

"The matter which this page contains is carefully selected from various sources; and we guarantee that, to any intelligent farmer or housewife, the contents of this single page, from week to week during the year, will be worth several times the subscription price of the paper."

"WE ARE BUT MINUTES."

We are but minutes—little things, Each furnished with sixty wings With which we fly on our unseen track, And not a minute ever comes back.

We are but minutes, yet each one bears Its little burden of joys or cares; Take patiently the minutes of pain— The worst of minutes cannot remain.

We are but minutes, when we bring A few of the drops of pleasure's spring; Taste their sweetness while yet we stay— It takes but a minute to fly away.

We are but minutes—use us well— For how we use them we must one day tell. Who uses minutes, has hours to use, Who loses minutes, whole years must lose. —Selected.

THE HOME.

Hints About Home.

The assumption that a large amount of property is essential to enjoyment leads many to expend all their energies in efforts to get rich, intending, when wealth is secured, to support themselves and families abundantly with comforts and luxuries. They tug and toil without rest or recreation, deny themselves many pleasures easily within reach, till hoarding becomes a habit, a passion, a mania—then, when money for the pleasure of getting and having it, not for the good use it may be put to. Finally they die from worry and over-work, victims of deplorable avarice, "which is idolatry." We should enjoy life while living it, comfort and pleasure should not be postponed to an uncertain future; money is valuable only in its use. Comforts are needed and appreciated while health, vigor and vitality are unimpaired, and, especially, while the children remain at home; neglected opportunities never return. A happy home is not necessarily a costly one. Its architecture may be unpretentious, its adornments simple, its furnishings plain. But it must be neat, orderly, arranged with taste and adapted to the wants of the occupants. There should not be too much of it—a very common fault; rooms may be too large and too numerous. It is indispensable that we live within our means. Debt has blighted many a happy home, it may promise relief, but in the end brings ten times more distress and damage.

Whoever would be thoroughly furnished into every good work, must set his standard high. Intelligence, moral and social culture, increase capacity for enjoyment and wonderfully aid in giving enjoyment to others. School privileges are greatly to be prized, but far more important are suitable books, and the disposition to make the best possible use of them. A good public library will be in every school district if the inhabitants are considerate and progressive. More families are deprived of home comforts by thoughtlessness and criminal neglect than by poverty. Housewife families could lighten the labors of wives and housekeepers very materially without much expense, if considerate and obliging. It is possible to keep a pony and a buggy for the women and children, a good musical instrument, and many things too numerous to mention. Some must be content with very humble abodes; but if these be neat and orderly, with the help of vines, shrubbery, flowers and simple adornments, they may be made very enjoyable. But whatever the surroundings, best of all is a strong bond of affection, a gentle loving spirit, that leads every member of the family to minister to the comfort and happiness of every other member.—Hugh T. Brooks.

Odors of the Kitchen.

There are a great many people at the present time who are building houses for themselves and take an interest in the best methods that can be employed. Yet it is strange to note how many people fail to observe the simplest rules of caution, mislead, no doubt, by builders more anxious to secure a job than ready to give the best advice. Houses are being put up all over the country in direct opposition to what would appear to be common sense.

One of the first considerations in building a home is the location. A sunny slope is always one of the most desirable places to build a house, so that one may have the advantage of good drainage and the wholesomeness of a cheerful exposure. One can hardly have too much sun in the house, in spite of the old-fashioned prejudice against it. The house should face the sun, and the southeast is considered the best exposure.

This will bring the kitchen and pantries on the north side of the house, where they should be. The kitchen should always be located a little on one side of the main building, when it is on the same floor as the dining and living room, as it usually is in the country, so as to prevent a direct draft when the front doors are open and bring in the odors of cooking. Too little attention is paid to this one item in building, though it is essential to the healthy and agreeable atmosphere of the house.

Where a house is built exclusively for summer occupancy the kitchen is frequently apart from the main house, and many country houses which are occupied all the year around have a special building apart for a summer kitchen. This is one of the best ways of avoiding the problem. It does away with the heat of the kitchen fire, which is sure to be brought into the main part of the house, with the kitchen odors, which are especially disagreeable in summer and apt to hang about the carpets and furniture of the living apartments, and give them that indescribable stuffy odor which is always intensely depressing.

Some houses are built in such a way that it is impossible not to perceive what has been the menu of the last meal on entering the front door, and there is a blending of all the past meals hanging about the rooms. Such an atmosphere as this must be unwholesome. The door which communicates between the kitchen and main house should have a strong spring on it, so that it cannot be left open through the negligence of

derelict servants unless it is hooked back, a thing which should be expressly forbidden unless necessity requires it. There should be no other communication between the main rooms and the kitchen but this door. Windows opening between the kitchen and the dining room are but foolish contrivances, which save but a few steps and bring in the heat and atmosphere of the kitchen as readily as an open door. There should always be a ventilator in the kitchen window, which should be open at all times, and there should be abundance of windows for light and ventilation.

