

FARM AND FIELD.**A WELL-KEPT KITCHEN.**

Unless your scraps are to be saved for a cow or pig, burn all leavings and pairings, the refuse from tables, and the scrapings as fast as made. Open all the back drafts of the stove, put the leavings on the hot coals and let them dry and burn, which they will do in a few minutes. With the drafts open there will be neither smell nor smoke. If the scraps must be saved, have a waste pail with a tight cover, or a covered firkin large enough to empty a panful of parings into in a hurry, without dropping any on the floor. Never pour slops with the waste, for it sours and ferments sooner. Have the pail emptied twice a day in warm weather and scrubbed with water and a few turns of an old broom, which cleans it without touching your hands to it. But if rinsed, drained and dried in the sun even your waste-pail will be as neat, wholesome and well kept as any of your belongings. Every wash-day all slop pails and barrels should be scrubbed with hot suds and a broom outside and in, scalded and aired, when I think you will not have to shrink from them as disagreeable subjects. Kitchen furnishing shops supply large tight garbage firkins neatly painted with covers, which never need be obnoxious to sight or smell. A sour waste barrel in a corner always foul with droppings is not to be tolerated, for it is enough to cause fever in warm weather. You must not consider it beneath you to look after such details of house and yard, to see that everything in sight or out of sight is wholesome, clean and safe as it is possible to be. You have been taught to despise the slovenliness which wears a good dress and bright ribbons with unwashed skin and careless underclothing; learn also to despise and dread the housekeeping, which is satisfied with pretty parlour and chambers, while the closets are unswept and musty, and the back sheds and cellar full of half-decayed rubbish. Dread it because such neglect causes ill health. Do not rest till the working part of your house is as pleasant as the well-furnished part.

Of all rooms in a house, I delight in a well-kept kitchen, for no other room is so given up to good works and consummate cleanliness, so washed and scoured and polished, till it smells of the sanctity of neatness. When the western sun shone broad and merry over the sparkling window, yellow floor and white tables, when a savour of sweet marjoram and lavender from the window-boxes was in the air, and the shining stove with its bright tea-kettle and simmering pans was a shrine of good cheer, I have taken portfolio and books out in my kitchen to the light stand and little Shaker chair to enjoy the sparkling humour, the warm home radiance, the neatness and seemliness which made the place akin to poetry and clear thoughts.—*The Next Neighbour, in April Wide Awake.*

A WORK-SHOP ON THE FARM.

Every farmer who has any mechanical genius should have some place where, in rough or stormy weather, he can go and make such repairs on his farm implements as his knowledge of mechanics will enable him to do well. If the farm be large and the farmer skilful, it pays to have a small building by itself, where not only carpenter's tools are to be found; but also a blacksmith's forge, with a few of the most important tools.

The farmer who can turn his hand so as to use successfully both the carpenter's plane and the blacksmith's hammer, is truly fortunate, because it enables him not only to mend his farm implements during leisure hours in the winter, but it also enables him to repair a sudden break-down

in the busy season much quicker than he usually could if he had to depend on others living at a distance. It is not, however, good policy for the farmer to turn his attention so much to mechanics as to neglect his farm; there is a point beyond which it is neither profitable nor good policy to go.

On a farm where there is a family of boys the repair-shop is a necessity, if the boys are to receive thorough instruction and the farm is to be made attractive. The boy who is able to make his own sled feels an independence which is unknown to the boy who has never had an opportunity to become acquainted with the use of tools; and when he has a farm of his own, the practice which the repair-shop gave him will enable him to readily make most of the repairs on the farm, and if, he has leisure, make many new improvements. A repair-shop should always be a building by itself, because if in connection with others, it increases the risk of fire, and makes the rate of insurance very much higher.—*Mass. Ploughman.*

ASHES VS. VEGETABLE MATTER.

A suggestive lesson may be derived from the following simple experiment. Upon one acre of land a farmer ploughed in a quantity of cornstalks, while upon another acre he spread the ashes resulting from the burning of an equal quantity of stalks. Both acres were planted with corn. That upon which the stalks were burned gave the best start, but the acre upon which the stalks were ploughed in soon caught up and surpassed the former, and finally matured the better crop.

