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### RURAL NOTES.

WITH the use of improved machinery on the farm comes the necessity for more ability and skill in the hired help, and this means that higher wages must be paid for such help.

WITH the great depth of snow in the country this year, there is danger that fruit trees will be girdled by mice. A simple preventative is to tread the snow firmly about the trees.

DEEP underdrains deepen the soil. A drain three and a half feet deep is better than one two and a half feet, and the fact that at the greater depth the drains are effective at wider intervals settles the question of cost.

Sows farrowing in the winter are apt to become feverish and destroy their young. The cause of this tendency is said to be the lack of green food, and it is recommended that roots or bran should be fed to supply its place.

THIS is the season of lambs and calves, and great care requires to be taken both of the young one and the mother animal. Warm and cleanly quarters and plenty of nourishing food will bring the farmer a handsome reward.

IN experiments made at the New York Experimental Station last year it was discovered that corn ensilage had a marked effect in rendering churning easier, but it rather diminished than increased the quantity of butter in the milk.

IN Dundee, Scotland, seventeen persons were recently attacked with scarlet fever, four of whom died. The source of the infection was the milk brought from a dairy where the son of the owner lay sick of this disease. The incident should teach dairymen in the same line of the trade a very valuable lesson.

THE best fertilizers for strawberries are said to be phosphate of lime, potassa, and lime. Barnyard manure tends to produce a large growth of foliage and succulence of fruit, but a free top-dressing of hydrate of lime has the effect of making the fruit dry, firm and sweet and consequently of making it more marketable.

A NEW variety of celery, known in the Paris markets as *celeri blanc*, will it is thought,

revolutionize the culture of this vegetable. Its leaf stalks come naturally white and tender, without the necessity of earthing up or blanching. We should like to see this variety introduced and cultivated by our Ontario gardeners.

THE preservation of straw for feeding purposes is very important. It is best secured at or immediately after threshing time. The chaff, especially of wheat straw, is most valuable, and should, so far as possible, be distributed through the stack. That which is left in rear of the straw carrier should be put under shelter, as it rots easily.

THESE are days of fancy prices. Not very long ago we noted the sale of a cow on the other side of the lakes for \$20,000; and on our own side a celebrated Jersey was advanced in price by her owner from \$10,000 to \$20,000. These are big figures for a cow, but what are they compared with \$3,750 for a single rose plant!

MR. WRIGHT, of Essex Centre, is not deterred by the failure of his sorghum crop last year. He has thoroughly drained his farm, and has about ninety acres fall-ploughed and ready for planting as soon as the spring opens. But it may be many long years before we again have such an early visitation of frost as last fall. A frost so early and destructive has not been known in Essex for forty years.

MINNESOTA millers are seeking a market for their products in Canada. Just what measure of success they are meeting with is not known to us, but if the last proposition made by the Ontario Millers' Association to the Government is agreed to, margins, after payment of duty, will be small. The proposition contemplates a reduction of duty upon wheat to 10 cents per bushel, and an increase of duty upon flour to 25 cents per barrel.—*Milling World*.

THE number of eggs imported into the United States has increased from 110,000,000 in 1881 to 150,000,000 in the past year. Our neighbours do not seem to understand why this should be; but one reason, doubtless, is that a very large number are produced in Ontario, and another is that the United States markets are free and unrestricted as regards this commodity. The exports from this Province have increased from about 25,000,000 eggs in 1871

to more than 90,000,000, and the bulk of them goes to the United States markets.

EXPERIMENTS made with ensilage in England show that in fattening cattle it can supply the place of hay and turnips, and leave a considerable something to spare besides. Taking two lots of five animals each and feeding to each lot the same quantity of meal and cake, it was found at the end of two weeks that the lot fed on seventy-five pounds of ensilage daily to each beast showed a balance of forty-nine pounds over the lot fed on twenty-four and a half pounds best quality hay, and ninety-five pounds of turnips to each beast.

LIFE on the farm is generally supposed to be healthier than in the towns and cities; but if this is the fact how comes it that we see so many sallow complexions, sunken eyes and delicate forms on the farm, especially among the women folks? There is a great deal of undrained land in the country; there is also a more or less constant working of the soil in the growing season, and there are far too many cellars defective as regards drainage and ventilation. These are fruitful sources of malaria, and country people are hardly ever on their guard against them.

THE value of thoroughbred stock is very much underestimated by many persons. Long years (in some cases a century or more) of careful breeding has fixed certain characteristics in particular breeds to such a degree that the immediate offspring of pure blood males crossed with common females shows a marked improvement in every way. Thus the Essex, a breed of hogs easily kept, of medium size and remarkable docility, crossed with the common hog produces pigs of quick growth, taking on fat rapidly when desired, and, like the sire, with not a single white hair. The improvement in butter production by the cross of the Jersey bull and the common cow is not as well known, though it is as well marked as the improvement in flesh production resulting from the cross of a Shorthorn bull with the common cow. But in every case the best results can only be obtained from the *thoroughbred male*. While the half-breed female is valuable for the farther improvement of the stock by the same process, the half-breed male seems to lack the prepotency of his sire, and the young of the latter instead of showing an advance, will generally show the contrary.