AGRICULTURAL.

Farm Hints for May.

WATCHING THE SEASON.

The season, as indicated by the buds on the trees and the growth of those plants that survived the Winter, is much more backward than at the beginning of May last year, and there is really no need of hurrying to get seed into the ground, excepting such sorts as should have been put in before this time. The growth of the leaf and bud was the Indian's almanac, and it is the surest guide in judging of the warmth of the soil. It may require more experience and better judgment to plant and sow at the seasons as indicated by the growth of the forest trees or the orchard, or by the migration of the birds, than to do it on days appointed by the agricultural writers, but the proper signs, once learned, are not easily forgotten, and they vary only as the seasons and soils vary. Farmers should study these signs of the seasons, and should teach them to those who are to succeed them in their business, so that they may have a guide in their farm work, which will be equally reliable, whether the season is early or late; whether the land is dry, warm and sandy, or a cold, wet clay or muck; and wherever they can find the tree they know, or the wild bird with whose habits they are familiar.

SPRING PASTURING.

While waiting for the soil to get dry and warm again for the reception of the seed, much other work can be done. Not the least of this is the inspection and repair of all fences and walls, before the time comes for allowing the cattle to go into the pasture. Poor fences make "breachy" cattle. Unruly animals are apt to make quarrelsome neighbors or vexatious lawsuits. Cattle which have acquired the habit of breaking bounds should be disposed of before they, by their bad example, teach other stock a like habit. No weak places should be left to lead them into temptation. Such a place once found and broken through, will be subject to attacks, even after it has been made much stronger than adjoining points. The safest method is to see that all is made strong. If by reason of the carelessness of hunters, or by accident, a breach is made, which the cattle have found and gone through, do not be content with making it as good as it was before, but make it much stronger, or entirely change the character of the fence, so that it will not be recognizable as the same weak point. Now is a good time to post notices warning gunners and fishermen from trespassing. It is better to let the birds sing, and the rabbits run unmolested, than to have grass trampled down, fences broken, fires set in the woodland, sheep worried by dogs, and cows or colts wounded with shot.

Do not be in too much hurry to get the cows into pasture. When there is a chance for them to get a fair bite of grass, give them a good feed of hay in the morning, and then let them out for a while, making the change from dry fodder to green more gradual. Do not take away the grain ration as soon as they get to grass. If desirable to reduce it, make the reduction gradual, as the early grass is not as nutritious as the hay and grain ration has been. The most skilful feeders and best dairymen are nearly all agreed that it pays to feed grain every night, even while the animals are in good pasture. It keeps them in better flesh. It makes the milk richer, and it is an inducement for the cows to return to the barn at night, almost saving its cost in the labor of hunting up the cows in a large pasture. Two quarts of grain given at night is worth more than three quarts given in the morning and one at night, as it will be much more thoroughly digested. This may not be true of working animals, or of those who stand idle in the barn feeding upon dry fodder, but it certainly is for cattle in pasture and for horses used for light driving. Look out that the cows which are heavy with calf and mares with foal do not injure themselves or get injured by others in the play that they will attempt when they first realize their freedom from the restraint of the stable. Let out a few animals at a time, and let them have their frolic out before all are turned together.

A PLEA FOR SHORTER HOURS.

When the workmen are striking all over the land for less hours of labor, the farmer who is his own master, should not be tempted to over work himself, his hired men, or his team. A little planning, a little calculation in saving unnecessary labor, and a little extra energy put in during the shorter hours, will often accomplish just as much. If the total crops are not as large, the short crops must bring increased price. These are the arguments of the mechanic, and they are equally applicable and equally true for the farmer. It is true that the farmer cannot always limit himself to eight hours or even to ten hours, as there are times when a few hours work will save a crop, but if he has saved his strength by shorter hours on other days, he will have a reserve to draw upon, which will prove useful in those times of need.

