*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.

THE HOME.

GET READY.

I once heard of a woman who was so thrifty that she began house-cleaning early in April, and when other housekeepers were just beginning she was done. This so stimulated her ambition to get ahead of her neighbors, that the next year she began in March, and when the rest were cleaning house she was nursing her own family through pneumonia, contracted from exposure and cold from having no fires in the damp days of spring. Thus, in getting ahead too much, we sometimes get set back.

This is true of gardening as of house-cleaning. The man who, in our northern latitude, plants his beans in April, often is planting them over when those of his neighbors are contentedly swelling in the ground and getting ready to grow. And yet, even the first of February is none too early to be thinking of the tender flowers of our garden.

If proper work was done in the autumn, we have our hotbed and cold-frame ready, so that at any time we may begin to use them. If not, we may even yet make some headway with the flowers. The catalogues are beginning to come in, and the first orders always receive promptest attention. By clubbing, we can often get many of our own seeds at a discount. For a small garden just for home, one does not need a whole paper of many kinds of seeds, but several ladies can make their order together, and divide what they get. Especially is this true of the more costly seeds, as primroses, fancy geraniums, maples, chrysanthemums and the novelties; sweet peas, pansies, nasturtiums, pinks, and many others, to be used for whole beds for cut flowers, may be bought in the mixed seeds, and by the ounce. If we desire some particular variety, we can buy the mixed seeds for the general bed, and a paper or two of the chosen kind for the special purpose.

By the time the seeds get to us, now, it will be time to plant in boxes in a sunny window these varieties, as primroses and geraniums, that need more growth before bedding out. If one wants an early bed of pansies, the sooner there are started the better. Keep them in a warm room until they are well up and getting the second leaf, and then they may be removed to a cool chamber and given a window with eastern exposure. Pansies will even stand a slight frost without killing them.

Now, too, is the time to order plants and roses for the bedding out. The order being in they will be sent at the suitable season. Hardy shrubs and deciduous plants can be ordered now, and often we find those that can be had of a reliable house, twelve different kinds for a dollar (there are often offered more than twelve), and we get varieties that otherwise we would pay a dollar apiece for if bought separately of a local nursery-man or florist.

Now is the time, also, when the carpenter can give you work at a less price than later on, and the window boxes can be made ready to adjust at a moment's notice. Every home should be surrounded by all the flowers we can care for, and shade and greenness, and bloom be made to sweeten and brighten our lives, add to health, and thus lengthen our days.

If America's women and girls gave more time to gardening and floriculture, and less to pie and cake baking, there would be fewer complaining of broken health.—Housekeeper.

PLANNING FOR SPRING.

Of course, we all intend to have some flowers next summer. A flower garden made without thought or plan is usually a very poor thing indeed. There is no better time to plan than the long winter evenings, when the day's work is done, the family draw their chairs around the cheerful fire, and together examine the floral catalogues that our enterprising florist scatter every where. From grandmother with her old-time favorites, to the wee toddler, who has fallen in love with some flaming beauty of the colored frontispiece, everyone has some special pet that he or she really must have! Sometimes the pocket-book is in a state of semi-collapse, but if there is but a dollar to be spared, it is enjoyed the more, if each adult and child have shared the spending of it.

Just as the merchant takes account of "stock" once a year, so ought the prospective flower-grower to take stock of her resources before commencing her gardening. It takes time, strength, and money for flower-growing on an extensive scale, but a very creditable display can be obtained under unfavorable circumstances, by a little ingenious headwork. If time and strength are lacking, make up your mind to have but few beds, but to make the soil in them deep and rich. That furnishes food at all times for the roots of plants imbedded in them, and a good many plants and bulbs, gladiolus, tigridias, geraniums, verbenas, petunias, dahlias, hardy perennials, etc., will grow and blossom well, with no care beyond the planting. They must be of good size, however, for no one need expect to grow flowering plants from the seed, without giving them considerable attention while still small and weak.

