

Farm and Home.

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All Around the Farm

NON-PRODUCTIVE CORN.

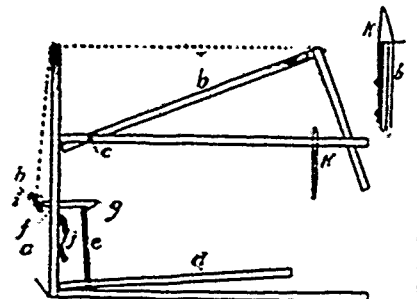
Why do some nice, thrifty, healthy stalks fail to have grain, even nubbins? There are lots of stalks this year and well matured ones too, but without a sign of corn, says S. H. of Mo. Indian corn is different from many plants that we are familiar with. In that it has two kinds of flowers in different places on the same stalk. One of these, the tassel, at the top of the stalk, is the male flower. The other, where the ear is developed, is the silk, or female flower. Each piece of silk which sticks up from the end of the ear is a hollow tube which extends back on to what becomes the cob. The tassel, or male flower, produces a quantity of pollen or dust. If now this pollen falls off and on to the end of the silk, it sticks and will very likely slip down inside the silk tube to the end next the cob, where it fertilizes a little embryo or seed. This action starts the small seed into life, and the kernel of corn develops as a result. This dust or pollen, as every farmer knows, blows about in the corn field and covers everything more or less. And its presence on the silk is absolutely necessary to produce seed.

If now, through heavy rain, the pollen is mostly beaten off before the silk appears, no grain will appear on the cob. If through any circumstance the silk and pollen appear at different times, so that they do not come in contact, no seed will be developed. Sometimes, through unusual climatic conditions, the male and female flowers do not appear together as they should, and then the trouble referred to by S. H. of Mo occurs. And also when a series of cold, hard rains occur at flowering time, it results in a similar way. These are things that cannot be prevented, but they are the causes of lack of corn on the cob.

This subject, as well as many others of deep interest to corn growers, is discussed in my new book Indian Corn Culture, which is sold by the Orange Judd Co of 52 Lafayette place, New York, at \$1 prepaid. -[Director C. S. Plumb.

A GOOD MINK TRAP.

The trap, as outlined herewith, is made of inch boards, 11 in wide, 29 in long with back part, a, 23 in high. The top board, b, is 1 1/2 in shorter than



A SECURE FOX TRAP.

the sides, and instead of hinges, I bored a hole, c, in back part of side pieces 2 1/2 in from back piece and put a good nail through it and into cover which made an efficient and durable hinge. I then cut a board, d, 14 or 15 in long which fits loosely into back end of trap. The front end should be cut away at least 1 1/2 in on each side so as not to touch sides of trap. Then in center of back end of treadle, e, 2 or 3 in from the end, I bored a 3/4-in hole into which I fitted a standard, f, of tough and seasoned hickory, say 5 or 6 in above top of treadle. Then bored a 1/4-in hole, g, through back of trap opposite and nearly as high as top of standard. Next, cut a small forked limb and cut one branch off so as to form a hook, g, and the other end should be long enough to reach through the hole to outside of trap. Then I drove a nail, h, in back end of trap, say 2 in either side of spindle hole. Tied to back end of cord what I called a toggle, i, which is as large as a wooden pencil and tied by it the middle. Then hooked the spindle on to the standard and pushed it through hole in back end of trap until front end of treadle is say, 1 or 1 1/2 in high and the spindle reaches through the hole in back end of trap barely far enough to put the toggle under it and the left of the

cover will hold all in place and the trap is set.

For mink, I nail the wing of a chicken, j, on inside of back end of trap and the mink, coon or opossum will surely wish to smell it and will bear down the treadle and will be caught. I have used this trap for more than 40 yrs and have caught many kinds of small game, including rabbits and some birds. Most of the animals mentioned will raise the cover of the trap and escape unless it is secured by a hook which I secure to side of trap, k, and which I make also of a forked stick 3/4 in in diameter and weaken somewhat the upper portion of the longer part and nail it so that in falling the cover will press it back and let the hook come on top of cover. -[A. A. Hubbard, Rhea Co, Tenn.

The Cherry Currant is rapidly getting to be the principal red currant for commercial purposes. Its large size, fine flavor and earliness combine to make it the most satisfactory of all varieties for market. When well cultivated and well pruned back, a plantation of cherry currants will continue very productive for 12 to 15 yrs. Plants are vigorous, stout, stocky growers and begin bearing the second year. Berries are very large, 1/2 inch in diameter, bright red, and ripen during late June and early July.

Cheaper Production is being studied by our merchants, manufacturers and business men as never before. I do hope all our dairy men will study this question, have their stables improved so that the cows can be kept comfortable, with proper ventilation, improve their dairies, weeding out the poorest each year, and adding nothing but the best; build silos and grow plenty of corn, so they will have plenty of good, cheap food, milk regularly, and for 10 mos at least each year, and if they do so the coming season will record the greatest prosperity among our dairymen we have ever seen, on account of our cheapening the cost of production, sending more milk to the factories, and of a better quality from each dairy, and receiving better prices for the same. [D. Derbyshire, Ont.

