

Miscellaneous.

Agricultural Papers.

We clip the following from a report of J. H. Smith's address in the *Weston Farmer*—

If there is a single man who bears me testimony that does not take one or more agricultural papers, let me urge you not to return to your homes till you have subscribed for at least one good agricultural paper. It will be the cheapest investment that you ever made in farming. You cannot afford to do without it. And just as certainly as you make the attempt, you will find your digging behind the ago; you will be less successful than your more enterprising neighbor, whose table is ever covered with agricultural books, papers and journals. As your sons grow to manhood they will, if they have the life and energy of true born Americans, tire of the dull routine of a farm that is not improving, of a home where the business is unknown, except as it is handed down to them in company with the ignorance and errors of a past age. They can readily see their home is not a pleasant one, and they can also see that there is no prospect of its becoming a profitable one in the future. Simply a life of toil and drudgery, with but little if any chance for success either mentally or financially. Under such circumstances, I cannot blame them for wishing to seek new homes and a new business.

But, if upon the other hand, your home and your farm bears the outward marks of improvement, if there are no unsightly hedges of brush and briars growing along the fences, if the fences themselves are in good condition, if the land is underdrained where that is necessary, and is kept in such a condition that each five years shows a steady improvement in the quantity as well as the quality of the crops; if the Chester White, the Berkshire, or some other of the improved breeds of swine, have taken the place of the ill-looking brutes that inhabited many farms some years since, and, I am sorry to say, are too often found yet, if the noble Short-horns, or perhaps some other improved breed of cattle, are grazing your fields in the summer, and comfortably housed in your stables in the winter; if a noble span of horses and a comfortable carriage has taken the place of the common scrabs and the lumber waggon of a few years since; if a nice garden and a bountiful supply of fruits and vegetables for yourself and your friends; if your flower beds are things of beauty and of pleasure; if a new and more comfortable house has or is to take the place of one that was made to answer while you were making other improvements and getting your farm in condition to pay for this one; if that home is to be one of comfort and pleasure, a home where the mind as well as the body is to be fed, one where all the inmates are trained to an intelligent, active, and successful industry, instead of the dull routine of a life of daily drudgery; if such be your homes, believe me, gentlemen, your sons will not leave the farm. If they see it year by year growing into a thing of beauty, as well as of profit growing more and more attractive as well as profitable, you need not fear their leaving it.

You will not hear your daughters saying, "well, I will never marry a farmer." On the contrary, they will look upon the home farm as the dearest spot on God's green earth, and when your work is done they will still look back to father's farm as one to be imitated and improved upon, instead of a tiresome place to be got away from and forgotten.

Boiling Potatoes.

The following extract appeared in the CANADA FARMER some years ago, and we now republish it by request.—The lady authoress of "Uncle Tom," and divers other popular publications, has been writing a homily on cooking potatoes. I should like to know if Mrs. Stowe does really boil potatoes herself? I do, and I have long since known better than to pare my potatoes raw and then douse them naked in water red hot—boiling at two hundred and ninety horse power. That is one way to boil potatoes certainly, but not the proper one, by a very long way. Philosophy, common sense, and a month or two of practical experience over the dinner pot, teach us great deal better than that.

My dear madam, don't you know that about six-tenths of all the starch that a potato affords is deposited so near the surface, that however carefully we may pare the tubers in a raw state, we are sure to throw away the greater portion of that very material that we eat? Then, if we toss

potatoes into boiling water, unprotected by the iron coats, we have set in a second, and I hopelessly incorporated with the mass, that pernicious principle which gives the sliced potato its slightly acrid something insipid, and always objectionable flavor.

Any thoroughly potato-licked Irish woman would as soon think of committing regicide, as boiling her potatoes unressed, in the manner recommended by our literary lady cook. And there are no better potatoes, or potato cooks, any where in this world than there are in Ireland.

I tell you, fellow-brawlers, everywhere, that the correct way to cook a potato in any country, provided boiling is the determination, is to wash it clean first—let it lie in clean cold water two hours—then is all the better—dip it in cold water in the pot, without paring, boil moderately until the test fork goes smoothly through the potato without encountering a mite of core. Then drain off the water, set the pot over the fire uncovered, for five minutes, after which whip off Mr. Potato's jacket in a hurry, and send him to the table in a cello cover, piping hot—or if you are not over-fashionable and fastidious, it is preferable to serve "murphy" in his coat.

Please follow this formula a few times, and if you shall find it a pernicious practice, you shall be at liberty to consider Madame as competent to write a readable romance, as she is to cook a potato.—*Saturday Evening Post.*

How to Wrap with Wire.

In a former number of the *Agriculturist* (November, 1871) we referred to the uses to which a coil of wire might be put in a farmer's hands. In using wire for these various purposes we at first found some difficulty in wrapping the wire around such things as a broken shaft, tongue, or a spring. Indeed, the same trouble is experienced when we come to wrap a cord, even for temporary purposes, around anything that may happen to need such a strengthening. The loose end of the wire or cord is very much in the way of the operator, and has a fashion of becoming entangled, which when one is in a hurry, as is generally the case, leads to his feeling very strongly on the subject. Many years ago, in whiling away the tedium of a sea voyage, we observed the sailors wrapping marine or fine cord around the splices of the ropes as a preservative against chafing. They used for this purpose a small instrument which we found was exactly what was wanted to wrap wire around a broken buggy shaft on an emergency, and ever afterwards this little implement and a ball of wire found a place in our tool-box.