On the other hand, if money is scarce, but time is less an object, a fine array of flowers can be grown at the cost of a few cents for seed. Nasturtiums, phlox drummondii, petunias, dianthus, and many others of our most brilliant and pleasing flowers are annuals, asking only planting, a little special care while small, and enough attention afterward to keep the weeds down and the soil mellow. Very often the children are only too glad to take the major care of the flower garden themselves, for the privilege of picking all the flowers they want.—Housekeeper.

A NOVEL LAMPSHADE.

A friend evolved a very handsome and unique shade for a library or reading lamp out of odds and ends, and gave me the benefit of her experience which I pass on to the readers of *The Housekeeper*.

I had seen it suggested that remnants of embroidery silks might be utilized for fancy work if crocheted on rings, and this I had done until I had a good many finished of different sizes, colors and kinds, a funny assortment, from mediaeval embroidery to Asiatic filo.

My eyes are sensitive to strong light, and I needed a lampshade; not one of those filmy trifles which serve for ornament, but something which might shield the eyes and throw the light on to the book. I thought of my multi-colored rings. I crocheted with black Victoria knitting-silk enough additional rings to give uniformity and character to the pattern which was first, around the top, a row of close rosette-shaped figures, composed of one in the centre, and six placed about it. Below this was a row of leaf shapes, something like a plantain leaf. These were set close together, stem ends up, and the shape admitted the use of rings of different sizes. I fashioned the work to fit the shades as I proceeded. When the shade was nearly large enough I finished it with a scant ruffle of cream-colored lace: the pattern on the lace I outlined with black Roman floss. I find my shade of sufficient body to use over a skeleton or wire frame, thus giving me the porcelain shade from my reading lamp to support a lace cover for a parlor lamp.

I think a very beautiful shade might be made by using silk of one color, say lemon colored knitting or crochet silk, with tassels for a finish, and this placed above a deep fall of white or butter-colored lace.

A tidy for an upholstered chair might be made of these rings in colors to match the upholstery of the chair, and would be very durable as, if the rings are covered with silks in Asiatic dyes, the tidy could be cleansed with soap and water and remain as lustrous and handsome as ever. Use brass rings to avoid rust.—Charlotte Whitcomb.

WASTE OF FOOD.

We waste food in two ways. We throw away a great deal, and many of us eat more than we want. That which is thrown away is the form of kitchen and table refuse does no harm, and in so far as it is used for feeding animals, or, in the case of fat, for making soap, it is not an absolute loss. That which we consume in excess of our needs is worse than wasted, because of the harm it does to the health.

In connection with studies of dietaries by the author and associates in New England, some observations have been made which bear upon this prevalent habit of throwing away valuable food. Thus, in the dietary of a carpenter 7.6 per cent. of the total food purchased was left in the kitchen and table wastes. The total waste was somewhat worse than this proportion would imply, because it consisted mostly of the protein and fats, which are more costly than the carbohydrates. The waste contained about one-tenth of the total protein and fat, and only one-twenty-fifth of the total carbohydrates of the food; or, to put it in another way, the food purchased contained nearly 10 per cent. more protein, 12 per cent. more fat and 5 per cent. more carbohydrates than were eaten; and, worst of all, the wasted protein and fats were mostly from the meats, which supplied them in the costliest form.

From the statistics of the amounts and composition of the table and kitchen wastes of a boarding-house at Middletown, Conn., it appears that these contained one ninth of the whole nutritive material of the food purchased. They included one-fifth of the protein and fats and one-twentieth of the carbohydrates. Here again the rejected portions were mostly from the meats. Except in so far as parts of the waste were fed to chickens or possibly used for soap, it was simply thrown away. The boarding-house was a very good one, the mistress was counted an excellent housekeeper and the boarders were mechanics and other thrifty and industrious people with only moderate incomes.

The common saying that "the average American family wastes as much food as a French family would live upon," is a great exaggeration, but statistics show that there is a great deal of truth in it. Even in some of the most economical families the amount of food wasted, if it could be collected for a month or a year, would prove to be very large, and in many cases the amount would be little less than enormous.—Professor W. O. Atwater in Farmer's Bulletin, No. 23.

HOME-MADE CEMENT.

