



Agricultural Department.

CARE OF TOOLS.

All tools require to be kept in a dry, and, if practicable, a tolerably warm place. Moisture causes the decay of wood and the rusting of metals. Freezing causes injury to wood by expanding the pores where the moisture is congealed. In most respects the upper, rather than the lower, part of a building is the best place to store tools. In the first place they are completely out of the way, do not require to be moved about, and are less liable to accidents. The barn floor is not the best place in the barn to store implements. They are in the way there. Men and boys are liable to stumble over them, and if cattle and horses break loose in the night a double damage is liable to be done. Dirt of every kind collects on a barn floor, and more or less of it will find its way into the journals of a machine, or will adhere to all kinds of surfaces. The friction occasioned by removing hay and straw that has fallen on painted surface will give them, at least, an unsightly appearance.

In many respects a scaffold at the end of a barn is a better place for tools than is the ground floor. All things considered, a place near the roof makes the best depository. There they occupy no room available for other purposes, and there the temperature will ordinarily be found to be the warmest. Farmers might take a hint from carriage-makers, who so often put their choice materials on supports in the top of their shops, partially for convenience in getting them out of the way, and partly because of the favorable temperature. A painted surface will come out in the spring in the best possible condition if the article is inverted when putting it away. All the dust and grit fall on the side that is less conspicuous and the least exposed to wear when the article is in use. This suggestion will apply to plows, harrows and cultivators, as well as to more costly implements.

All iron and steel surfaces should be clean and free from rust when they are put away, for rust seems to encourage further rusting, as a minute spot will spread to much larger dimensions. Petroleum, hog's lard or any of almost any kind will afford protection against rusting by keeping away the moisture and air. A coating of these substances can be much easier removed in the spring than a coating of rust. Mowing and reaping machines should be taken apart and thoroughly cleaned before putting away.—*Prairie Farmer.*

SEASONABLE SUGGESTIONS.

Very many farmers fall into certain habits, or contract a certain routine method of performing farm work and duties, for the different seasons of the year, and perhaps the winter season is the one when there is the least economy exhibited of all; especially is it shown in their care and attention to their stock. No one supposes that the farmer neglects his stock or would knowingly and willingly have them suffer for any needed want; but still very many who have the care of stock in winter cause them to suffer much from the very want of forethought, or the force of habit. Take the matter of watering stock—how many there are who instead of supplying them with water at the barn, or sheltered yard, let them go to the brook or near stream; few of them ever give it a thought that each animal suffers in more ways than one every time it goes to the water; cruelty or bad economy would be the last thing they would desire to be accused of. But is it not cruel to send the poor dumb creature out in the cold, cutting wind, or driving storm, to obtain a supply of ice-cold water to satisfy the demands of nature; and perhaps drinking enough to set them shivering, and making them uncomfortable for several hours; and is it not false economy to allow all the necessary waste occasioned by their daily, or more frequent visits to the brook or pond? There is a waste of manure—waste in feed. "Waste in feed!" say you; certainly! only think how much warmth of body and the whole system is lost by these visits, and that this warmth must be made up from extra feed, or the fat of the system is reduced. Good economy would dictate that the stock should be kept, when not in their stables, in the sheltered barnyard, where a supply of good clean water could be had for constant access by all the stock; they then drink only as they need, and never to excess so as to suffer therefrom; are sheltered from driving winds and storms, and, what is an important item with all good farmers, the manure is saved where it can be readily loaded and carted to any desired place. Running water, wells or cisterns, are the most available sources for a water supply in ordinary times. Feeding stock is another item to be looked

