throat, so in the fowls of this disease we see patches of disease on comb, &c., and these patches have given rise to the term small-pox. This is a mistake that is frequently made. We must, therefore, be very careful that the odors which we wish to disguise or overpower are in reality harmless, that they are merely disagreeable and not poisonous. Of these, however, there are a large number, a good example being the odor of boiled cabbage—one of the most disagreeable, penetrating and persistent smells that we know of. Disagreeable as it is, it is certainly not injurious, and anything that will conceal or disguise it, will serve the purpose quite as well as a disinfectant that

exerts a more powerful chemical action. Substances used for merely concealing bad smells are strictly disinfectants; and not to be confounded with disinfectants; the latter are frequently deodorizers also; thus there are few more powerful deodorizers than chlorine, which is also a disinfectant; but roasted coffee, which is a good deodorizer, is not at all, or, at least, only in a very slight degree, a disinfectant.

Prominent amongst the simple deodorizers are the smoke of burnt rags and paper, and the vapor of roasted coffee. By means of these ordinary effluvia of the sick room, and those accidental odors that occasionally find access to the rooms of even the best houses, may be neutralized and rendered innocuous. And it is even probable that they exert a slight disinfecting power, due to the pyro-acetic acid, and possibly also crotonic and carbolic acid, which are the products of all smothered combustions. In procuring smoke from burnt rags or paper, we should avoid burnt flames, and allow the material to burn with a slow or smothered combustion. A few rags laid on a shovel and set on fire, will continue to burn even after the flame has been blown out, and they will then give off a very strong vapour, which will overpower almost any of the smells with which we are ordinarily annoyed. When paper is used, it is best to select the brownest and coarsest. There is, however, a variety of coarse brown paper which consists largely of fire woolen dust or shoddy, and this we should carefully avoid. The best method of applying coffee as a deodorizer, is to place a small quantity of the berries on some hot coals, placed on a common shovel. The shovel with its contents is then carried through the rooms in which it is needed, and the pleasant aroma of coffee will in general displace any disagreeable smell that may be present.—*Technologist.*

Feeding young Calves.

As we have seen, fresh milk is the best food for the young calf, and the most natural method of taking it is for the calf to draw it from the udder of its mother. But there are many cases in which it is necessary to prevent this natural method among the 500,000 dairymen of the United States. This natural method is only practicable among the breeders of pure-blooded and high-priced stock; and even in these cases, if the best milk is available, it is quite unnecessary that he should feed new milk longer than two months. After that period the calf may come on the skim milk and linseed or flax seed gruel, with an excellent chance of growing into a prize animal. In two months the calf will have made an excellent start and be ready for the modified diet. And if the calf is to be taught to drink, it is better to do this when ten days or two weeks old. It will learn easier at that age than later, and the milk will give more milk through the season than if the calf is permitted to suck longer. The milk being fed warm from the mother, the calf will make a growth not perceptibly different from one that sucks. This blooded calf should have the free run of a dry yard, with a little hay or straw to eat, that it may early develop its first stomach and clean its coat. A small field of grass in summer is still better. When the time comes for feeding skim milk, the ration may be made about as nutritious as the new milk by adding it to flax seed gruel, made by boiling a pint of flax seed and a pint of oil meal in ten to twelve quarts of water. Mix this in equal parts with skim milk, and feed blood warm. Let the calf have this fill twice per day, at regular times, until six months old. During this time teach it to eat a few cuts, and in case of a tendency to scour, give, for a meal or two, in the milk, a quart of coarse wheat flour, sometimes called by farmers, canal. It will be perceived that the oil of the flax seed will make good the loss of the cream in the milk,—in fact it is a ration as rich as milk itself; and we have seen calves raised upon it quite the equal of calves running with the dam. We are also used flax seed and pea meal, but the gruel to mix with the skim milk, and it has proved an excellent combination.—*Can. National Live Stock Journal.*

A young English nobleman was recently traveling in a railway coach, when the train met with a severe accident. A passenger hurried to the master with the intelligence that the train was completely cut in two. The cool young aristocrat, finding himself satisfied of his own safety, drew a long, drawn-out "Will you kindly ascertain in which half he has got the key of my lunch basket?"

Deodorizers.

Deodorizers and disinfectants may act in one of three several ways: 1. They may overpower the odor and thus render it imperceptible. 2. They may absorb it, and thus remove it from the atmosphere; or, 3. They may decompose it, and thus render it innocuous. It is evident that, although very useful in some cases, the first class cannot be relied upon where the contaminating odors or vapors are truly poisonous. To hide the offensive odor of emanations from drains and cesspools by means of more powerful odors, is not to rob these emanations of their equally character, although this is a mistake that is frequently made. We must, therefore, be very careful that the odors which we wish to disguise or overpower are in reality harmless, that they are merely disagreeable and not poisonous. Of these, however, there are a large number, a good example being the odor of boiled cabbage—one of the most disagreeable, penetrating and persistent smells that we know of. Disagreeable as it is, it is certainly not injurious, and anything that will conceal or disguise it, will serve the purpose quite as well as a disinfectant that

Curious Statistics about Insects.