There is no reason why the farmer should toil from sunrise until sunset, and then have an hour or two to spend in "doing chores," to produce that which the mechanic will buy with the labor of eight hours, or perhaps a less time. Particularly is this applicable in the Spring, when the character of the work to be done is different from that which has been done during the Winter. A new set of muscles is brought into play, and although they feel vigorous and strong at the start, they get tired and sore, and the speed must slacken to give them a chance to recuperate. Do not work yourselves or your teams so as to get "harness-chafed" and have to lie idle to get over it, but take a lesson from the professional ball-players, and from those who train the race-horses. Put yourself in training before you try to do all that you are capable of. Remember, too, that four-fifths of the farmers and gardeners would accomplish best results in the year if they did not try to do so much. There are always crops that do not get properly cared for, and tasks begun and not finisned. Begin in the spring with a determination that whatever is begun will be finished, and whatever is planted will be taken care of.

GARDEN CROPS.

There is now much work to be done in the garden. Peas should be planted every week for a while, that they may come along in succession for the family table and market. Then as soon as the ground gets warm enough, the planting of sweet corn and beans should begin, and be kept up at frequent intervals, though a judicious selection of varieties will vary the time of picking very much. Early cabbages can be set, and even tomatoes, in well-sheltered locations. Spinach and lettuce can be sown for a succession during the Summer, and dandelions for the next Spring cutting. These last can be sown in beds, and in August or September transplanted to the place where they are to grow. A few square rods of beds will furnish plants for a large field, and the plants grow much larger than when sown in August, as the custom used to be. In fact, there is a risk in sowing in the Fall of not having the seed come up well, if the season is dry. Squashes and melons may be put in toward the last of the month, if the ground is warm, and if they are not grown as field crops they should be in the garden. Carrots, beets and parsnips may be sown wherever the ground is dry enough to work up fine, as they do not care so much for heat as rich soil and one through which their slender seed leaves can easily find a way, and their delicate roots find food.

FIELD CROPS.

In the fields the planting of potatoes is in season at any time from March until June, and the best time depends upon the variety, the soil and the weather, so that it is well to make more than one planting. If early potatoes fail, late ones will probably do better. Corn planting for a field crop should be deferred until the ground is warm. Get dry, well ripened and well cured seed, as there is as much difference in the product of a vigorous seed and one that is immature or damaged, as there is in the product of breeding animals in the two conditions. While this is true of all seeds, it is not as easy to judge of smaller seeds as it is of corn, beans and peas. Those who save their own seed should only save such, and those who buy should buy carefully. Wetting the seed in tar water to prevent crows from pulling it is desirable in some sections, and it may in some cases be desirable to add copperas to the water, or a solution of vitriol, to keep off the smut, in the same way that wheat would be treated. In Canada it is almost essential to put artificial fertilizer in the hill to make the growth more rapid and the ripening earlier, thus preventing the loss by early frosts. Unless the land is very heavily manured, the fertilizer will increase the crop enough to pay the cost.

CORN FODDER AND ENSILAGE.

Those who do not sow corn to be used as fodder are decidedly behind the times, if they have milch cows. It is valuable as a green fodder when pastures dry up. It is good dried for Winter fodder, and every one who keeps a half-dozen cows should have a silo in which it can be put as ensilage for Winter use. It saves hay. It is a substitute for roots. While there are many arguments as to the relative merits of the tall Southern corn, the common field corn, or sweet corn, as regards thick or thin sowing in the drill, regarding the desirability of having ears form on the stalks, or having all the material of the grain in the stalk and and leaf whether to cut early or late, or to weight the ensilage or not, there are now no opponents of the ensilage as a food, or but a few who have only theories and no facts to offer against its use. The corn should be sown in drills at about the same date as field corn is planted, and if Southern corn, or the larger varieties of sweet corn, are grown, they may be from eight to fifteen inches apart in the drill, some favoring the closer distance for the sake of a finer growth of stalk. Smaller varieties of corn planted at a foot or fifteen inches apart in the drill, will make nearly as many ears as under the old system of hill planting. When desired, the corn may be harvested separately by plucking the ears when ripe, and then putting the stalks in the silo. Or all can be put in the silo together, a little before the corn is ripe enough for husking, or when it is in the roasting ear stage.

Dairy Data.

When persons say that cows in milk do just as well or better if confined to the stall continually, the idea seems preposterous, not having good sense to back it. "Generally, the nearer we let nature take its course in the actions of animals, the better off they will be, and what is unnatural, if caused by man, is usually unwise." All animals, including the human one, are endowed with power to move from place to place, and if constrained from this liberty continually, will deteriorate.

