*** 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.

LETTING THE OLD CAT DIE.

Not long ago I wandered near
A playground in the wood,
And there heard words from a youngster's lips
That I never quite understood.

"Now let the old cat die," he laughed:
I saw him give a push,
Then gravely scamper away as he spied
My face peep over the bush.

But what he pushed or where he went,
I could not well make out,
On account of the thicket of bending boughs
That bordered the place about.

"The little villain has stoned a cat,
Or hung it upon a limb,
And left it to die all alone," I said,
"But I'll play the mischief with him."

I forced my way between the boughs,
The poor old cat to seek,
And what did I find but a swinging child,
With golden hair brushing her cheek.

Her bright hair flashed to and fro,
Her little red dress flashed by,
But the loveliest thing of all, I thought,
Was the gleam of her laughing eye.

Swinging and swaying back and forth,
With the rosy light in her face,
She seemed like a bird and a flower in one,
And the forest her native place.

"Steady! I'll send you up, my child,"
But she stopped me with a cry:
"Go 'way, go 'way! don't touch me, please,
I'm letting the old cat die!"

"You letting him die!" I cried, aghast,
"Why, where's the cat, my dear?"
And lo! the laughter that filled the woods
Was the thing for the birds to hear.

"Why, don't you know," said the little maid,
The flitting, beautiful elf,
"That we call it 'letting the old cat die,'
When the swing stops all of itself?"

Then swinging, and swinging, and looking back,
With the merriest look in her eye,
She bade me "Good day," and I left her alone,
A-letting the old cat die.

THE HOME.

Winter Hospitality.

In this age, when there is too general a strife for luxury, there is apt to be neglected that which adds more to our happiness—which is comfort. It is a relief to find a house where there is no attempt at display, but a constant aim for contentment. Each of us can remember a few homes where there is nothing for style, but everything for coziness. Sometimes young housekeepers begin with high-flown ideas about the entertainment of guests. We often hear such remarks as, "I should like to have her visit me only I can't put on the style she does," or, after having seen an acquaintance in a better home, the plain liver says, "I'll be terribly mortified if she ever comes to see me." These expressions do not betoken the best kind of pride. In the summer two things are necessary to successful entertainment of a guest—cordiality and cleanliness. In the winter one thing more is necessary, and this is—warmth.

Our minister, who is a young man, was lamenting that the Methodist preachers of his generation are so poor in reminiscences while those of fifty years ago had perils in woods and plains long horseback rides with saddle-bags, and adventures of various kinds, which, although grievous at the time, do work up into such delightfully thrilling stories; he was trying to collect what he could in the way of tales of hardships pertaining to his first few years of "circuit-riding." Among other things, he said: "I remember one good sister in the country who had her yard piled up with fire-wood, ushered me into a bedroom where the thermometer was six degrees below zero. She said—as though it was a joke—'Well, brother, D. if we don't freeze you out to-night, I don't know as we ever can.'"

Wasn't that a blood-curdling tale? Indeed it was, and one can almost doubt the Christianity of such a "sister." She certaintly forgot the golden rule.

There are some very foolish ideas about "hardening" the human body, and one of these is the theory that cold bedrooms are healthy in winter. A cold bedroom at home is bad enough, then one can warm at the sitting-room fire, perhaps half undress there, and run and jump into bed before all the comfortable heat is gone, but to put a stranger into a cold room is to treat him with barbarous inhospitality. If the guest-chamber has no stove, by all means heat the bed. No matter how homely the contrivance be sure your guest is warm. He will love you better; he will wish to visit you again; he will not sniffle for weeks afterwards with a bad cold, and say, with what thanks you can imagine, "I got this cold the night I staid at brother R.'s."

Ask your guest if there are enough covers on the bed, and have handy a few extra blankets. Do not make fun of him if he prefers to sleep next to wool, instead of clammy cotton or linen. Do not deny him the simple and inexpensive comfort of hot water to wash in; have it *hot*, not disapointingly lukewarm. Let a cozy steam curl up from the pitcher as it is set on the stand. In short, let your winter guest be served with the necessities of a warm body if you would have him remember you with the kindliness of a warm heart.—*Kate Kauffman, in Farm and Fireside.*

Selected Receipts.

