

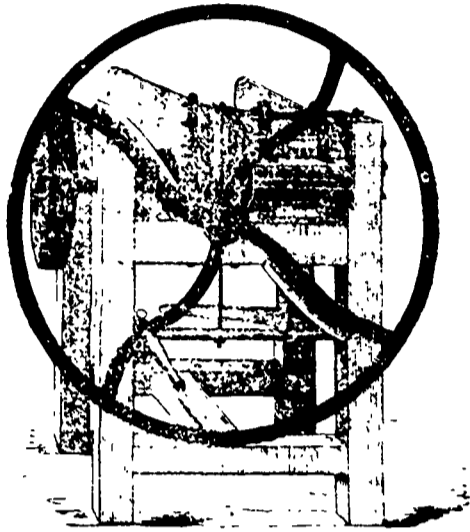


A Family Journal, devoted to Agriculture, Internal Improvements, Literature, Science, and General Intelligence.

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BECKETT & PHILLIPS' STRAW CUTTER.

The above is a cut of a new Straw Cutter, manufactured in this City, by Messrs. Beckett & Phillips, machinists and engineers. Upon the whole, we like its construction better than any we have yet seen. The gearing is simple and durable—two qualities of the greatest importance in any machine intended for general use. It may be worked either by the hand or horse power. We would advise those who intend to purchase to examine these machines; they are *“bona manufacturata.”* The quantity of straw which they will cut per hour we could not learn, but it is clear that they will cut *enough.* Price, £6.

FOOD FOR HORSES, CATTLE, &c.

It is now generally admitted, by all at least who have tried the experiment, that there is no mode of preparing food for Horses and Cattle, so economical, and so advantageous in every respect, as that of cutting the straw, and crushing or *chopping* the grain, and mixing them together. Still, it is no uncommon thing to see our farmers feeding their horses the year round upon nothing but *oats* and hay. These make very good food it is true, and a little trouble is avoided, but how much is lost by this practice, and how much would be saved by the other?

In the first place, there is no white crop that so speedily and so completely impoverishes the soil, and renders it unfit for the production of wheat, as the oat. Upon our argillaceous or clay soils the profitless character, and injurious effects of the oat crop are very apparent. It is, in fact, to rob the soil of every ingredient necessary to the growth of wheat, or other white crops, except alumina and the silicates. The only case in which oats can be raised to advantage (we speak comparatively) is where the soil is a deep vegetable mould. Here, from the deficiency of silicious matter, which the wheat crop requires in order to form a good coating for the straw and to prevent rot and rust, oats may be grown for two or three years with advantage. But aside from the exhaustion of the soil a consideration by the way, of vast importance to Canadian farmers hereafter, let us view the matter in another light. In the ordinary method of feeding oats, one third is probably lost to the animal, being bolted whole, or imperfectly masticated, and voided in the same state. It is clear that very little nutrition is gained in such a case. This evil is increased where the oats are of the potatoe, or other hard-skinned variety, and the horse or other animal has bad teeth. Again, from the short time often allowed horses to eat, their oats are thrown to them at once, while they are in a heated state, and besides, eating with voracity and but half grinding their food, they run great risk of being foundered. We might enumerate other evils. On the other hand, let fewer oats be grown; harvest them one or two weeks sooner than is usually done, and take them to the stack or barn in proper time:

provide a good cutting machine and make a good use of it, and the beneficial results will soon be seen in the improvement of the health and appearance of your stock—in the superior quality of your manure after the straw has passed through the animal mill, over that which is made from straw that is allowed to rot in great heaps in your barn yard, and these results will be felt too in a very sensitive place, viz., your pocket.

So satisfied are we of the great saving effected by the use of cut straw and chopped grain as food for both horses and cattle; and so fully are we convinced of the imperative necessity for the most rigid economy on the part of our farmers, under the new order of things, that we shall use our best exertions to bring about a change from the old wasteful, slovenly practices to improved and cheaper ones. To this end we invite the attention and assistance of practical farmers in every part of the country, who can point out the evil and suggest the remedy. Let them give us their views whatever they may be, and don't let them hesitate because they "can't write." We pride ourselves upon being able to understand anything that comes within three degrees of intelligibility. If their language requires a little fixing, we'll do it for them with the greatest pleasure, and faithfully give their thoughts to the public. Help us to gather up the knowledge that lies scattered in isolated patches over the country, and to spread it *broad-cast* over the whole surface of Canada.

And now, to make a beginning, we offer the following premium: any farmer who will furnish us with the particulars of an experiment (which he has already made, or will now make) that proves in the most satisfactory manner the nature and extent of the advantage of using *cut-pool*, or otherwise, as the result of the experiment may show, shall receive a copy of our paper for three years, or three copies for one year if he prefer it. We will leave the mode of the experiment entirely to the discretion of the party making it, and reserve to ourselves the right of deciding (if more than one person writes us) which experiment is best. We shall pursue a similar plan with regard to other questions, until we succeed in waking up the farmers to discussion. Who will enter the lists? If the prize be small, the contest is easy, and may benefit hundreds.

PRESERVATION OF MEAT BY FREEZING

Every body knows, or ought to know, that meat will keep perfectly sweet so long as it remains frozen. Witness, for example, the mummified which was found some years ago in the north of Siberia, preserved by the eternal frosts of the Arctic circle, from the time it was enclosed in the ice, after the deluge; a whole carcass, covered with skin and flesh; some of which was cooked and eaten by the enterprising discoverer, and found to be palatable. But every body does not know that their meat will be tender or tough, according to the method of thawing it.