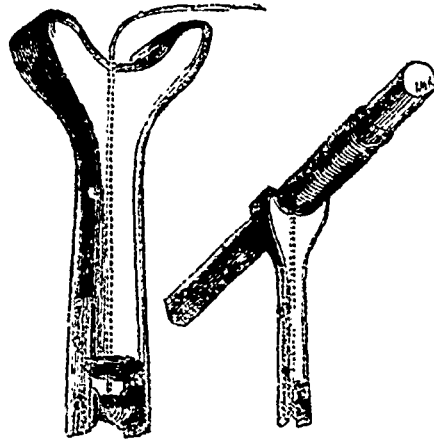


Fig. 1.—Reel.

Fig. 2.—Reel in Use.

The instrument is shown in the engraving on this page. Fig. 1 shows the form in which it is made. It may be cut out of a piece of soft wood, as pine, cedar, or basswood. A hole is bored through the centre lengthwise, through which the wire or cord is passed. The wire may be wrapped on a reel which is fastened to one extremity. From the reel the wire passes through the hole in the centre out at the bottom between the jaws, in each of which there is a groove cut along which the wire passes to the outside of either of the jaws desired. Fig. 2 shows the manner of using it. The end of the wire is fastened to the thing to be wrapped. It is then drawn tight by winding up the slack on the reel. The wrapper is then passed round and round the shaft to be wrapped, and as it is passed around it the wire is coiled. Proper tension is gained by holding the reel and allowing the wire to be unwound slowly. By pressing on the reel any degree of tightness in the wrapping may be secured. When sufficient is wound, the end is made fast and the wire is cut. Many varied uses may be found on a farm or in the house for this little tool.

A Fine Barn.

Governor Smith, of Vermont, is building a splendid barn, 100x150 feet, of brick, which is thus described in *The St. Albans Transcript*:

The central part is four storeys high, including the basement; and the whole is divided into three parts by partition walls of brick. In the central part of the first floor above the basement is the carriage room, 50x70 feet. Large weighing scales will be inserted in the floor. In one corner will be an office, and a room for steam power, with which to cut and grind the feed for horses and cattle. Running up from this floor to the fourth story, which will be devoted to the storage of threshed grain, will be an elevator, while in the opposite corner will be a feed-room.

The two rooms north and south of the one described, on this floor, are each 40x100 feet; one for cattle and the other for horses and cattle. There will be a row of stalls on each side with a wide passage way between, and doors at each end, allowing of the passage of teams through the cow stable. A shallow trench behind the cattle stalls will hold the water and absorbents, which, with the solid excrements will be precipitated into the manure cellar below.

The third floor contains three lofts for hay, estimated to be sufficient to contain 255 tons.

The basement or cellar contains three rooms, connected by large doors, allowing of the free passage of teams to all parts. Here will be conveniences for storing roots, muck &c., as well as manure.

A tank for water, sixteen feet in diameter, will extend from this basement to the roof, and be filled with water from the bay by wind power. The pressure of a column of water of that height must necessitate a tank of immense strength. A tank on each floor may be intended.

A CIRCULAR BARN.—In the *June Atlantic*, N. S. Shaler gives the following description of a large barn in a Shaker settlement on the borders of Massachusetts and New York: To me the great barn was the most interesting of their economies; it was a wonder of convenience, and more novel than any other thing I have seen here. A circular stone building, 150 feet across and 40 feet to the eaves, with a cone roof and a central lantern; a driveway from the hillside led to a huge door, through which the loaded waggons could drive to a staging which carried the roadway quite around the inside of the building. A dozen waggons could unload at once, heaping their burdens into the vast central space. Beneath the roadway were stalls for beasts, who in the long winter were to empty the great central garner. At this season it was empty, and its vast space, lighted by the central lantern, and fretted with its cobwebbed beams, was very imposing—a sort of agricultural pantheon.

TEA.—Somebody, professing to speak from long experience, avers that the leaves of the raspberry, if properly treated, make finer tea than any that finds its way to Mincing Lane. The French peasants make an aromatic drink from the leaves of the black-currant tree, and believe it to be a specific for indigestion. Thanks to M. Raspail, they have also learned to appreciate the flavor, aroma, and virtue of borage tea. Our dietetic philosopher and friend, Fin Dec, would like to do in England what M. Raspail did in France, but knowing the inveterate suspicion the poorer classes at home have of anything to which they are unaccustomed, especially if it costs little, discreetly declines making the experiment himself. "Let any social doctor," says he, "who may be anxious to test the phability of the English agricultural laborer as a pupil, accost him with the following proposition: 'My good man, I have, I assure you, from the bottom of my heart, the liveliest interest in your welfare. Now, the tea you drink is detestable, adulterated, and very dear stuff. It does you no good; now, take my advice—grow borage, which will cost you nothing, and drink borage tea. It helps digestion, is a sudorific, has a delightful aroma, and will have no bad effect on your nerves, or the nerves of your wife.' I am lost in conjectures as to the fate that would befall the doctor. He might be bonneted, cibowed into a thorn-hedge, reminded that the horse-pond was near, or recommended to confine his attentions to his own tea-cup. But the unlikely result of all would be thanks for his suggestion. No, the unlikely would be the trial of it.—*Chambers' Journal.*