This experiment illustrates the difference between mineral fertilizers and decayed vegetable matter or humus. The minerals, being in a soluble condition, soon made themselves manifest in the increased growth produced. At first the buried cornstalks had no effect upon vegetation except by increasing the porosity of the soil, and by admitting larger supplies of atmospheric air to act upon the constituents of the soil. When the stalks began to decay, and the minerals were not only liberated from the stalks but also from the soil in contact, then the corn which was planted upon the stalks began to pull ahead of that planted upon the plot fertilized with ashes. The value and efficiency of the ashes would be sooner exhausted than the vegetable matter of the stalks.

Again, where the stalks were used the fertility of the soil would be increased, because in all probability the nitrogen contained in the stalks would remain intact until liberated by their decay. This substance would be in the form of ammonia and its compounds, that would be again decomposed before becoming available plant food. In burning the stalks, although all the minerals would be preserved in the ashes, yet it is quite certain that the nitrogen would be thereby expelled, thus robbing the plants of the fertilizing properties of that valuable agent. We should have many such experiments before establishing a theory, yet these suggestions might easily be followed out on other farms and by other farmers.

THE FARM DIARY.

A correspondent of the *Country Gentleman*, after acknowledging the almost necessary failure of farmers in keeping the daily record of work and events written up promptly as shown in his own experience, recommends a compromise in the form of a weekly record to cover principal affairs. The idea is open to only one serious criticism. The weekly record will be considerably more apt than the daily to be made the work of Sunday morning or afternoon. Better keep no diary at all than to fall into the habit of "catching up" on the

Sabbath. And yet we dislike to give up the diary as a failure. People find time for a few habits regularly year after year without a single interruption. Even the busiest farmer in the land has seldom in his life-time forgotten to take his dinner at noon or to go to bed at night. We all manage somehow to wind the clock on schedule time, to set the hens in the proper season, etc. And there is only a mild form of compulsion behind most of these routine performances; why not implant the habit of writing a few lines at every day's close to preserve the memory of the day?

The family diary should be so framed as to require a minimum of writing, and we should restrict ourselves to one or two leading events or occupations every day. There should be a blank for an entry of weather aspects to be filled in at pleasure and generally only marked weather aspects need be noted. Then occupations, business transactions and miscellaneous memoranda should have places assigned.

In every family some one should be secretary and that one should be held responsible for not only the historical but also for the financial book-keeping. If that secretary be a boy or a girl, this part of daily duty will prove one of the most valuable aids to education.

AN ACRE OF CLOVER.

In two and a half tons of clover hay, or in an acre of clover sod of corresponding quantity, there will be, both for grain and straw, enough phosphoric acid for a crop of thirty-four bushels, of combined nitrogen for seventy-one bushels of potash for 102 bushels, of magnesia for 120 bushels, and of lime for 270 bushels. In other words, the clover hay or sod contains enough phosphoric acid for more than double an average crop enough nitrogen for more than four average crops, and potash for more than six average crops of wheat. With such figures before you, do you wonder that farmers are surprised at the large crops they can raise on clover sod? You see also why lands in rotation with clover can endure the heavy tax of two crops of wheat in succession without a complete exhaustion. But when a body of clover is ploughed in with sod, we reach results that round out that figure of Oriental magnificence: "The pastures are clothed with flocks, the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, and they also sing."—*Professor Beal.*

WOOD ASHES AND POULTRY DROPPINGS.

I use thousands of bushels of wood ashes, spreading them on the top of the ground after ploughing, and harrowing them in, and the result is always satisfactory. I also use all the hen manure I can get, having some years as much as seventy-five barrels, nearly all of them either sugar or salt barrels, and, after trying many experiments, have settled down to the following as about the best. A barrel of the manure is emptied out on dry and hard ground and worked over with shovels or six-tined forks until it is fine, and then about three barrels of fine dry earth is mixed with it, and all worked over together until no one would know by scent or handle what it is. The largest crop of potatoes I ever saw was manured with one large single handful of this preparation in each-hill. The land was in a good condition and the crop well cared for; but these alone would not account for the enormous yield—at the rate of 640 bushels per acre. The effect on corn is about equally good. The above may seem like a laborious preparation of this very valuable manure, but I know it pays. Plant-food