Hair Mattresses and Feather Pillows.

At this season of the year, before the general house-cleaning, it is a good time to look over the hair mattresses. It is safe to say that a bed which has been in continual use for five years needs making over. The best way to clean hair is to do a small portion—ten or twelve pounds at a time—washing it thoroughly with good borax soap. This makes it springy and curly. It may then be pulled over, thoroughly rinsed through water once, hunched by hand, and then spread on sheets in a warm room where all moisture will be dried out of it. Very few upholsterers who make over hair do it properly. Unless the bed-tick is very much soiled, it can be washed, and when the mattress is made over it will be as good as new. It is better to intrust this part of the work to the hands of an expert upholsterer, who will come to the house to do it, and make over several beds in a day.

The old-fashioned way of renovating feather pillows was to hang them in the rain till they were thoroughly soaked in every part, shaking them well and turning them daily, bringing them in at night to avoid the dew. Steam renovators now do this work so expertly and at so low a price that it hardly pays to do it at home. The most thorough way of renovating feathers at home is to rinse them thoroughly in clear, cold water, spread them in a large bag made of mosquito netting and hang them out in the sun till they are thoroughly dry and fluffy. Then put them into clean, new ticks. The unpleasant odor sometimes found among feathers is due to the decaying animal matter in the quill of the feather. After the feathers have been in use for a long time and have been renovated, this may disappear, though it is by no means certain. Fortunately very few people now use the feather bed, as has long been condemned by the physicians as unwholesome. More objectionable than the feather pillow, though more expensive, is the ordinary "Arctic" down pillow, made from the plumes stripped from the stems of German feathers. This down, unlike the genuine goose down, which remains compact where it is put, will force its way through the stoutest ticking or muslin, filling the air in the vicinity of the pillow with infinitesimal particles which are very unwholesome to breathe.

Things Worth Knowing.

—Save your cold tea; it is excellent for cleaning grained wood.

—Wild mint scattered about the house will rid it of rats and mice.

—Hot solution of salt and vinegar brightens copper and tinware, also bathtubs.

—Mirrors should not be hung where the light shines directly upon them.

—Warm soap-suds will keep the bugs from house-plants and make them grow very fast.

—To remove finger-marks, putty, stains, etc., from glass, put a little soda in the water with which you wash it.

—Now time should be set over the fire with boiling water in them for several hours before food is put into them.

—To remove rust from knives, cover the blades with sweet oil for a day or two and then rub with a lump of fresh lime.

—To keep linen from turning yellow put it away rough dry after washing and bleaching well and rinsing in blue water.

—My mother, best of cooks, occasionally divulges a secret. Her cold boiled ham is delicious, and, unlike that in restaurants and hotels, never gets dry and scrappy. "After boiling, leave the ham in the water until cold," is the simple reminder. And, ah! such sandwiches it makes!

THE FARM.

Raise Some Mushrooms.

Although not in general use in this country, the consumption of mushrooms is larger than is commonly supposed, the demand coming chiefly from hotels, restaurants, and the wealthy in large cities. The production not being sufficient to supply this demand, thousands of pounds are annually imported from France and England. In nearly all the temperate regions of Europe mushrooms are a common article of food with rich and poor. They grow wild abundantly in the fields in many places, and these wild mushrooms are said to have a finer flavor than those grown artificially in the dark and fed with strong stimulants. When wanted in quantity for market they have to be grown artificially. Caves, cellars, spaces under the arches of railway spans, tunnels, etc., are utilized for their growth in Europe. One cave at Mery, in France, produces in the season 3,000 lbs. daily. No doubt mushrooms can be made a profitable crop in this country. The high prices at which dealers hold both the native fresh and the foreign canned product are proof that the supply is not sufficient. Fresh mushrooms can be cooked in a greater variety of ways, and their flavor is superior to that of the canned; hence their value is better. Although very perishable, the shortness of their season keeps up the demand, and loss from even a small portion of the crop by spoiling is not likely to occur near cities or on larger country places.