In reply to several inquiries, we reprint the recipe for simple cement for mending firebrick in stoves: To one part of common salt, add one part of powdered soapstone, and mix with water to a stiff paste. If powdered soapstone cannot be obtained, common coal ashes, sifted through a fine sieve, will answer. Fit the broken pieces of brick together and plaster them tightly with this cement while they are still warm. Make a fire in the stove as soon as the bricks are mended, as the heat hardens the cement. Bricks mended in this way with the soapstone powder will last a long time. A cement of ashes and salt will not last so long.

THE FARM.

PIGS IN THE ORCHARD.

I believe I stated in an article written for your paper some two or three years ago that whoever would invent a harrow that would thoroughly tear to pieces sod land, stir it up, pulverize and put it in condition for reseeding, would confer a great favor upon orchardists as well as make himself rich.

Shortly after that I received a communication from a man in Massachusetts saying he had noticed my article and that he was happy to say that he was then at work upon such a harrow, and when perfected or completed he would advise me. I have not since heard from him or his harrow.

For a long time it puzzled me what to do with my land. The orchard contains between eight and nine acres, and a portion of it had never been ploughed. Top dressing every two or three years was the practice, but it was expensive, as it always is when you undertake to raise fruit and hay from the same land. Morever, much of the land had become hide-bound from repeated top dressings, and failed to respond satisfactorily in both fruit and hay.

Something had got to be done, but what? Many of the trees were low headed, and branched out so far as to make it utterly impossible to use the plough, for whether oxen or horses were used great damage would ensue to the limbs. Finally I concluded to try pigs, although I must confess it went a good deal against the grain to do so, for to me there is no prettier sight than a fine-growing orchard or a heavily-loaded one in grass.

Before and since putting pigs into this orchard I have used all my sheep dressing from a flock of 50 sheep made during the winter, spreading it under the trees as far as the limbs extended. Last season I tried them in a small way. This year I had in at one time 25 hogs and pigs, and it was wonderful as well as surprising the amount of work accomplished. The most of the sod was old and tough, but the pigs noses were tougher, and they rooted up and pulverized more than half of the ground, stirred the sheep dressing into the soil under the trees, and ate up all the small and wormy fruit.

At the time I took them out—about Sept. 25—you couldn't find an apple under any of the trees in all that large orchard. However, such fruit as I gathered from the trees has never been taken from them before, not in my remembrance. My Roxbury Russets were double the size they have been formerly, and all the other fruit was much larger, freer from worms and better colored.

Now I shall continue the same method of improvement this year, but that portion of the orchard where the pigs have been the longest and done the most work will be divided off, and the pigs kept out. This portion will be harrowed and seeded heavily with clover, making good pasture for more pigs. I think the problem is solved for this orchard. In another orchard I am pursuing a different method.—Correspondence Am. Cultivator.

KINDNESS TO COWS.

Some time ago, suspecting that the hired man was not treating our cows as he should, I undertook to do the milking myself, says a farmer writing to the National Stockman.

I found that one cow, a thoroughbred Jersey, began to lift one foot from the ground as soon as I began milking. I paid no attention to her save to occasionally stop and pet her, but she kept on and finally upset the pail. Then she jumped as if to ward off a blow, but instead of the blow that she evidently expected she got only kind words and more petting. She turned her head and after giving me a good look she began to lick my coat and kept it up until I had finished milking; and after a week or so I could go in her box stall and set the pail under her and milk her without any trouble. And to repay me for her kindness to her, when I went after the cows in the evening I had only to open the gate and call her while the hired man had to walk after her and drive her to the stable.

Now I do not believe there is one case in ten thousand where striking a cow does any good. Cows are not by nature vicious, and even when they are made so by man the way to conquer them is not to show them more viciousness.

Look at the matter in a common sense light. A young heifer is brought to the stable with her first calf. She naturally thinks it is a great event and is very much excited over it. When a man comes in with a rope and a pail and after tying her head so short that she can hardly see her calf, he begins to pull on her teats. They are of course more or less sore and she resents it, the only way she has of showing her resentment is by kicking, which she naturally does. And then the owner begins to inquire for devices for kicking cows, never thinking that he has, or ought to have if he runs a dairy, the remedy within himself—kindness.