When frozen meat is brought into a warm room, and thawed by heat, it you have not good teeth, and the digestive powers of an ostrich, you had best leave that part of the dinner for those who have. Therefore, bring from the larder, the night before it is wanted, the meat or poultry intended for dinner, and plunge it into cold water. The next morning a thick coating of ice will be found encrusting the whole piece. Take it off and change the water, and let it remain until the hour for dressing it. If to be boiled, put it over the fire in cold water; if for a roast, put it not before too brisk a fire, as there is always danger that the heart of a large piece may not be completely thawed, in which case it will be spoiled.

Vegetables should be thawed in the same way, and, with few exceptions, they will be better for having been frozen. Potatoes, however, acquire a disagreeable sweetness.

HOW TO RESTORE FROZEN PLANTS.

If you have ever had the misfortune to find your parlour window favourites frozen stiff when you paid your devours to them in the morning, you will appreciate and thank an unknown friend for the following recipe for preserving tender plants from the effects of frost, and restoring them after they have been frozen. Before you allow them to feel the effects of ice, plunge the whole, or as much of the frozen plant as is practicable, into cold water, and keep it under until it has thawed, which will easily be known by its becoming flaccid; then place it where it will warm gradually, as sudden heat will cause it to die. So treated the most hardy will recover immediately—others will lose their leaves, or even die down to the ground—and some are so tender that the slightest frost will kill them; but generally they will put forth with fresh vigor after a season of rest, and gratefully repay your care. Water sparingly until the leaf-buds are well grown, increasing the quantity when they expand.

SEASON FOR OBTAINING CUTTINGS.

January is perhaps the best time to take cuttings of myrtles and other hard-wooden plants—at least they strike root very readily at that season; and many a beautiful and rare exotic have I raised from the stems of my bouquets, after they have adorned the parlour table for several days, or bloomed for more than one night amid the curls of some fair girl, only less loved than the flowers she wore. Geraniums, and many other soft-stemmed plants, strike root easily at any season. Some, as oleanders, require no earth, and may be raised very readily by plunging the stems, in a bottle of spring or rain water, and hanging the bottle where it will have light and air, but not much hot sun.—[Am. Agriculturist.]

ALPACCA.

There is a project on foot, says the New York News, for importing a considerable number of this valuable animal from Callao or some other port on the Pacific. Some 4 or 5000 have already been subscribed, and a merchant has made a proposition to bring out three hundred of them. From prospects we are led to believe that we shall soon be provided with the Alpacca in sufficient numbers to test their superiority over the common sheep. A few have already been sent for, which will be here in a few months.

FARMING IN WINTER.

What shall a farmer as a farmer, do in the winter? He has much to do in the winter, peculiar to his profession—in his house, in his barn, in the woods and at market. There is no need of his being idle. He has a great deal to do for the promotion of his interests. In the first place, if the rigours of the season drive him within doors, let him think himself a lucky man; for it is to the family that his most important duties are. Has he a wife and children? Let him make the first his companion, his friend and equal, and let him devote his thoughts and labours for the instruction and improvement of his children. See that they are well and tidily clad. See that they go to school and are furnished with suitable books. See that their winter evenings are employed in useful reading and study, with innocent amusement intermixed, rather than visiting the haunts of dissipation and ruin. Let the winter be devoted to the duties of the fireside and the calls of social intercourse.

Having everything in order in the house, both as it respects the physical, moral, and intellectual wants of his family, let his next attention be devoted to the domestic animals of the barn and fold. See that they are well fed. Keep the stalls clean. Blanket the horse; and if you do the same to the cows so much the better. Make sure of as warm a place for them all as possible. Give them straw beds to sleep upon. Comfortable animals will thrive best and give back the best returns.

In the day time when your children are at school, cut and haul home wood enough to keep a year's stock of seasoned fuel before-hand. This is economy. In short, every farmer has enough to do in winter; and that well done is often the most important and profitable labour of the whole year. Keep stirring and do good.—[Maize Cultivator.]

COLD WATER FOR STOCK.

Farmers, you are aware that very cold water in the winter, as well as summer, is injurious to your stock? If not, we can assure you that so is the fact. It often causes disease, especially of the bowels; and under no circumstances will cattle drink so much of it as is absolutely necessary for their thrive.

Water, if possible, should be obtained from a spring, and be drunk as it bubbles out, at a moderate temperature, or be pumped up fresh from a well, or be taken from holes cut through the ice of a deep stream or clear pond. The water of a swift running stream, where more or less of its surface is exposed to the frosty atmosphere, is usually quite too cold for healthy drink. That also taken from standing troughs, or shallow pools, with the ice broken up in it, is equally injurious. It is better to have the water brought from a spring into the yard or stable, and when wanted, turn into a trough easily accessible for the stock. When they have drunk sufficiently, stop the running of the water and draw the troughs dry; then no ice is made to chill the water excessively, to the injury of the animals drinking it.—[Ibid.]

MILK IN THUNDER STORMS.

We have heard great complaints from the dairy women about their milk getting sour during a thunder storm, although perfectly sweet a short time previous. The following plans will in a great degree prevent this:—All the pans containing milk ought to be placed upon a non-conductor of electricity, such as blocks of baked wood, pieces of glass, or wood that has been well painted or varnished. These are articles most easily provided. Beeswax, feathers, and woollen cloth are also non-conductors, but inconvenient to be used. All these articles will insulate the pan, and prevent the fluid from entering, which is the cause of acidity, or is in fact the principle of acidity itself.—[Mich. Far.]