In 1782, says the London *Times*, the caterpillars of the brown tail moth were so numerous as to defoliate the trees of a very large part of the South of England. The alarm was so great that public prayers were offered in the churches that the calamity might be stayed. The poor were paid one shilling per bushel for collecting caterpillars' webs to be burned under the inspection of the overseer of the parish; and four score bushels were collected daily in some parishes. But on the other hand, the benefits derived from the labor of these insects should not be overlooked; some species feed only on noxious weeds, and others upon still more noxious insects. One of the greatest friends of the agriculturist is the family of ichneumon flies, which lay their eggs in the bodies of living caterpillars, in which they are hatched, thus destroying them; although the caterpillar, after being "ichneumonized," has still a voracious appetite. The caterpillars which feed on cabbage eat twice their weight in a day; the larvae of some of the flesh flies eat a much larger proportion than this. The productive powers of insects vary very much. Some lay only two eggs; others, such as the white ant, 40,000,000, laying them at the rate of sixty a minute. The queen of the bee is capable of laying 50,000 in a season; the female wasp, 30,000. The majority of insects, however, lay but one hundred; in general, the larger the insect, the fewer the eggs it lays. Most insects have two generations in a year; some have twenty; others take seven years from the time the egg is laid until their death in a perfect insect. Our insectivorous birds are diligent destroyers of the eggs of insects, but they will not do all that is required; hard labor is also needed.

More Brains and Less Muscle.—In a recent number of *Scribner's* George E. Waring thus alludes to the progress in and among our farmers:—"If American agriculture has an unsatisfied need, it is surely the need for more intelligence, and more enterprising interest on the part of its working men and women. From one end of the land to the other, its crying defect—recognized by all—is that its best blood—or, as we would say, its best brains and its best energy—is leaving it to seek other fields of labor. The influence which leads these best of the farmer's sons to other occupations is not so much the desire to make more money, or to find a less laborious occupation, as it is the desire to land a more satisfactory life—a life where that part of us which has been developed by the education and better civilization for which, in this century, we have worked so hard and so well, may find responsive companionship and encouraging intercourse with others." That Mr. Waring is correct is clearly proved by the increase in the number of farmers' clubs which are to be found in nearly every neighborhood. It was in the progress of which caused the rapid and unprecedented spread of the Granger movement, and if the social features of the organization are fully appreciated and kept alive its ultimate success is assured. If, however, as is too often the case, the whole strength of the organization is used in the effort to make money and avoid middlemen, it will soon show signs of failure in the decreasing energy of its members.

Irish Farmers in New England.

The Boston *Commercial Bulletin* says:—"The change in the character of mill operatives in New England during the past quarter of a century is well known. Until within that period they were mainly American, the female 'help,' principally girls, from the New England farms. To-day that class are almost entirely out of the mills, and their places are filled with Irish and French Canadians. The last State census shows that a similar process of change has been in progress in Massachusetts farming. The reports published do not give these details, and yet it is impossible to state the magnitude of the change, but a very large number of Massachusetts farms are now owned by Irish and Canadian fellow citizens, who have bought out the 'natives,' and are settling down to steady agricultural life. It is a matter for regret that the average Yankee is losing the patience in toil which is needed for agricultural pursuits, but it is offset by the gratification at finding the foreign citizens acquiring the habits of economy and thrift which the fact we have mentioned shows. A stake in the ground is the best guarantee of good citizenship. Ownership of real estate makes men conservative and improves the quality of their citizenship."

Cattle in Australia.

In Australia cattle are far in excess of the demand, and will not sell for more than can be realized from their hides, tallow, horns, etc., for exportation. The flesh is almost valueless. An immense establishment has been started there for boiling the meat into condensed soup or extract. The meat, cut into large chunks, is inclosed in an enormous tight cylinder capable of holding fifty bullocks at a time, and also steers of various sizes. The steam is then skimmed off, and the meat, more pulp, is further solidified and canned for exportation. A bullock makes about twenty pounds of extract, as the nutritious quality of which is a wide difference of opinion.

A bull, according to the French, is an angel whose wings decrease as its legs lengthen.

There is a man in Oswego who can put up a stove pipe in seven languages, and he is not more than average profane.

Some people pass as virtuous because they haven't energy enough in them to break one of the ten commandments.