Coal Ashes in Orchards-The only benefit I have been able to detect from the use of our soft coal ashes is to improve the mechanical condition of our heavy clay soils by loosening and mellowing them. Sand will do that just as well. I would advise your correspondent to plow the land early in spring, being careful not to go deep enough to cut too many of the roots of the trees, and sow cowpeas the first half of June, allowing them to lie on the ground over winter, to be worked in in spring. The peas may be pastured to hogs in autumn, thus paying for their being grown. After plowing in spring the land should be kept well cultivated until the cowpeas are sown. Soy beans may be grown instead of cowpeas if desirable. -[Prof J C Whitten, Mo Exp Sta.

The Southern Cabbage Crop should be raised from good seed of a good strain and an appropriate variety. Select a rich, deep soil, manure well and prepare thoroughly. Cultivate deep and often at first, but not deep after the first 2 or 3 weeks. Keep the young plants well watered and shaded if grown for early winter transplanting.

Specialty and Diversity-A radical change for a farmer is hardly ever best, at least not as it is generally done. For instance, a few years ago there was a great fall in price of sheep and many sacrificed to get out of the business and went into raising hogs which were then high. Now again, sheep are good property and hogs not so good. Some are paying very high prices for calves now and there is of necessity great risk to run in so doing. The point is this, do not change from low to high but rather from high to low. The best way is just to pursue the even tenor of your way, keep a few of different kinds of stock and let them be the best of their kind and give them the best of care. Raise a little of different kinds of grains, vegetables, etc, and let that little be of the very best quality. In short, do not attempt so much but that you can treat every endeavor as a specialty. Be a sort of specialty in diversity farming, thus

with eggs in many baskets all will not be broken in case of a fall. If one crop fails another will not and will retrieve the loss. The thing to be studiously avoided in this mixed husbandry is not to attempt to do more than we can successfully. It is this error that brings so much dissatisfaction upon the followers of this same mixed farming. And yet year after year is the same thing repeated. With the efforts of each preceding year as object lessons one would think they would reform. -[A. N. Springer, Tipton Co, Ind.

Steel Roadways-Short sections of steel track suitable for hauling heavy loads were laid during the past year at Omaha, Neb, Ames, Ia, and St Anthony Park, Minn, under the supervision of the dept of agri. The western states are not well supplied with stone and gravel for road making purposes, and these experiments are being watched with great interest. Secretary Wilson says in his annual report for '99 that it is the intention of the dept to encourage the laying down of steel track sections during 1900 wherever the localities can be induced to purchase the steel. Model roads of various kinds have been built under the supervision of agents of the office of public road inquiry in Md, Neb, Minn, Ia, Ky, Ind and Wis, and elementary knowledge of road making is being rapidly spread among the people.

Farmers Should Organize in such a way that the interest of each member should be studiously considered; and each should willingly make sacrifices when the need of the society demands. Weekly meetings should be held, the men to deliberate questions of agriculture, the women, in an adjoining room, discuss methods of housekeeping and training the children. Later, all should meet together and have some literary work which has previously been prepared; then consider plans for works of charity and social improvement. These meetings should be so conducted as to awaken an increasing desire for education, that, soon, the farmer's child may stand among the highest in the educational ranks. Before the meeting adjourns a program for home study should be arranged, including farm news, general current topics and some standard literature. This little organization will reap its reward; when, through its influence, other organizations have sprung into existence, and each community being aroused with fervent zeal, the farmer can step forward and cheerfully receive his rights. [Helen Bodine, Logan Co, Ky.

The Napoleon Cherry, or Royal Ann as it is called in Cal, is the most productive variety known, yielding fruit of the very largest size, which is in good demand and therefore one of the most desirable varieties for the commercial orchard. It has one serious fault in that it is very subject to rot, especially in wet seasons, and sometimes the whole crop of this variety is ruined by it. The tree is upright, spreading, vigorous, hardy and very productive. Fruit is very large, oblong heart shaped; skin yellow ground, light in shade, rich red cheek in the sun, sometimes mottled; stem 1 1/2 in long. Flesh is yellowish white, very firm, meaty, fairly juicy, good flavor, much esteemed for canning because it looks well in the jars and bears cooking well. The fruit ripens July 8 to 16.

There seems to be little doubt but that manufacturers of farm machinery will take advantage of the condition of affairs in our new possessions by filling them up with modern implements. This will be specially true in tobacco sections. Save all your pine cones to start fires with these cold mornings; try them once and you will never do without them.

WANTED, AGENTS.

We want at least one good agent at every postoffice where we are not at present represented, to solicit subscriptions to FARM AND HOME. This is a rare opportunity for men and women out of employment, and even for enterprising boys and girls who wish to engage in profitable work through the fall and winter months. If you can canvass all of the time or part of the time and would make money easily and quickly, send at once for our new terms to agents and complete premium list, which we send free on request. Address: FARM AND HOME, Springfield, Mass., or Chicago, Ill.