Proprietors of English butter factories understand so well the absorption of odors by milk, cream and butter that they are beginning to construct their dairy-houses with living-rooms above for occupancy of employes. The object is to guard against conveying odors or infection to the dairy as persons who live in crowded lodging-houses or low neighborhoods are likely to do.

It is unwise to keep horses and milch cows in the same stable, or under the same roof if there be an open space between the animals, for the reason that the milk when drawn will absorb and be tainted by the ammonia arising from the excretions of the horses. Every stableman knows how the disagreeable scent pervades his clothing after grooming the horses. The knowledge of the presence of a good dose of this exhalation in the cup of milk a person drinks cannot be assuring to delicate stomachs.

To Prevent Colts from Becoming Wormy.

Many valuable colts are lost every year for the want of a little care. Hundreds die from the lack of condition. As a rule if colts are fed liberally and kept growing constantly from birth, there is not much danger to be feared from worms. Yet it is always best to be on the safe side, and use all harmless means to prevent every form of sickness and suffering. Some Kentucky breeders practice mixing a little pulverized copperas with salt and placing it in boxes where the colts can help themselves as they like. Two tablespoonfuls of pulverized copperas to a pint of salt is sufficient. Horses suffering from worms can be cured in time by feeding a tablespoonful of powdered gentian every night for two or three weeks. It can be mixed with oats or turned down the throat from a bottle. Copperas and gentian is an excellent tonic. Breeders will do well to keep a small quantity on hand. Get the druggist to put four ounces each, compounding it in his mortar so as to mix it thoroughly. Put the powder in a small box or wide mouthed glass jar, label it, and when needed give to grown horse a teaspoonful in their feed at night. A yearling will require about one third as much as a grown animal, and weanlings a much smaller quantity.

Economy Not Avarice.

Economy does not mean to pinch and be stingy in order to grow rich in worldly possessions. It does not demand a denial of moderate luxuries and the pleasures of a comfortable existence, so that dollar upon dollar can be laid aside. That would be parsimony. One may practise strictest economy, and yet have plenty and be liberal. Prudence and a judicious management of capital at hand, never making an expenditure recklessly, without reflection—this is what constitutes true economy. It is not so much the amount paid out, as for what purpose that sum, however small, has been spent. The great secret of success in practical economy lies in a careful consideration of petty expenses, and a rational distinction between what is essential and what is superfluous. The smaller item should not be undeserving of recognition.

Under no circumstances should expenses exceed income. It is always more profitable to pay "spot cash" than to contract a debt, which should not be done unless unavoidable. Never should indebtedness be incurred in anticipation of expected gain. Expectations are not realizations; the debt is certain and must be met; the gain—well, "there is many a slip." Economy should be practised in time of youth, its results to be prudently preserved for unforeseen sickness, need, misfortune and inevitable feeble and helpless age. Its observance calls for no peculiar trait of character in the individual; it simply requires determination and strength of will to resist selfish gratification. Further, it may demand education, that is, that the power of extravagant habit must be trained to succumb to the power of economic education.

Rum in Africa.

One of the greatest hindrances with which the missionary to Africa has had to contend, has been created by Christian nations themselves, through the agency of the liquor traffic. Long and loud have been the protests made by the Missionary Societies and their agents against the wholesale introduction of ardent spirits among peoples, who, not having the restraints of civilization to to keep them in check, speedily become victims of their appitites and perish in great numbers. Not unfrequently it has happened that the same vessel that conveyed the missionary in its cabin has carried hundreds of barrels of rum in its hold. In view of these facts it will be gratifying to many to learn that steps are being taken to wipe out this Christian (?) disgrace. It is stated that the big British companies in the African trade are conspicuously in the front of the movement to curtail the rum trade. The Royal Niger Company has reduced the import of spirits to one fourth its recent volume. It has prohibited the trade in one-third of its territory, intends to do so in another third, and with regard to the remaining third is awaiting an agreement by England, France, and Germany. The British East African Company is excluding liquor from every part of its large territory. The African Lakes Company refuses to carry intoxicants to the lake regions, and the British South Africa Company has just resolved absolutely to prohibit the sale of spirits to the natives. These companies are setting a good example, which German enterprises in Africa seem to be in no haste to follow.

Should have Spared Him.