Among requisites for success with these strange, rootless, stemless, leafless plants are a knowledge of their requirements, the most favorable season for forcing, and a ready market. Mushrooms are not difficult to raise, and certainly very interesting. The following is one of many methods used by gar-

deners in their cultivation: Mix fresh horse manure thoroughly with an equal weight of pasture soil, garden soil, or soil full of old manure should not be used, as it is likely to contain seeds of poisonous fungi. This compost must not be allowed to get wet. As soon as it is ready to be made into beds, if all that is needed is being collected; if not, it will do to wait a few days till sufficient has been added, provided the mass has been kept from heating too much by being trenched over daily. A stable, a shed, or any convenient place, will do for the beds, where a uniform temperature can be maintained of from 40 degrees to 60 degrees. They should not be so wide that the crop cannot be gathered without stepping into them. They may be made on the ground or floor, and if economy of space is desired, they may be made in frames put one above another, like shelves. A thin layer of the compost is spread evenly over the bed and firmed down with a brick, then another layer is added, and so on till a depth of eight inches is obtained. The top layer must be left firm and even. Insert a thermometer into the bed; in a few days the heat will probably rise to over 100 degrees; when it goes down to 80 degrees the spawn may be planted; make holes with a sharpened stick a foot apart each way and 4 inches deep; drop into each a piece of spawn about the size of a black walnut, fill up the holes with the compost, leave smooth and level. When all has gone well, in ten or twelve days the spawn will have vegetated and spread through the beds in every direction. About two inches of fresh soil—mixed with manure—should now be spread over the beds and gently firmed with the back of the spade; on this, some three or four inches of straw is scattered. All that remains to be done is to watch the temperature, and if the surface of the bed seems dry sprinkle with water heated to 100 degrees. Patience is required in waiting for the appearance of the crop; if the temperature falls below 40 degrees, the growth is more or less delayed. A certain novice in the business became disgusted at the non-appearance of the mushrooms at the expected time, and decided to give up further attempt. Shortly after the kitchen-maid ran upstairs and informed him with horror that the cellar was full of mushrooms. And so they nearly always come unexpectedly, sometimes sooner, more frequently later, on account of their sensitiveness to varying temperature. Raising mushrooms is no more difficult than raising strawberries, cauliflower, or women might find pleasure and profit in this business, which is not overstocked. To be sure, a demand would have to be developed in many localities—but let a bright woman raise a crop for home consumption, serve up her vegetable in a delicious way, and invite her friends to the feast. After the manner of hungry Oliver, there would soon be a call for "more." A reliable word on the subject, of which several are printed in this country and some practical knowledge gained by growing them on a small scale, are necessary before entering the business.—Mrs. J. M. Milligan.

Seed Facts.

Mr. J. J. H. Gregory's recent address before the Boston Market Gardeners' Association, reported by *The Massachusetts Ploughman*, contains the following among other data from his long experience and observation:

"One of the worst of the many disreputable things done in the seed trade is the habit, quite common in Europe, of baking good or inferior seed in order to destroy its vitality and then mix with good seed of the same or some similar appearing variety; he had known stable cabbage seed to be baked and mixed with cress, cauliflower seed, the buyer could not detect the fraud except in the small percentage of seed that germinated. The grain trade has its standard of A No. 1, A No. 2, etc., and there is no reason why the seed trade should not have a similar standard of quality, but there is none as yet. Seeds ripened in a dry season are best and keep vitality longest. It is better to keep seeds of the vine family where they will not freeze. When they lose life the oil in them becomes rancid. The seeds of the vine family are cold and wet, weather after planting. He believes it to be a fact that cabbage seed harvested before full ripe produces earlier cabbages than seed well ripened."

Good seed, even in the hands of skillful gardeners, will not grow; a heavy rain will often pack the surface so that the seed cannot come through the crust, and a very dry, hot wind sometimes prevents germination. Had known samples of onion seed, 90 to 100 per cent of which germinated, but a fair average is 85 to 90 per cent; cabbage, 85 per cent; sweet corn, 85; beans not so high, about 70 per cent; the wrinkled peas do not so surely germinate as the hard peas."

Our Method of Feeding Ducks.

The young ducks that we have selected for breeding stock, together with the old birds, we turn out to pasture about September 1st, being careful not to mix them. We feed them sparingly at this time, as the young birds would begin to lay, and then begin to moult, a thing we do not want them to do, as they would not moult in December and begin laying the second time so much later in consequence, so we feed sparingly on corn and soft food, and about November 10 we mate them and locate them in their winter quarters. We now begin to feed heavier, giving the birds all they will eat of two parts corn-meal and two parts of wheat bran and boiled turnips in the morning and at night, feeding them on corn and oats at noon, feeding refuse cabbage or green rye once each day. We keep oyster shells, ground bone and sharp sand by us as a superior to that of the canned; hence their value is better. Although very perishable, the shortness of their season keeps up the demand, and loss from even a small portion of the crop by spoiling is not likely to occur near cities or on larger country places.