WATERING HORSES.

A writer in the American Horse Breeder takes exception to an article that has been very extensively circulated in the agricultural press, advising watering horses before feeding. He gives what he considers a better method:

"I have made the horse a study through life, his thoughts through sickness and health, have owned and fed not a few, and can safely say there is not one horse in fifty that will drink in the morning before feeding any time of the year, and not one in a hundred will do it in cold weather. I have tried it and know what I say to be true, our benevolent friend to the contrary. There is any amount of horse advice nowadays, nine-tenths of which is given through hearsay. As I said before, I have selected the horse for my study, have cared for him, have treated him through life, and found the most successful modus operandi is to always have plenty of water before him. By having plenty of water where horses can at all times get it, I find comparatively few troubled with that dreadful disease "colic," which in many, many cases, is produced by imprudence, especially in watering. It may be said: Horses after taking a swallow or two of water will then spill the remainder. There is no need of that. It is very easy to place a bucket in the corner of the stall and secure it by nailing a latch across it to keep it in the stable, and your horses will always be ready for use. When horses are treated in this manner they drink less and always keep in better shape."

BACTERIA OF THE BARN.

In these days when some phase of bacteriology enters into almost every action of man, it is time for the farmer to consider its relation to his work. For his first field of study he might well turn to his cow barn, where he will not only find the greatest abundance of material, but where a few thoughtful precautions will be well repaid. Under the nearly perfect conditions of the new experimental barn at the Iowa Experiment Station it has been found that in five minutes time an average of 4,454 germs will fall upon a surface equal to that of the milk in an ordinary sized milk-pail, if it were set a few feet behind the cows. Directly under the cows the number would be much increased, owing to dislodgment during milking. Observations in the open air outside the barn revealed only about one-fourth as many.

Among these barn germs are included the beneficial lactic acid producing species, so necessary to ripening of cream, as well as the deleterious producers of some of the most nauseating taints and putrefactions. Infection from these latter is in proportion to the cleanliness of the barn, the cows, the milker, the milker's clothes, ventilation, etc. Neither feeding with coarse fodders nor cleaning the stable should be done during milking or nearer than an hour or so before milking time, for myriads of germs may thus be set in motion, and the milk-pail being unusually near the flour will get its share. Horses should never be kept in the same section of the barn with cows, for horse manure is a very favorable medium for the growth of putrefactive species. The presence of horses only multiplies the disagreeable odors so readily absorbed by the milk during its short stay in the barn.

As it comes from the udder of a healthy cow milk contains no germs and if properly handled may produce the finest of butter; but if subjected to filthy infections of any kind, strong butter is the certain result. In part, this explains the difference between 10 cent and 25 cent butter.—C. D. Reid in Rural Life.

THE RELATIVE VALUE OF MUCK.

In most parts of the country farmers have close to their fields deposits of muck and various forms of decayed vegetable material. The question of utilizing this black soil in any way depends largely upon the character of the land. On very sandy soil muck is one of the best fertilizers that can be spread over it, for it not only adds vegetable humus to the land, but it gives more consistency to the soil, so that other fertilizers will not leach through and be wasted. In the northern part of the country many farmers claim that muck is not valuable enough to pay for labor required in hauling it.

The value of muck, however, depends entirely upon the amount of nitrogen contained in it. This is about the only real plant food that the muck furnishes, and it is a very valuable food, but often it is not in sufficient quantity to do much good. When the muck contains only about 1 per cent. of nitrogen it certainly does not pay to haul it to the fields, unless the chief object is to make the sandy soil more consistent. On heavy clay or loamy soils very little good will be obtained. But sometimes muck contains as high as 3 per cent. of nitrogen. In this case, however, the muck has been air-dried and the moisture evaporated. In this condition the muck will prove of value to nearly all soils lacking in nitrogen, whether they be sandy or loamy.