after, that no uneasiness of stock or waste of material occur. Few are the farms where there is no coarse or unpalatable fodder which must be disposed of; and how to dispose of it to the best advantage to the stock, is a problem which some would like solved. That this coarse, unpalatable food, will cause stock to lay on flesh or even thrive, if fed alone, is not to be expected; but how to come the nearest thereto is still the question. Experience and the appetites of the stock must be the best answer. I have seen men who fed a considerable quantity of this poorer quality of fodder, and still their stock seemed to thrive as well as another's which had only the best quality of hay and feed, and the first stock wasted less in quantity than the second. This was produced by the way in which it was fed, but there are few possessing this faculty. For the generality, there is an economical method, which, if adopted, would add much to the value and lengthen out the better quality of feed. Coarse hay, cornstalks, and even good clean straw, may be made quite palatable to stock if it be cut fine, moistened with boiling hot water, and packed in a tight box or large cask, which may be closed tight after mixing a light sprinkling of bran, meal or shorts through the whole, and letting it stand a few hours before feeding. A bushel of this fed to a cow or an ox will be eaten with a relish, and will equal a larger feed of the best hay. Try it, you who may be short of the better quality of hay. In your care of the stock, remember that comfort is the thing needful for any stock to thrive; therefore study to make the stock comfortable in all respects. Hens, to supply you with eggs during the cold of winter, must first be made comfortable by being properly fed, and by having warm or comfortable quarters both for their run and for their roosts—good sunny shelter for day time where they can have free access to a variety of food, gravel, broken bones, green food, corn, oats, buckwheat, and clean water.—*W. H. White, in Country Gentleman.*

HEDGES FOR FARM-FENCE—DO THEY PAY?

BY S. FOLSOM.

What will a hedge cost per rod that will keep cattle in and keep cattle out of an enclosure? How long will it take to grow such a hedge? What is the best and cheapest hedge plant? How much width of space will a hedge-proof hedge demand? On what farm in America can I find such a hedge? What does it cost a year, after maturity, to trim and care for it? What is the annual amount of interest and taxes on each one hundred rods of it on land worth \$100 per acre?

A neighbor who has some of the finest hedges in Western New York on his farm, just in its prime, [told me, this fall, that he wished it all cleaned out. It is Osage. What it cost him, or how long it has been growing I know not. He says it costs him more to trim it and keep it in order than it would to build and maintain a substantial post and board fence. It occupies three times the ground, besides spoiling the soil for crops to a large and growing extent. The expense of digging it out is all that saves it.

Having looked for a hedge farm-enclosure of any considerable extent in a thousand miles' travel, I failed to find one without extensive breaks. Honey locust, Osage orange, hawthorn, soft maple, and various other hedge plants, have been very freely tried in most of the Western States—and all, everywhere, have miserably failed to produce a trustworthy fence, a cheap fence, or even a durable fence.

In our own State (New York), happily, we have only to fence our own stock in and make and maintain half the line fence where neighbors demand it, suffering damage from cattle on the highways only when due diligence of an accompanying driver fails to keep travelling animals from turning aside and injuring our crops. Nevertheless we must have fences; and the question at the head of this article recurs—Do hedges pay, as farm fence?

Unless some improvement can be made in them, the question seems to foreshadow a strong negative vote. For fancy grounds, parks, cemeteries, highway bounds, etc., the ornamental may be united with the useful in a neat hedge of evergreens or fancy shrubs. But for farm fence, the hedge must be made productive of fruit to compensate for the land it occupies and the care it demands.

Suppose, for example, that a row or double row of apple or pear seed be planted—a choice grape-vine being set at the same time in the row at distances of 12 to 16 feet—and midway between these let a tree be grafted to some choice fruit. Train the grape-vines each way on top of the trimmed hedge, and let the grafted trees rise as posts. Here you have a hedge festooned with fruit—a thing of beauty and a joy forever and a hedge that will restrain and turn farm animals; one that, if well tended, will grow in five or six years; one that by intertwining the twigs during this period will be even pig-proof and chicken-proof, and one that will also pay.

Who will try a fruit-growing hedge? Seed, vines, and labor are the outlay. A bed of rich, mellow soil, six to eight feet wide, is the first step. The plants for a few years will need the care bestowed on a row of corn, and then trimming and gathering the fruit.—*Christian Union.*

THREE THOUSAND EGGS A YEAR.