Mr. Henry Matthews, the Imperial Home Secretary, is having hot shot poured into him from almost the entire English press on account of his refusal to interfere to save Richard Davies from the gallows. Davies was one of two brothers who killed their father while he was maltreating their mother. The ather, according to one journal, was slain as one slays a wild beast, or any other creature whom we deem *hostis humani*. The younger brother, a lad of sixteen years, was sentenced to one year's imprisonment while the elder was hanged. The London Daily Chronicle declares that Secretary Matthews "stands convicted of judicial murder by the jury of public opinion." The St. James Gazette surmises that Mr. Matthews wanted to appear austere but also tried to save his popularity, so he sent one to the gallows and the other to prison for a year. The Pal-Mall Gazette says that Mr. Matthews "acted out of sheer cowardice and indecision;" while the Star boldly charges that "the whole practice of capital punishment is being broken up." "The fact is," continues that paper, "that the death penalty is hideously out of date. Science is playing havoc with old institutions, and with none more freely than with the penal code. We punish now for safety, not for vengeance; and in our punishment we are beginning to take ac count not simply of the offender's crime, but of his parentage, his surroundings, his temperament, and generally his chance in life. Science has pitched away the rack, the thumbscrew, and practically the cat-'o-nine-tails. Sooner or later it will pull down the scaffold." It is conjectured that Mr. Matthews' political popularity has been very eriously impaired by his blunder in having young Davies hanged.

Fears of Another Strike.

Fears are expressed in England of an early revival of the recent monster coal strike, the disastrous effects of which extended to almost every branch of industry in the land. The men, it is true, obtained at the time the advance of 10 per cent. which they demanded. But since then they have discovered that the mine-owners took advantage of the scarcity of fuel caused by the strike to get rid of the otherwise unsalable "slacks" and "smudge," and that, instead of losing anything by the lockout, they had actually realized a handsome profit thereby. The Miners' Federation is now about to promulgate fresh demands on the ground that the mine-owners are far better off at the present moment than they were at the time when the settlement was made, and that as their improved fortunes are due to the action of the men in striking, the latter are entitled to participate in the profits.

Prince Bismarck views the labor agitation in Europe with a philosophic mind, and says: "The end of strife would be the end of progress, and this is not the intention of Divine Providence." It is a remarkable act that the philosopher is the man who stands apart and watches the struggles without engaging in it. Before Prince Bismarck tendered his resignation and laid aside the burdens of the government of Germany, he did not take such a calm and philosophical view of the labor troubles. But there is truth in what he says, just the same, and his remark shows that Germany has lost a prime minister to gain a great moral philosopher who can look upon the questions of the day from the height of retirement, and be able to say things for which only Prince Bismarck will be responsible.

The Faithful Violet.

On the soft moss at the foot of an old oak there nestled one springtime a little blue violet. The great tree spread out its branches like a protecting roof, and the tender green leaves, which were just beginning to put forth, shielded the little plant from sun and rain. When the soft, warm air blew through the forest and the lark and other birds were making the woods ring with their songs, the violet awoke from her long winter rest, and opening her blue eyes, wondered how long she had slept. But she thought it must have been a very short time; for the trees looked just the same, except that the leaves looked smaller and of a lighter green; but the sun shone just as warm, and the sky looked just as blue. Then she spied in the rough bark of the tree a small worm almost encased in a brown shell. The worm greeted the violet, and the two became firm friends, talking all day about their dreams and hopes. The worm said:

"I dreamed that this ugly brown shell had fallen off, that I had gay-colored wings and could fly through the air over the tops of trees and through the blooming meadows. Oh that it might be true; for I am so tired of living in this small place; and before you awoke, I was very lonesome here."

"I, too, have had a dream," said the violet; "it seemed that one night the wind blew very cold, and soon I was hidden under a cover of snow. I could see hundreds of my little sisters, and they, as I, were all trembling with cold. Then it grew very dark, and for a long time we could see neither the sun nor the bright blue sky. We were so frightened that we dared not even speak; and so we remained quiet and still. I was beginning to think that I must always stay in this dark place; and as I could no longer see any of my sisters, I thought they had left me to die alone. But I was afraid to cry out. Finally I saw a bright light, and the flower queen in her new bright robes stood beside me, 'What, are my little violets still sleeping?' she asked. 'Wake up, wake up; see how bright the sun is shining, and hear how the birds are singing.' When I opened my eyes, here I was on the same soft moss and under the kind old tree. But I hope I shall never again have such an unpleasant dream."