It requires a scientist to ascertain except by practical experiment the relative amount of nitrogen in a given muck bed, and it will be well to go to this trouble before carting any great quantity to the field. The treatment of muck will increase its value. Usually the little nitrogen found in it is in an insoluble form, but by exposing it to the air chemical changes take place which make the nitrogen available as plant food. If raw, wet muck is applied very little good will be obtained the first year. Consequently, it is better to air-dry the muck first. Sometimes when applied in the wet form a great deal of nitrogen is lost before it is ready for the plants to take up, and again the damp muck may sour the soil so as to partly neutralize the effects of other fertilizers applied later. Altogether it is unwise to apply wet muck to the field.

Muck supplies organic material to the soil which most of our lands are sadly in need of. We cannot apply too much vegetable material to the soil, and muck has always been of great service in this respect. After air-drying it mix it with stable manure. It will absorb the liquid matter rapidly. It absorbs and holds amonia better than almost any other material, and for this function alone it should be used when it can be obtained cheaply.—A. B. Barrett, in American Cultivator.

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THE COST OF BUTTER.

The cost of a pound of butter is the most interesting of diary problems. Experiments at the Wisconsin Station with good cows giving an average of 300 pounds per year indicate 10½ cents per pound for the butter. During the winter months the average cost per pound was 13.9 cents. Some cows of a beefy build made the butter cost as high as 18 cents in winter; others produced it at below 11 cents, showing that the individual cow has much to do with the problem; but the average was as stated. The cost of a cow's keep per year was placed at an average of $35; but in Wisconsin hay is worth only $5.60 per ton; cornmeal, $14; bran, $11. However, the proportions of yield with the different types of cattle will hold good in the East. The productive capacity of a cow depends more upon type and conformation than upon size or breed. Those of the beef type produced butter fat at a cost of 17½ cents per pound; those carrying a medium amount of flesh produced butter fat at a cost of 15 1-10 cents per pound; the spare cows lacking in depth of body produced butter fat at a cost of 14 6-10 cents per pound, and the spare cows having deep bodies produced butter fat at a cost of 12 1-10 cents per pound, during the winter. (Massachusetts Ploughman.

PLUMAGE AND BREEDS.

If one can secure a good breed it is not a mistake to give some attention to the plumage of fowl, says the *Mirror and Farmer* provided the matter of color of the plumage is not given the preference over utility. On black soils a white bird shows the effects of such on its plumage, and does not appear as bright and clean as it would if located on a light sandy soil. Now, as one who takes an interest in the pure breeds delights in having pretty birds, they being no more difficult to keep than nondescripts, a preference is given those breeds which show to the best advantage. On light-colored soils the black breeds are more ornamental than the white, while the buff color breeds will in such cases show less soiling of the plumage. On a neat lawn, in the spring season of the year, a flock of light Brahmas will add a pleasing effect, and their black tails and partly black hackles render them even more attractive by the contrast. The Partridge Cochin hens and the Brown Leghorn hens, when together, make a pretty contrast in sizes of birds, but in color they are very similar, especially to a novice, and they seldom show the effects of dirt on the plumage.

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Dated this twenty-eighth day of December, A. D. 1894.

Sgd. J. F. MERRITT,
Sgd. G. WETMORE MERRITT,
Sgd. WM. W. TURNBULL.

PROVINCE OF NEW BRUNSWICK,
CITY AND COUNTY OF SAINT JOHN S.S.

Be it remembered that on this the twenty-eighth day of December, A. D. 1894, at the City of Saint John and Province of New Brunswick, before me Silas Alward, a Notary Public in and for the said Province, duly admitted and sworn, residing and practising in the said City of Saint John, personally came and appeared Joseph F. Merritt, G. Wetmore Merritt and Wm. W. Turnbull, the parties to the above certificate, who severally acknowledge that they signed the said certificate as and for their act and deed, and as required by the law relating to "Limited Partnerships".

In testimony whereof I, the said Notary, have hereunto subscribed my name and affixed my official seal the day and year in this certificate above written.

Sgd. SILAS ALWARD,
Seal. Notary Public for New Brunswick.
jan 1 3m

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