With the infertile eggs boiled hard and chopped fine. About one part egg to four or five parts bread-crumbs, feed every two hours for the first two or three days—never more than they will eat clean—then four times a day till the birds are six weeks old, when three times each day will be sufficient. We use equal quantities of wheat bran and corn meal at first, gradually increasing the meal until the birds are eight weeks old, when we use about 5 per cent. of the bran, especially during the last few days, when 5 per cent. of Bowker's Animal Meal or ground beef scrap may be used to advantage when the birds are young, increasing it to 10 per cent. the last few weeks before marketing.

One thing is necessary, to mix some 2 or 3 per cent. of sharp sand or finely-ground oyster shells with their food, or they will suffer from leg weakness, from inability to assimilate their food. Feed all the birds will eat once per day of green rye, corn fodder, or refuse cabbage, according to season.—James Rankin, in *Farm Forum*.

Feeding Vermin in Orchards.

As a result of practical experience, fall pruning of trees, allowing their branches to lie on the ground through winter, is advised as a preventive of injury by mice and rabbits. It is best, however, to pile the pruned limbs as far as possible from the tree. In that case it will gather snow and make a refuge for mice that they will not desert.

Nests for Sitting Hens.

With a little care hens may be trained to sit in nests on the ground rather than elevated above it, as is generally the case. The method rising from the soil prevent the eggs getting too dry, as they will in nests where contact with soil is not possible. Many people who do not appreciate the importance of this point have no luck with hens that they set, and only get full hatches of chickens when hens steal their nests, and often hatch every egg they sit on.

Good Garden Tools.

So much of the work of the garden is done by hand that a farmer is inescapably one who does not provide himself with the best tools that are made. Some farmers do not appear to realize that as much improvement has been made in tools for garden work as for cultivating and harvesting farm crops. When he sees the weeder and cultivators operated by horse power he will find that what is needed to be done laboriously by hand has been greatly reduced, and is not at all burdensome.

Manuring Bean Ground.

It used to be the popular idea that beans did best on poor ground. They do not succeed in black, mucky soil, not because it is too rich, but because such soil adheres to the vines and pods, rusts and injuring them. But the chemical analysis of beans shows that they require nitrogenous and mineral fertilizers more than most soils furnish. Manure for beans should be well composted and in available form. For early beans, to be used or sold as string beans, a dressing of nitrate of soda will pay. It gives a more vigorous early start than any other manure, as it furnishes nitrates in available form when it is hard to supply them.

Nature Improved by Art.

It is noted as an interesting fact that the wild fruits that formerly grew in out-of-the-way places, owing nothing to cultivation, are in these later days found of larger size and better quality than ever before. Seeds of the strawberry and raspberry from cultivated grounds are carried into the woods and dropped beside stumps and fence corners by birds, and such seeds produce better wild fruit than was ever before known of that species. It is probable that some of the wildlings that have lately been discovered, especially of the raspberry, are from seeds of fruits that have been given as good cultivation as plants could possibly receive.

TEMPERANCE.

—Mrs. Hitchcock, president of the W. C. T. U. of Nebraska, says that they have already 8,000 children who have placed their names on pledge cards proposed by Anna Gordon, world's superintendent of juvenile work, to form the Temperance Chain that will decorate the white ribbon department of the Columbian Exposition. As is known to all active workers there will be a children's exhibit, for which Miss Gordon has provided and in which children of all nations are manifesting a most encouraging interest.

—The World's Temperance Congress, to meet in Chicago during the World's Fair, will hold a four days' session, discussing the following phases of the temperance question, one on each day, respectively: "Scientific and Medical," "Educational and Economical," "Legislative and Political," "Religious and Miscellaneous." Specially prepared papers will be discussed, but no resolutions adopted. The following named organizations will also send a world's congress one day each during the Fair: Sons of Temperance, Good Templars, National and World's W. C. T. U., and Non-Partisan W. C. T. U.

—The "drink question" is a large one, and it confronts every nation. In Germany it is discussed under the title of "Die Deutsche Alkoholfrage," and the Englishman who knows no language can make a pretty good guess at what the German words mean. The discussion of the question has brought out some statistics which are altogether startling and depressing. "One quarter of the productive energy of the country is devoted to making some kind of intoxicating drink. That is one fact. Another is that the production of material manufactured into wine and spirits in Germany occupied in 1889-90 just about one-fifth of the cultivated land of the country. As a consequence, 'bread riots' break out occasionally, and the 'food question' is seen to be intimately related to the 'drink question,' and to the stability of the government, and to good order throughout the empire.

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