As the violet ceased speaking it began to grow dark, and, after bidding her friend good-night, she fell asleep and did not waken till the sun shown through the branches. Many other forest flowers had by this time ventured out of their home under the earth, and the anemones and bluets were now holding a reception under the oak tree. The violet looked on with delight, and gave the newcomers a cordial welcome. Then she saw on the grass not far away a flower much larger and handsomer than the others; its blue and yellow leaves seemed sprinkled with the finest gold dust, which glittered and shone in the sunlight. The strange flower began to move, and coming to the violet, said:

"Do you not know me, my little friend?"

The voice certainly had a very familiar sound, but the violet was sure she had never before seen the beautiful flower. Shaking her head she replied:

"You are very handsome and I am proud to be called your friend; but I do not remember you and think I have never seen a flower like you."

"I am no flower," said the stranger; "see, there lies my empty shell, and they now call me a butterfly. My hopes at last have been realized, and with these beautiful wings I can fly through the field and forest."

"I am glad to see you so happy," said the violet; "but I shall be very lonely when you are gone away."

"Oh, I am not going to leave you, my dear friend," said the butterfly; "you shall always be my playmate and companion. I shall fly through the woods during the day, and in the evening shall tell you about my travels."

The days now passed very happily for the two friends. Every morning the butterfly would take leave of the violet, and then begin his journey through the surrounding country. When he returned he would tell of the wonders he had seen; of the gold fish in the lake; of the reeds along the shore; and of the birds' nests with their many colored eggs. When the night came, and the moonbeams fell through the trees and the fire flies were flitting to and fro, the violet would talk of the flower queen and the fairy island until she fell asleep.

One day on the shore of the lake the butterfly met another butterfly dressed in red uniform who called himself an admiral, and told of a white marble palace which stood on the other side of the hill, surrounded by a large garden, in which lived the most beautiful flowers.

"Not at all like these common wild flowers," he said.

When the butterfly had told the violet of his meeting with the admiral, it was decided that he should spend the next day in the garden, and in the evening relate its beauties to his little friend.

Early the next morning he flew over the hill, and there saw the marble palace with its golden roof and the beautiful garden. Hundreds and hundreds of the rarest trees and choicest flowers filled the air with their fragrance. The butterfly was astonished at the sight of so much beauty, and entering a garden lighted on a rose tree, where he again met his friend the admiral, who greeted him in a most friendly way and went with him through the garden, introducing him to the flowers. Everyone had a pleasant word for the stranger, even the haughty tulips gave him a friendly nod. They listened with interest to his account of his woodland home; but laughed so scornfully when he told of his playmate the violet, that he became ashamed of his little friend and declared he would never again go back to the forest.

Day after day he lived in the beautiful garden, breathing the rich fragrance of the flowers without noticing that the bright color was fading from his wings. But the flowers observed how dull and gray their friend was becoming, and no longer took any interest in him. They began to treat him very coldly, and some would not even speak to him, but turned away their heads when he came near.

One day a cruel boy came into the garden, and, catching the admiral ran a pin through his body. In his fright the butterfly flew from the garden toward the forest. He then recalled how false he had been to the little violet, and thought how she had watched in vain for his coming. He wondered if she would forgive him, or if she would turn away as the other flowers had done. He remembered how gladly she had welcomed him every evening, and with what interest she had listened to the story of his travels. He hastened with all speed, and when he reached the forest he found the grass just as green as when he had gone away that bright morning. But the flowers bent their heads, and the bluebells, instead of ringing merrily, as was their custom, were tolling soft and low, while the bluets seemed to whisper, "Your violet is dead."

Full of anxiety, the butterfly hurried to his old home; but the violet had bowed her head and died from grief for her lost playmate. All night, in deep distress, the butterfly hovered over the dead flower, and during the long summer he might have been seen wandering sad and lonely over the fields. When the cold winds and frosts came he died under the old oak tree near the grave of the little blue violet.

PAYSIE.

In Sunday School.

Some score or so of little lads,
Whose ages range from four to seven,
(Here truth, uncompromising, adds
That one, the booby, is eleven,)
In suits of various shapes and size—
The most of them are minus collars—
With restless limbs and eager eyes:
You see my class of Sunday scholars.