LEMON CREAMS.—Pare two lemons thinly and throw the yellow peel into six tablespoonfulls of water; squeeze the juice of a lemon over a quarter of a pound of sugar. Beat the yolks of five eggs thoroughly; add the peel, water and juice gradually to them, and strain through cheese cloth into a saucepan. Stir always one way until it thickens, but don't let it boil. Serve in custard cups. Wet the cheese cloth before using it to strain the juice through.

ESCOLLOPED OYSTERS.—Butter a deep baking dish and put a layer of cracker crumbs on the bottom. Wet these with cream, put in spoonful by spoonful. Next have a layer of fine large oysters. Season with salt and pepper, and strew with bits of sweet, fresh butter. Pour in a little of the oyster juice. Add another layer of crumbs, moisten with cream, and so until the dish is full, the top layer to be cracker crumbs. Beat up an egg in a cup of cream or rich milk and turn it over all. Set in the oven, invert a plate over it to keep the flavor, and bade until the juice bubbles up on top. Remove the cover, and when the crumbs are golden brown take the dish from the oven and serve as baked.

CHICKEN OMELET.—Where a more delicate breakfast is preferred a chicken omelet is satisfactory; in this case the chicken is cooked the day before. You need for each omelet four eggs, one saltspoonful of light salt, two tablespoonfuls of milk, one tablespoonful of butter. Beat the eggs light with an egg beater and add the salt and milk. Put the spoonful of butter in the spider, and when melted pour in the eggs. Have ready a cup of chopped chicken heated hot in sweet cream. When the omelet has been in two or three minutes pour over it the creamed chicken. Shake the spider a little, then run a knife under to see if it is brown; if so fold over half way and remove to a hot platter for immediate serving.

THE FARM.

The Effect of a Summer Fallow.

In these times of enforced economy summer fallows cannot be afforded. It is too great a waste of a time and labor to leave the land idle and spend several weeks in ploughing and harrowing the land without any direct return. There may be cases in which this may be desirable, as in a new cleared swamp, when the work may be expended with good effect in getting the land free from acids and drying it so that crops may be grown upon it. But it is a great mistake for a farmer to let his land get in such a poor condition as to need a year's idleness to restore a little fertility to it. And this is because there are ways of doing better than this by growing such crops as will improve the soil and preserve the fertility. The sun has no bad effect upon the land, except to dry it, and moisture is necessary for the improvement of land that is summer fallowed. There are crops that may be grown for the improvement of the land that will answer the same purpose, and pay at least some of the expense of the cultivation. But a good farmer should work his land with such care and skill as to avoid any necessity for such waste as a summer fallow, and by the use of fertilizers he will be able to do this.

You Can Do Better.

All cannot obtain wonderful results, but there are few, perhaps none, who cannot do a little better than they are doing. Let me illustrate: Frank M. Price and his brother have been farming on 180 acres for the last five years, near Earnest, Ohio. When they begun the land was run down and a stranger to clover and rotation. Wheat yield had got down to 8 bushels per acre. They began a rotation of clover, corn and wheat, drained the land as fast as they could and did better work in cultivation. Their wheat yield under such management has increased to 23 bushels this year, and 26 one other year, and has never been below 15. Our minister said in his sermon yesterday that Providence works through human agencies; that your chances for getting game are small if you load your gun with baking powder instead of gunpowder. This is my favorite doctrine. You would think a man a fool, wouldn't you, who loaded his gun with baking powder; but how much less foolish is it to ignore rotation and clover and draining and thorough tillage, etc., etc., and let your wheat yield run down to 8 bushels per acre? And then you blame Providence, perhaps, or speak of your luck. By the way, I thought the loss of that acre of wheat this year in my field was a matter of luck, but it wasn't. It was a gun loaded with baking powder again. Right west of it, in a neighbor's fence corner, I have found a large barberry bush. That was doubtless the trouble. I have lost perhaps 100 bushels of wheat during the three last years in fields lying east of this bush. I knew well the reputation the shrub had, but had failed to notice it, although often passing by it. Providence helps those who help themselves. Trust in God and don't worry, but first keep your powder dry and aim well. Be very sure you don't leave any of your part of the work for God to do. He has given you the brains and ability to do almost anything, and if you don't use them to overcome obstacles, why you will have to suffer the consequences, to teach you better, just as you would if you stuck your hand in the fire, and just as surely.—*T. B. Terry, in Practical Farmer.*

General Purpose Cows.

