

The Farm.

How to Manage the Weeds.

The weed management which I find most profitable is to prevent in every possible way the ripening and sowing of their seeds. In the case of the bearded plantain a single hour spent in examining the clover seed with the magnifying glass would have saved me from \$10 to \$20 expense trying to destroy the plantain, which I am not sure can be done at all. The seeds are very easily recognized. One side is curiously concave, with bright brown spots. The way the concave sides of each pair of seeds face each other in the capsules is quite interesting, if you have the misfortune to raise the seeds on your own ground. The way in which the seeds of weeds are planted far and wide over the farm from the manure pile seems not yet to be understood by many farmers; and hence there is an enormous waste of labor in (partially) destroying the weeds thus planted.

These weeds, as I believe, are not produced from seeds in the hay and straw of which the manure is made, but from weeds that grow on the ground under the manure pile while it is uncovered during the summer. These weeds, particularly the three principal garden weeds, "the three Ps"—which are first planted on the edges of the manure pile by birds, ripen their myriads of seeds, which fall on the ground and are shovelled up and hauled out with the manure the following spring. I have found it easier to keep the ground smothered under straw or similar rough material during the summer, thus preventing all growth, than to destroy the weeds after they begin to grow. Depend upon it, a few hours spent in preventing weeds from being planted with the manure will save days and days of labor afterward. One case more.

It is hard to convince many farmers that there is any profit in destroying the weeds in their corn and potato fields to the end of the season, so as not to allow any to go to seed. They can see the profit in killing the weeds pretty thoroughly till the corn has the start, but in August and September they allow a jungle of weeds to ripen seeds in countless millions, to grow again not only next summer, but for years to come. Some farmers are sure it does not pay to keep the ground clean to the end of the season, because they have tried it—for one year. They tried it a year, and there were just as many weeds as ever the next year so far as they could see! It is true; we must prevent the weeds from going to seed three or four years in succession to begin to get the full benefit of it. But the profit does begin to appear the very first year. The yield of corn is sensibly increased, and the wheat is sown on the corn stubble with very much less labor if the ground is clean.—Ohio Farmer.

Protect the Toads.

That the toad is beneficial to the farmer and particularly to the gardener is admitted by every one who has observed its habits. Additional facts have been secured by recent observations at the Massachusetts experiment station, which show 11 per cent of the toad's food is composed of insects and spiders beneficial or indirectly helpful to man, and 80 per cent of insects and other animals directly injurious to cultivated crops or in other ways obnoxious to man. The toad feeds on worms, snails, sow bugs, common greenhouse pests, and the many legged worms which damage greenhouse and garden plots. It feeds to some extent on grasshoppers and crickets, and destroys large numbers of ants. It consumes a considerable number of May beetles, rose chafers, click beetles or adults of the wireworm, potato beetles and cucumber beetles. It is a prime destroyer of cutworms and army worms.

To all agriculturists the toad renders conspicuous service, but gardeners and greenhouse owners may make this animal of especial value. Every gardener should aim to keep a colony of toads among his

growing crops, and the practice of collecting and transferring them to the gardens is a commendable one. While the sense of locality is strong in the toad, and it will often return over considerable distances to its original haunts, yet it may be induced to remain in new quarters if there is a sufficient food supply. Many farmers provide toads with artificial shelters made by digging shallow holes in the ground and partially covering them with a bit of board or flat stone. In such places toads will often remain for many days, sallying forth at night to seek food.

The enemies of the toad are hawks, owls, and, worst of all, small boys, who stone and kill many of them. Dr. C. F. Hodge states that he found two hundred dead or wounded toads in a single day on the shores of a small pond on the grounds of Clark University. The loud cry of the toad at spawning time readily betrays its presence, and small boys, and sometimes those of a larger growth gravitate toward the pools as naturally as do the toads themselves. There have been excellent laws enacted to protect insectivorous birds. Why should there not be as stringent legislation against the destruction of toads?—American Agriculturist.

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How to Use a Dash Churn.

There is a proper way to employ almost every implement mentionable, and a dash churn is not to be excepted. As ordinarily used, however, much dissatisfaction arises in that the butter is not good or will not keep well, and as a result the churn is soon thrown aside for a swing, barrel or box one.

Now, albeit the dash churn is not as good as those just mentioned, where one has an old-fashioned wooden dash churn that is in good condition it is hardly advisable in the majority of cases to incur extra expense by casting it aside for one of later date. It can be made to do excellent service simply by boring a three-fourth-inch hole at the bottom, by which to draw off the buttermilk and washing water.

This is the way to proceed: When the butter reaches the granular stage set the churn on the stool, pull out the plug and draw off the buttermilk, then pour in cold water, agitate slightly and draw off the water. In so doing use a small horsehair sieve to catch any particles of butter that escape with the water, and do likewise when drawing off the buttermilk. This greatly simplifies matters, for the butter can thus be drained, salted and partly worked in the churn, which tends to produce a much better article, other conditions being equal. But let those having a good dash churn try the experiment for themselves ere they sink hard cash in making any venturesome exchanges, since "a bird in hand is always worth two in the bush."—Frederick O. Sibley.

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The Forces of Right.

Think not that God deserts the field,
Though truth the battle loses;
But grasp again Faith's sword and shield,
And follow where he chooses.
He shrouds himself in dark events,
No mortal eye beholds him;
And many an adverse providence
As in a cloud enfolds him.

We see Truth's foes press close around,
Distrusting her resources;
Faith fills the teeming battle-ground
With chariots and with horses.
And lo, God's standard rises clear
Amid the smoke and thunder;
Embattled armies disappear,
Or into fragments sunder.

The baffled surf ebbs to the sea,
As though its task forsaking,
But to return more mightily,
In greater volumes breaking.
What God has sworn shall yet be done,
No power of man can stay him;
Upon the seas he plants his throne,
And all the waves obey him.

Soldiers of Christ, take heart again.
Fear not dark portents solemn.
God moves across the battle plain
In many an unseen column.
The very stars of the blue night,
As they fulfill their courses,
Shall wheel obedient in the fight,
And add them to our forces.

—Selected.



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