The very simplest lessons theirs—
A verse or two, a text repeated;
Each brow an anxious pucker wears
Until the weighty task's completed.
Then teacher's turn—and once again
She tells the ancient Bible story
Of Daniel in the lions' den,
Or Solomon in all his glory.

Or how the kindly Shunamite,
Who built her guest the little study,
Was promised, to her heart's delight,
"A what?"—"A wee machine and cuddy.
But when I read how Samson found
A lion in the way and slew it,
A tender infant's boasts resound,
"Gie me a poker and I'll do it!"

Then comes the parting hymn, which brings
An end to all my Sunday labor;
Each youngster finds the place and sings
A little louder than his neighbor.
But, as they straggle out of school,
One weeps because he's lost his bonnet—
A younger brother, as a rule,
Is sitting all the time upon it.

Yet sometimes in these childish eyes
There comes a light, a thought, and straightway
They seem to pierce earth's cloudy skies
And gaze beyond the Golden Gateway.
And surely to a little child
The promise long ago was given:
"Of such"—the Master turned and smiled—
"The kingdom is of heaven."

M. C. E.

Keeping Horses Clean.

Few owners of horses are aware of the importance of keeping the skins of the animals clean. Proprietors of valuable stock usually require their hostlers to keep the animals so well groomed that their coats will shine like a new dollar, and so clean that they would hardly soil a white handkerchief. This is done to please the eye, the owners usually being oblivious of the fact that by pursuing this course they are using one of the best means to conserve the health and vigor of the animals. The skin and lungs are the great purifiers of the blood. They are the mediums through which are expelled waste material of the blood such as carbonic acid gas, water, etc., which if suffered to remain in the system become active poisons. The skin naturally does about as much of this work as the lungs. If the former is not kept clean, and its pores become obstructed, upon the lungs devolves so much more of the labor to perform as the skin fails to do; and if the lungs are overworked the animal loses a por- of his power, speed and endurance. When a good portion of the pores of the skin are closed, as in a cold fever, or from filth, the breath is overladen with moisture, plainly proving that the lungs are doing double work; and when the lungs are partly decayed, as in persons having pulmonary consumption and accompanying night sweats, the skin then is doing double labor, as the profuse perspiration indicates. These facts show the intimate relation existing between the skin and the lungs, and evince the necessity, for the good of the animal, that the skin be kept clean and thus preserve a healthful equilibrium of action between these two important features of the animal economy. An animal with a dirty hide cannot be at its best. Cleansing the skin is strengthening the lungs.

Odd Names.

"What name do you give this child?" said a Western preacher to a couple who had brought their baby some distance to be baptized.

"Luthy, thir," lisped the bashful mother, and the pastor, who was a little deaf, exclaimed in horror:

"Lucifer! Nonsense, woman!" and dipping his hand in the font, he continued, with virtuous unction: "John Wesley, I baptize thee—" And whether she would or no, the poor little girl received the name of the great preacher.

A young couple, who appeared one Sunday at the altar to baptize their first child, were the victims of an amusing, though less serious blunder. The wife was quite self-possessed, but the young husband seemed painfully abashed.

"Name the child," said the clergyman, and the poor young man looked about in hopeless embarrassment as if in search of the forgotten words. At this critical moment his wife nudged him; then he awoke to the requirements of the occasion and said, in a loud clear voice; "I will."

The ceremony of his last visit to the altar was evidently so fresh in his mind as to quite overshadow the significance of the present occasion.

Highest of American Peaks.

"The highest mountain in America" must now be changed from Mount St. Elias to Mount Wrangel, a little to the north of the former peak. Several of these mountains have been newly measured. Mount Hood, once "roughly" estimated at 15,000 feet then "closely" at 16,000, was brought down by triangulation to 13,000. An aneroid barometer made it 12,000 and a mercurial barometer made it 11,225. Mount St. Elias, estimated by D'Egelot at 12,672 feet was triangulated by Mr. Baker at 13,500. It now appears that Mount Wrangel rises 18,400 feet above Copper river, which is in turn 2,000 feet above the sea level at the point. If this holds good, Mount Wrangel is a good 2,000 feet higher than any other peak in North America.