If there is a general purpose breed, one that will do for an all-around cow to suit the average small farmer, it is to be found among the Red Polls of to-day; a breed that can trace back its pedigree for nearly two centuries. They yield a generous amount of milk, rich enough to give good cream, and the steers fatten easily for market when needed, so that very heavy carcasses can be produced. They thrive on a fair amount of ordinary food, and do not grow thin and sickly as some of the finer breeds if denied the right kind of ration. They are so polled that they cannot worry each other, and they do not have to be dehorned. Altogether, with their meek and mild natures, they are admirably fitted for the average farm, and good specimens of the breed can be had for a fair sum. Fancy prices are seldom paid for them, for they are not a fancy breed.

In this country the Red Polls have not been very numerous until recently. Now a great number are scattered throughout our farming districts, and they are rapidly increasing in numbers. A short time ago the Red-Polled bulls were crossed upon Jersey cows, and in most cases the progeny has been hornless, taking this characteristic from the father, but retaining the good milk and cream qualities of the dam. Some very fine herds of cows for dairying purposes have been built up by this crossing. During the two hundred years that this breed has been kept pure, the hornless characteristic has always been noted, until it has become a permanent factor. Consequently, the bulls transmit it to their progeny in nearly every case.

The Red Polls are more generally met with in the Eastern and Middle States than in the Western, but they are gradually extending over the whole country. They answer the purposes of many farmers much better than other breeds, and they are gradually growing into popular favor. The exact quantity of milk produced by these cows has never been closely ascertained, and there are many conflicting opinions about them. On the whole, however, the yield is a good, fair one, far greater than the average of good native cows, and the quality is as good as that of any other pure-bred animals, with the exception of the butter breeds of the Channel Islands. Neither quantity or quality is lacking.

As to the weight, the matter is very clear and emphatic. They fatten up well, and produce excellent carcasses, large and heavy, and with sweet, juicy beef. They thrive on a fair amount of nutritious food, and can pick up a good living on the ordinary grass fields, supplemented with a little feed and grain. In return for this they produce good quantities of food and milk, but increase it by heavy feeding. Too heavy feeding, however, tends to fatten them, and they quickly run into heavy carcasses, fit only for the butcher's shambles.—*E. P. Smith, in American Cultivator.*

Cross-Fertilization.

Professor Galloway, of the Department of Agriculture at Washington, makes some declarations that are surprising to some people, on account of their being at variance with what has so long been taught in regard to the mixing of varieties. Cases have been reported of one kind of apples growing on a limb of a tree of another kind where trees of the two varieties grew near each other, and they were accounted for by supposing that the flowers were fertilized with pollen from the other tree. But this explanation is spoiled by the new discoveries. The professor says:

"In the course of some investigations of pear blight carried on by the Department of Agriculture it was shown that when insects were excluded from the flowers many varieties of both pears and apples failed to set fruit. This discovery led to experiments which seemed to clearly prove that most of our well-known varieties of pears and apples are practically self-sterline; in other words, to obtain a good crop of Bartlett pears, for example, it is necessary for the flowers to receive pollen from some other variety. A Bartlett pear flower fertilized with its own pollen, if it develops into a fruit at all, will be so different from the typical form so as to be scarcely recognised. The evidence at hand seems to clearly indicate that pollen from most of the well-known varieties will fertilize the Bartlett flower and produce typical Bartlett fruits. On the other hand, Bartlett pollen is thoroughly capable of fertilizing other varieties, such as Anjou, Winter Nelis, etc., the result being, in every case, the production of typical fruits of the kinds in question. The whole of the evidence at hand resulting from this work may be briefly summarised as follows: The majority of the cultivated varieties of pears and apples require cross-fertilization in order to bring about successful fruitage. By cross-fertilization is meant the transfer of pollen from a different horticultural variety and not from a different individual of the same variety."

