

VELOCIPEDES.

The two-wheeled velocipede appears likely to over-ride all old fashioned prejudice, and become a really expeditious and useful means of locomotion. Setting aside the saving of time by the use of those inovators, the exhilaration and exercise, and the ease with which they can be managed, are undoubtedly strong and convincing arguments in favor. Among the novelties are monster velocipedes, in which parties of half a dozen or more can ride, but these have the disadvantage of expense, and of requiring a full complement of passengers for their proper propulsion. Velocipedes of two, three, and even four wheels are being produced to meet special requirements, such as those of artists, commercial travellers, invalids, amateur tourists. In other velocipedes, accessory motive power is being provided in mounted steam-engines, which will probably be superseded by those working with oil and gas. Again there is the sail velocipede revived. A recent marine velocipede consists of two cigar-shaped iron cylinders connected with rods, the paddle wheel between being worked by the feet in a small iron and glass raised aloft. There is also the skating velocipede, placed on wheels and on which a terrific rate of speed may be attained on a wide sheet of ice. With a good machine the average rate of speed attainable is from eight to ten miles an hour. The exertion is very inconsiderable, and when once under way, the speed is very easily maintained. An extraordinary American invention, being nothing less than a two-wheeled velocipede, without anything approaching to a canoe or boat, to go on water, has just been patented by the eminent Patent Solicitors, Messrs. Hazeltine & Co. It is adapted to rivers and lakes, and is said to be capable of beating our ordinary Thames boats, according to the trials made on the Hudson and New York Bay. The buoyancy is secured by air chambers in the wheels, which are of great breadth, whilst a weight attached to the centre of gravity secures an upright position. It is worked in the ordinary method, by cranks and rods, and is steered by a species of rudder, the rider having complete command of the tiller. Instead of mounting on the ordinary waves of tideless waters, it cuts through them. Much interest is already excited respecting the trials to come off.—[European Mail.

MULCHING GRAPEVINES.—A correspondent of the "Country Gentleman" speaks of freshly cut grass as a "new" mulch for grapevines; and he also thinks ashes a good thing. I have used the cut grass and the ashes, and have no doubt of their service. But this is only practicable on a small scale, without considerable expense. As to the ashes, it is much to be regretted that so much of both coal and wood ashes is wasted. It ought all to go on the land, either for grapes or some other crop. A good mulch for vines could be got by planting the pruning thickly, and cutting the branches when in full leaf. But either this or a grass mulch would become dry, and a spark might destroy the vineyard. In our dry summers a mulched vineyard would be in great danger.

The only easy and safe mulch is good cultivation. I am not sure that it is not the best of all mulches. But as the vine furnishes in its own leaves and branches an excellent manure for itself, it occurs to me that waste cuttings thickly planted would furnish branches and leaves that might with advantage be mowed off and composted as manure. Liebig has a pleasant story of a poor Dutchman, not able to purchase manure, who kept his vineyard flourishing by means of its own clippings; but he buried them in the ground.—R. S. Elliott, St. Louis Journal of Agriculture.

In 1868 the United Kingdom devoted a million and a half acres to potatoes, Great Britain more than half a million, and Ireland more than a million.

Parsley was first known in Sardinia.
The pear and apple are from Europe.
Spinach was first cultivated in Arabia.
The sunflower was brought from Peru.
The quince came from the island of Crete.
The nettle is a native of Europe.
The citron is a native of Greece.
The pine is a native of America.
Tobacco is a native of Virginia.
Celery originated in Germany.
The pear and apple are from Europe.
The gourd is probably an eastern plant.
The walnut and peach are from Persia.
The mulberry originated in Persia.
The cucumber came from the East Indies.
The radish is a native of China and Japan.
Peas are supposed to be of Egyptian origin.
Rye originally came from Siberia.

RACING FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF HORSES.