A lady friend of mine was informed that the husband of a friend of hers brought into the house three thousand eggs a year from his coops. My friend had been unsuccessful in that line. She was induced by members of her family to write to the lady of this favored husband, asking him to communicate the secret of his success. The gentleman wrote her a letter from which we make some extracts.

My Dear Friend.—The good wife thinks a man who can bring into the house over 3,000 eggs a year is the husband for her, and she wishes me, as an expert, to tell you how it is done.

No eggs need ever be expected from Brahma hens. I have had all the Asiatic fowls—Brahmas, Cochins, Chinas, Shanghais, Malays and Javas—have showered upon them grain and kindness, and am now persuaded that the whole Malay race, both of men and hens, is indolent, malignant and useless. There is no business in them. Brahminism itself is a system of selfishness; the hens have no disposition to lay eggs; they eat incessantly, straddle about the world with an awkward gait, which is enough of itself to condemn them, and are only large and plump when roasted, because they cannot help it. Like geese and turkeys, they lay but one batch of eggs as their year's work, and then insist on sitting; they will do it, like George Washington, with their little hatch-it. You can no more get eggs from Asiatic fowls by oats than you can make a deaf and dumb child into a musician by feeding sounds and tongues.

Race is everything in hens, as in men. You want Anglo-Saxon hens; our native kind, with yellow feathers and legs, or the hawk-colored (speckled, blue and white), or the Leghorn, called so, I fancy, not from an Italian birth-place, but because the extraordinary comb hanging over their heads is suggestive of the old-fashioned Leghorn bonnet. In any of these families you will find character, a trim and active body, an alert air, and a cheerful devotion to business, and that business, eggs.

The food of hens should be chiefly oats; corn not more than one to two days, water always; scraps from the house; a paulful of old plaster, or powdered oyster shells occasionally, and then their songs of labor will wake the baby; your boys will be in continual procession bringing in eggs, and yourself serene in the realization of your rural hopes.—*Letter in N. Y. Observer.*

CLOVER HAY FOR HOGS.—The Sacramento Union has made a discovery. It says: "It is a strange-sounding proposition to feed hogs with hay, but hogs will not only eat alfalfa (lucerne or Spanish clover) hay, but they will do well on it. Our own experience and observation have proved to us that good alfalfa hay, with plenty of water, will keep hogs in a good growing condition all through the winter. We have found that nicely cured clover, cut short, mixed with corn-meal and cooked, is one of the best winter foods for pigs. Of this, when in a warm pen, they gained about as fast as upon meal and clover in summer."—*Live Stock Journal.*

CARE OF COLTS.—We import stallions at many thousands of dollars apiece, for the improvement of our stock, which is money almost spent in vain, and will continue to be so spent until we, as a class, winter our colts better. Colts should be housed through the cold, rainy days of the fall, and when it is pleasant they should run out. In the winter, they should have a liberal allowance of hay. They should also have a few oats. Oats are better than corn, for they make bone.—*G. Knight, in Western Rural.*

CARE OF HORSES.—Do not neglect thorough brushing, combing and rubbing down of all horses, and such cattle as are stabled constantly. Labor thus invested will pay a handsome return in time. Salt should be placed, in large lumps, where animals can lick it at their pleasure; notwithstanding all the theories against its use, practice has proved it to be of inestimable value to live stock.—*Agriculturist.*

—In boiling potatoes for pigs, says the *Gardener's Chronicle*, they should be strained, as the water from them is injurious to a less or greater degree, as it contains the poisonous alkaloid called solanine, which, it should be noted, is more abundant when the tubers begin to chimp or bud out.

—One of the best planks in the National Grange platform: "Any member found guilty of wanton cruelty to animals shall be expelled from the Order."

—California is going into the tree business in earnest. It has hired a State tree-planter, at a cost of \$15,000 a year and expenses.

DOMESTIC.