All this would seem to indicate that varieties of fruit were of man's invention, and not provided by nature to be self-supporting. But if this rule extended to natural conditions, nature must have had at least two varieties or the one would have been sterile. There are some cases, however, which support this theory. One is the fact that a seeding pear tree will in some cases live and bloom for years without producing fruit of any kind where there are no other pear trees on the farm. Another is the fact that seedings are seldom like the parent fruit. This latter fact might be due to the fertilization with other pollen having affected the seed, but not the fruit which contained it, as is the case with squashes, melons, etc. When corn is mixed by planting the two varieties too near, the result is seen in the grain of the immediate crop, and as the grain is the seed there is not so much difference in the result of the mixing corn and fruits and vegetables which contain seeds as would at first seem to be the case. But there are some facts and many old theories that will need to be adjusted to this new discovery. For instance, there are isolated trees in pastures and by the roadsides all over the Eastern States that have good crops of apples every year and bear the same kind of apples every time. Now, admitting that these apples would be better or worse if the flowers were fertilized with pollen from some other variety, is it not proper to call them, as they are produced now, the natural fruit of the tree, and those which might result from cross-fertilization, hybrids? Did any one ever hear of a Baldwin apple tree producing anything but Baldwin apples, whether it was alone or in an orchard? We want all the particulars now the subject is open.—*Mirror and Farmer.*

—It is stated that the hotelkeepers of Toronto are forming a protective league. They will pledge themselves to keep the law to the letter and make those not in the business keep it also. They will make war on divekeepers and druggists, many of the latter being little better than whiskey dives. A branch has been formed in Hamilton.

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A Question of Balances.

The French-Canadians are not without a considerable sense of humor, and they highly appreciate the following story, told of a prosperous baker in a town not far from Quebec:

The baker was in the habit of buying his butter in pound rolls from a farmer with whom he did a good deal of business. Noticing that these butter-balls looked rather small, he weighed them, and found that they were all under a pound in weight.

Thereupon he had the farmer brought before the magistrate, and accused of dishonest practices.

"These butter-balls," said the judge to the farmer, "certainly weigh less than a pound. Have you any scales?"

"I have," answered the farmer.

"And have you weights?"

"No—no weights."

"Then how can you weigh your butter-balls?"

"That's very simple," said the farmer. "While I've been selling the baker butter, I've been buying pound loaves of bread from him and I use them for weights on my scales."

The farmer was acquitted; but as butter is worth more by the pound than bread, he found presently that he had to provide himself with iron weights for his scales, in order to prevent the baker from cheating him still.—*Exchange.*

The Aquarium.

Any object which instils in children a love of natural history and teaches them to study the habits of dumb creatures with kindly interest ought to be encouraged. There are few things which will give so much pleasure to an intelligent child and to its elders as a well-stocked aquarium.

It is not necessary to have fancy goldfish and expensive curiosities. The fish and custacea and other water creatures and water weeds from our native brooks will make a very interesting aquarium. Nor is it necessary that an aquarium should be an elaborate affair of plate glass and ormolu. Such aquariums are considered to be in the very worst taste. The simpler the tank is the more effectively the contents will show and the more attractive the aquarium. A slight frame of nickle with glass sides, with a metal pan hidden in the base, is the best model. Such an aquarium can be easily made at home with a wooden frame, or an ordinary metal worker can make the nickle frame. Care must be taken in the metal work used to hold the water. Makers of aquariums use cement for this purpose, which is not injurious to the fish, as lead solder certainly would be. There should be at least three inches of white gravel on the bottom of the aquarium. This may be composed of the bright stones from a clear brook, or it may be obtained from roof-makers, who use the gravel for the manufacture of certain kinds of cheap roofs.

After putting in the gravel, scatter over any small shells you may possess. Add larger shells and quaintly shaped rocks, arranging them so as to form at least one grotto-like nook into which the fish may go if the light is too strong. There should be water plants put in at once, as these serve not only to keep the water pure, by absorbing the impurities of the fish life, but are an ornament to the aquarium. There should also be crustacea in the form of crawfish and water clams, and any other shelfish that can be obtained, as these creatures act as scavengers. After the aquarium is once filled with water, if the temperature of the room is not too high, if the air is kept fresh and the balance of the vegetable and fish life is correct, the water will remain fresh and pure an almost indefinite period of time. This is the theory and practice of the modern dealers in aquarium goods, and they certainly manage to maintain their aquariums for months without any change of water with all their inhabitants in perfect health. Whether this is possible in a furnace-heated house is doubtful, because the atmosphere would be likely to raise the water to too high a temperature to keep the plants and fish in health. In a house heated by hot water, where plant life of all kinds thrives, there is no reason why an acquarium should not be successful.

A north window is better than a southern exposure for an aquarium, as too much sun or light is injurious to the fish. It is a mistake to put bread, meat or any food in the aquarium, except the regular fish food. Bread or meat soon becomes foul, and not only renders the water impure, but acts as poison to the fish.