—A paper has been published by Prof. Ferguson, apparently at the instance of the British Government on this subject. He says:—"But the weight-carrying characteristic has gradually diminished, generation after generation, until now, instead of being the prevailing stamp, as it was at the commencement of the present century, it is the marked exception. Of late years, the distances run are short, and the weights carried but light. Horses are bred accordingly, for such very moderate requirements. Speed is the great desideratum; weight-carrying power is not required. As a general rule, power must be sacrificed to obtain an increase of speed, and such is the case in the present mode of breeding race-horses. There are certainly some well-marked exceptions, but they are so rare that their existence does not affect the argument. In former years there were Royal Plates run in heats of four miles each. The weights were also heavy. Not infrequently there was one dead heat, and four heats (sixteen miles) had to be run before the race was won. A reference to turf statistics will show how numerous the entries frequently were for such races, and how desperate were the contests. How many of our modern race-horses would be capable of such feats?—particularly the carrying of the weight, for which they would be generally unfitted, from the inability of their limbs to support it during such an ordeal."

The London Agricultural Gazette, in commenting on this paper, expresses the opinion that "racing authorities" have done their best to encourage the production of 'weedy' animals, that in almost every respect are the reverse of 'sound and stout' thorough-bred horses. The greatest difficulty which a breeder of horses now has, is to find a suitable thorough-bred horse to put to his light cart-mares. The subject is clearly one of the first that ought to receive legislative attention."

The winter wheat of Central Illinois, it is said, never looked better at this time of the year than now.

A large meeting of grain merchants, in St. Louis, seem to have been of the opinion that the best and cheapest avenue to the sea for the grain of the north-west, was the route to New York, via New Orleans.

The Cedar Rapids Times claims the championship for a young girl, "sweet sixteen," of Linn county, Iowa, as follows: For six weeks last winter, during the sickness of her father and mother, she attended forty-eight head of sheep, eight head of horses, twelve head of cattle and two calves, besides milking three cows, driving the cattle one quarter of a mile every day to water, cleaning the horses' stable, doing the house work and taking care of her sick parents.

A GLUE WHICH WILL UNITE EVEN POLISHED STEEL.—A Turkish receipt for a cement used to fasten diamonds and other precious stones to metallic surfaces, and which is said to strongly unite even surfaces of polished steel, although exposed to moisture, is as follows:

Dissolve five or six bits of gum mastic, each of the size of a large pea, in as much spirits of wine as will suffice to render it liquid. In another vessel, dissolve in brandy as much isinglass, previously softened in water, as will make a two-ounce vial of strong glue, adding two small bits of gum ammoniac, which must be rubbed until dissolved. Then mix the whole with heat. Keep in a vial closely stopped. When it is to be used, set the vial in boiling water.

SCOURS IN COLTS.—A correspondent of the Iowa Homestead says:—"Colt raisers, don't dose your young colts to death with strong medicine, when they take the scours. Just take a string (buckskin or soft leather is the best,) and cord the tail as close up as you can conveniently; that will give relief in half an hour and cure in from six to twelve hours. I have tried the same on two old horses, and it cured them in a few hours, and I have been told the same remedy is as good for calves, but have never tried it myself. Let us try to do away with dosing stock with strong medicine as much as we can, when something simple will do just as well."

TO EXPEL WORMS FROM HORSES.—Inquiry is made in the "Country Gentleman" for a receipt to destroy worms in horses. As the writer has given us so good a horse liniment, I propose to pay him in kind. Here is the unfailing receipt: Take equal quantities of alum, sulphur, and copperas; pulverize them, and give one heaping tablespoonful every alternate day for ten days. It may be mixed with dough and shoved down the throat.

LOSS OF CUD.—I have a heifer that has been drooping around with her head down for about two weeks. To-day I noticed that she did not chew her cud, and I got some elder bark and made two balls according to Mr. Wadsworth's directions, and gave them to her in the morning, but it did no good. At noon I gave her four balls, and in half an hour I had the satisfaction of seeing her chew her cud.

CROP PROSPECTS.—We believe there never was before so large an area of our country in Wheat at this season as now, and that sowed last fall is looking remarkably well. Unless some disastrous blight shall yet be experienced, we shall harvest more wheat in 1869 than in any former year. And on all this Atlantic slope, a very large breadth has already been sown to spring grain, while much land is now in course of preparation for Indian Corn. Our orchards are just bursting into bloom, and the promise of fruit—especially of peaches—is remarkably good.—NEW YORK TRIBUNE.

VERMIN ON CHICKENS.—A correspondent of the Journal of Agriculture at Kirkwood, states that for some seven years his chickens have been kept free from lice by strewing small branches or spray of cedar about the hennery. Previous to the use of this simple remedy, they were badly infested. No whitewashing or other means to expel vermin have been used.