The bilious youngster now struggles under his mother's left arm as she tries to jab the sulphur upon into his mouth, and says, "The dose take it!"

All hair-pins look alike to men, but let a wife go off on a visit and come home and find a hair-pin near the door and she can't wait a minute to grow red in the face.

Josh Billings says he knows people who are so fond of argument that they will stop and dispute with a guide board about the distance to the next town.

A lady ate oysters all through the month of August when she could get them, under the supposition that there was a "r" in that month. "Oysters" was the way she spelled it.

A precocious boy of eight summers attributes the death of a pet gold fish to the fact that it couldn't take a joke. He used to catch it occasionally with a bait pin.

Wild Hogs in California.

The tule lands of this county are everywhere inhabited by droves of hogs that have doubtless originally been propagated for domestic stock, which have escaped into the jungle and become wild. They live and thrive on the roots to be found in the tule, and appear moderately fat whenever they are seen. They are exceedingly shy, however, and it is only by accident that one catches a glimpse of them, as they instinctively avoid the haunts of men.

They are trapped and caught occasionally in an ingenious manner by the tule farmers, who build small very strong corrals or pens on their stamping ground. A heavy gate, made to drop perpendicularly, is fitted so as to close the corral when down. This is raised and held by a trap to which a string leading to the ground inside is attached. Barley is then scattered on the ground inside the corral, and in continuous lines for some distance in different directions. The corral having been built over the trails of the hogs, they are not long in scenting the barley, and once inside the corral they can scarcely fail to spring the trap in eating the barley. A drove of a dozen or more has before now been captured in this manner. The young on a are easily domesticated, but the old ones are slaughtered at once.

SHIRTS METHOD FOR TANNING A LAMB-SKIN WITH MR. WOOL. CO.—Make a strong soap-suds, using hot water when it is cold, wash the skin in it, carefully squeezing it between the hands to get the dirt out of the wool; then wash the soap out with clean cold water; next dissolve alum and salt, of each half a pound in a little hot water, which put into a tub of cold water sufficient to cover the skin, and let it soak in it over night or twelve hours; now hang the skin over a pole to drain; when well drained, spread or stretch carefully on a board to dry. It need not be tacked if drawn out several times with the hand while drying. When wet a little damp, sprinkle pulverized saltpeter and alum (an ounce each mixed together) on the flesh side, rubbing it in well. It is now to hang in the shade for two or three days, the flesh side in until perfectly dry. When entirely dry, scrape the flesh side with a blunt knife to remove any scraps of flesh. Trim off all projecting points and rub the flesh side with pumice or rotten stone, and with the hands. Prepared in this way, it is white and beautiful, suitable for a door-mat, and also nice for the feet in a slight or wagon in cold weather.

Advertising is a good thing, but when a grocer carries to a funeral an umbrella on which was painted conspicuously the business of his house, and held it over the preacher's head while he read his prayers, the bystanders thought that something besides the corpse was being run into the ground.

"William," observed a Milwaukee woman to her husband, "Mrs. Holcomb feels pretty badly now, since the loss of her child, and I wish you would drop over there and see her. You might say that all flesh is grass; that we've all got to go the same way, and see if she is going to use her dripping-pan this afternoon."

George's Theory of the Progress of America.—Prof. Grote's theory of the progress of America, as stated in recent papers, is that the original inhabitants came from Asia by way of the north during the latter part of the Miocene or early part of the Pliocene, and that this Tertiary population spread to the south along the mountainous backbone of the two Americas; that on the advent of the Glacial epoch, the people then living in the extreme north were modified by the change in climate and were brought down by the ice and followed it back again to the Arctic circle, and that the present representatives of glacial man are the Esquimaux.

Through a study of migrations Prof. Grote comes to the conclusion that the ice must have acted as a barrier to further communication between the two continents of Asia and North America, and consequently that the civilization of Central America and of the mound-builders are indigenous. Grote concludes that the theory of an accidental migration from Asia during the Quaternary cannot be supported in view of recently ascertained facts. In a letter dated February 11, 1877, Captain E. J. Berthoud of the School of Mines at Golden, Colorado, who has studied the geology and archaeology of the West since 1859, writes that Grote's theory "solves many knotty points in the antiquities and prehistoric geology of Colorado." Captain Berthoud believes, from his observations, that man existed in the Rocky Mountain region prior to the deposit of gold in the Colorado mountains, about latitude 39° 30' north to 41° north. Captain Berthoud has not only found flint tools and chips in the gold bearing glacial drift, with the remains of fossil elephants, but also in the drift of older date below this gold bearing drift. Flint tools have been also found in company with extinct shells of not later age than old Pliocene as determined by Prof. Conrad.

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