Among fish which are stiractive in the aquarium are tiny catfish and small shiners and other fish from our native brooks. Little sticklebacks, which may be bought for a small sum, are very interesting occupants. A pair of these fish, which may be obtained from dealers in aquarium goods, will build a nest in a corner of the aquarium and defend it most pugnaciously. A pair of ordinary goldfish may be bought for a small sum and are always dignified and stately inhabitants of the aquarium. A small water lizard and a tiny mud turtle may be added to the happy family. Dissensions may arise even in an aquarium. A crawfish is sometimes an objectionable occupant, owing to his habit of devouring his companions. It is rather distressing to find the water lizards minus legs and tail on account of his verocity. A mud turtle and lizard will live together in perfect peace. There should be a rock projecting out of the water for the lizard and turtle to crawl upon and take the air. A few pollywogs will prove to be very lively additions to the company, and are especially interesting while going through their period of metamorphosis into frogs.—*N. Y. Tribune.*

As Others See Us.

One of the Chicago papers tells us what a Javanese dancer in the Midway Plaisance thinks of America and Americans. She is well educated and writes Arabic fluently. Her name is Ejot, and she is one of the best dancers in the court of the Sultan at Solo, and considered an artist of rare merit in her own country. This is, in part, what she wrote:

"America is large and strange and cold. The climate seems to me to affect the people and make them rough and noisy. I never heard so much noise in my life. In my home we do not make great noise. Our emotions are displayed, but they are quiet and melodious; here joy and displeasure appear to call forth harsh sounds. They all seem to be in great haste, and they chew something all the time.

"The ladies are the most beautiful things in America, but they are very strange to me. They always want to shake hands. Then they kiss each other. I do not like that. In my country we kiss only our mother and sisters. Their dress is beautiful. Their form is strange. I think they must wear something around the waist to hold them rigid. They are all much larger than we are, yet their waists are smaller.

"The other day one of my lady visitors asked to come into my house to arrange her dress. She was as beautiful as the Java twilight. Her dress was the same, but very strange. She wore jewels beneath her garments, where no one could ever see them. If the American woman wears jewels on her knees, why does she not wear her dress short so people can see them? This one had much lace on her clothes. We never wear any but a single piece on the waist. She had great quantities. She had on so many skirts that I do not know how she walked. She never could run I am sure. It is a wonder to me how they keep their hats on. I am sure that the thin cloth they wear over their faces would choke me.

"I like the children best. They look so clean, and always have their faces washed.

"I will some day get an American lady's dress, and put it on just to see how I look. No one will ever see me with it on. I should be ashamed. Another lady asked me to sell her my dress. She wanted to wear it, she said. It made me angry. No one should ask for my dress.

"I do not like the men in America. They are not polite. Since I have been here many men who have been with ladies have pointed their canes and fingers at me and said something. That is very impolite. We bow, but we never point. The men do not take their hats off when they talk to us in our houses. It is not what they do in Java.

"I will be glad to return to Solo. I will tell my sisters of the strange things, but they will not believe me. But we are in a strange country. At home we are happy and live our lives slowly. Here people live lives in one day.

"A very strange thing is the questions asked. Everybody asks if I am married; if I am single; how old I am; if I paint my hair black; if my feet hurt me; and when I answer people laugh. That is very bad taste. Some day they will learn better, for they tell me that this is a young country."

Humble Beginnings.

Michael Faraday, the greatest philosopher of his time, started from a blacksmith's anvil. Shakespeare held horses at the door of a London theatre before he held the attention of all ages. The path of life opened for Robert Burns in a ploughboy's furrow. George Peabody endowed a library in the village where once he had sawed wood. The shoemaker's last would have been the most appropriate coat of arms for William Carey, the missionary. Herschel played in a brass band before God called him to listen to the music of the spheres and the orchestra of the morning stars. A barber shop was the starting place for Copernicus, the astronomer, and Jeremy Taylor the ecclesiast. A mason's trowel was the weapon with which Hugh Miller, the geologist, began to fight the battle of life. With a weaver's shuttle Columbus, the discover, and Dr. Livingstone, the explorer, began to weave their fortunes and their usefulness.—*Talmage.*

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"I was entirely cured of a scrofulous ulcer on my ankle by the use of B.B.B. and Burdock Healing Ointment." Mrs. Wm. V. Boyd, Brantford, Ont.

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