—Diphtheria has become such a formidable disease that the physicians of the Board of Health have devoted special attention to its investigation. Some important rules for its prevention have been suggested. Without giving these in full, it may be mentioned that the greatest caution should be used in keeping the house and apartments pure and clean in every particular. Drainage and ventilation should be as perfect as possible, disinfectants used when needful, and ceilings frequently whitewashed. When diphtheria prevails, children should not be allowed to kiss strangers, nor those suffering from sore throat, nor to sleep with, or use articles belonging to, others having sore throat, croup, or catarrh. Well children should be scrupulously kept apart from the sick, and the feeble should have the most invigorating food and treatment. Slight attacks of sore throat, etc., should receive immediate attention. Sick children should be rigidly isolated in thoroughly ventilated rooms, and disinfectants freely used. Diphtheria is most liable to attack children from one to ten years of age, and those who are feeble or inclined to throat troubles.—*Harper's Bazar.*

REPELLING ANTS.—Some years ago, says a correspondent of the *London Times*, at my house in the country, a colony of ants established themselves under the kitchen flooring. Not knowing the exact locality of the nest, I endeavored to destroy the insects with treacle, sugar, arsenic, &c., but, although I slew numbers thus, the plague still increased. At last, bethinking myself that ants dislike the smell of tar, I procured some carbolic acid, and diluted it with about a dozen times its weight of water. I squirted a pint of the mixture through the air-bricks under the flooring, and my enemies vanished that day, never to return. It has always been successful. For crickets, &c., also, a little of this sent into their holes acts as an immediate notice to quit.

BAKED POTATOES.—Potatoes are more nutritious baked than in any other manner, and they relish better with those who have a taste only for plain food. And those who have been accustomed to highly seasoned dishes, a mealy baked potato will taste far superior to a boiled one. Wash them clean, but do not soak them, bake quickly as possible, but do not burn them. As soon as done, press each potato in a cloth so as to crack the skin and let the steam escape, and they will be mealy; without this the baked potato will not be mealy. They should be eaten immediately.

OYSTER SOUP, No. 1.—Take two quarts of oysters, and drain them with a fork from their liquor; wash them in one water to free them from grit. Take two thin slices of the lean of ham, and cut in small pieces; some parsley, thyme, and onion tied in a bunch as thick as your thumb; strain the oyster liquor; put all in together, with pepper and salt. When almost done, add a lump of butter as big as an egg, rolled in flour, with a gill of good cream.

OYSTER SOUP, No. 2.—Take three quarts of oysters, and strain the liquor from them. Put the liquor on to boil with half a pint of chopped celery, one onion, two or three blades of mace, pepper, and salt. When it boils, add the oysters. Just before taking it off, the thickening must be added, viz., one spoonful of flour creamed into the well-beaten yolks of three eggs. Pour a little of the hot soup gradually upon the eggs and flour, stirring all the while, and as soon as well mixed, with a little cream, pour into the soup. Then add one quart of rich unskimmed milk; let all come to a boil, and pour into a tureen over some small squares of cold bread. Serve it very hot.

HOW TO SWEEP A ROOM.—An un instructed Bridget, armed with a broom, is about as charming an occupant of a parlor, or a library well-stocked with the pretty little knick-knacks which cultivated people like to have about them, as the celebrated bull in the china shop. Before Bridget's entrance, all fragile movables should be stored by careful hands in some neighboring closet; and the furniture, as far as possible, protected by covers and slight draperies, kept for the purpose. Then, after doors have been closed, and windows opened, Bridget may be called in and instructed. Almost hopeless the task may seem at first; but after a little she will learn to spread the moderately damp coffee-grounds and tea leaves, or, still better, the slightly moistened bran, evenly over the floor; to brush the corners of the room, and under and back of the heavy articles of furniture, with a parlor brush; then to take her broom, being careful lest its handle shall prove destructive to mirrors or window glass, and instead of digging into the hapless carpet, wearing off the nap, and raising clouds of dust by her short strokes, to take long, smooth, straight strokes, the "right way" of the carpet. This manner of handling the broom, together with plenty of the moist bran, will prevent the whirlwinds of dust which otherwise rise, and penetrating the best arranged coverings, settle everywhere upon books and furniture.—*Scribner's.*