

A new Rail Fence.

A new form of farm rail fence has been introduced among us, which is being adopted by many. It makes a safe fence, and, so far as experience goes, a durable and economical one, as it contracts the old form fence amazingly. I believe in "contraction" of the old crooked rail fences; too much land is occupied with them, and too much rubbish gathers about them. This is a straight fence made of posts and rails, stakes, wires and stones. In the first place, holes are dug 11 feet apart, 21 feet deep; into these, posts are set; then a stone 12 or 15 inches in diameter is placed with the face side against the post, so that the rails will have a good bottom, close to the post. On these stones are laid two rails, one over the other. Stakes, 3, 4 or more inches thick, and long enough to reach from top of stone to top of post, are taken; one person places one end of a stake on the stone, close to the rails, while another encircles the stake and post, just above the rails, with wire, which is made fast. More rails are then placed between the stakes and posts, and under the top rail another wire is put. While this is being done, the person holding the stake should see that the rails are properly adjusted, and the stake drawn snugly toward the post.

The advantage of the stone and stake are: the stone is a continuation of support with the earth to the post, and the stake and stone act as a brace to support the fence. In building this fence, the posts should be set against the bank on the side of the hole where the stone will be; the stone should be placed on the leeward side to the prevailing wind. (If it is built in an east and west direction, place the stone on the north side, north and south, on the east side.) The stone will not settle so quickly or so much on unbroken ground. After the fence is built, a team and plough should be taken, and the fence banked up to the bottom rail, the furrows will be done to the posts. *—Goshogwin Co. to Gentleman.*

Sowing Plaster Rapidly.

One of the most tedious and disagreeable operations in the line of farming is the sowing of gypsum (or plaster). Recently I saw a plan of sowing this fertilizer new to me, and that was efficient and very expeditious. Several bushels were placed in the rear end of the wagon box; the sower sitting on a stool or, what is easier, placing his knees in the plaster, and facing the rear end of the box. As the team moves along, about ten feet from the fence, the sower fills his right hand with plaster, and throws it quickly to the left; as the body moves to the right, fills the left hand with plaster and hurls it to the right, and continues thus alternately. An active boy can, by this plan, sow more plaster in a half day than two strong men; and with a few moments' practice, sow it equally as even. If the ground is quite hard it will answer to sow plaster in this way on spring sown grain; but it is especially recommended for clover ground. A strip twenty feet in width is sown at each passage across the field, and is not necessary to sow in lands, but cross the field in any direction, so that the dust may not fly on the horses; the wagon tracks being a sufficient guide for the return trip. *—L. D. Swook, in Country Gentleman.*

How to Make Black Paint.

The most economical and satisfactory black paint we have ever used for iron-work was by mingling about two quarts of coal tar with a pint or a pint and a half of benzole, which was laid on with a paint brush. This makes an excellent varnish for rough work; it could not be recommended, however, as a fine varnish for any inside work.

Three years ago, the iron fence and iron balustrade and hand-rails on our front steps were covered with such a varnish, while the iron-work of adjoining neighbors had been painted every year with oil and lamp-black and varnish. At the present time, our fence looks much the best and scarcely needs painting, while their's really needs a coat of paint. A paint made of coal, tar and benzole will be found excellent for smearing the iron-work of farm implements. As benzole is somewhat volatile, no more paint should be prepared at one time than will be used immediately. *—Industrial Month.*

FOND OF MELONS.—The Central Union Agriculturist, Omaha, Neb., says:—"We will send the Agriculturist free for one year for the largest water melon left at our office this season."

Architecture.

Writers on architecture have always traced the gradual progress of the art from the hut to the palace. In old established countries, which have taken centuries to arrive at civilization, to thus trace the rise and progress of architecture is a work for the deeply learned, for it is only by searching among the scanty remnants of records in Latin and other dead or nearly dead languages that these traces can be recovered. Thus we learn from such ancient manuscripts the period at which glass was first introduced into England, and see that by its introduction one great foundation for modern architecture was laid, to be developed as years rolled by, and niches in reared by fresh outlets for trade and traffic with other nations, and even the rise and progress of steam as a motive power has to be tracked through some obscurity, and the claims of various men to its introduction have to be weighed by the evidence that is found in books and manuscripts, which are old when compared with the history of this country. But on this continent we can see with our own eyes; the rise and progress of architecture. Our architecture, like our politics, is almost without a history. All has been done within our own or our immediate forefathers' memory. We can ride out a few miles from our cities adorned with buildings which will compare favorably with those of cities the records of whose foundations are lost in the mist of centuries, and see within a few miles the first habitations for man which the wilderness ever knew. The hut which first startled the bear and the wolf by its unknown aspect still exists, and that closely adjoining the palaces of our merchant princes. But inasmuch as architecture from the first is only one development of the natural instinct of man to make himself as comfortable as he can, it admits in every stage of examination and consideration; and it appears as if (taking this country generally) the time had arrived when, by the decrease of lumber and the increased facilities for its exportation to countries which are more destitute of it than ourselves, we ought to give up wooden buildings as a rule, and take, as other nations have done before us, to a more permanent material. With this view, we purpose giving our readers a few articles on the various modes of building, particularly on concrete, as being highly adapted for farm buildings in many localities. Ours being eminently a practical journal, we shall not go much into the history of the various styles nor discuss their particular merits, but give some plain hints and rules for economical building, so as in some measure to meet the wants of farmers, and enable them in some degree to become their own architects and builders.

VARIETY PICKLE. One gallon of a large finely chopped; ½ pint green peppers; 1 gallon green tomatoes; 1 quart onions (chopped fine and the juice drained from them); 4 tablespoonfuls of ground mustard; 2 of ginger; 1 of cloves; 2 of turmeric; 1 oz. celery seed; 2 pounds sugar; a little salt, and 3 gallon good cider vinegar. Mix well and boil 20 minutes. Anything like snaps or cucumbers can be chopped in before boiling. Gentlemen think this pickle very fine.

A FARMER, who was pestered with crows, hit upon the plan of soaking some corn in whiskey and placing it in the field so that the crows would get drunk, and then he could easily close on them. After soaking some corn all night, he put a bountiful supply in the field early next morning, and in about two hours he went out to see how things were progressing, and mark what followed. One old crow, a little larger than the rest, had gathered up and taken possession of all the soaked corn, and had built himself a bar out of some clods of earth, and was retailing the whiskey-soaked corn to the other crows, charging them three grains of sprouted corn for one soaked grain. He hadn't the gall to kill creatures that acted so much like human beings.

REMEDY FOR BARRENNESS IN PEAR TREES. A correspondent of the *Southern Cultivator* says: "I once had a pear tree of good size, and old enough, but it did not bear. On meeting an old gentleman whom I knew gave some attention to such things, I asked him what I should do with a barren pear tree. Said he, bore an auger hole (say 1 inch auger) through the body of the tree, one foot above the ground, and drive a seasoned white oak pin, filling the hole well; trim off nicely on both sides. I did so and had plenty of fine fruit thereafter. I also (as an additional remedy) drove a handful of nails into the tree, but whether that contributed to its fruitfulness I can't say."

TO TAN SKINS.—The following method is recommended: Take equal parts salt, alum, and Glauber's salt, and half a part saltpetre; pulverize and mix. Handle the skins and rub the mixture in well three or four times a day—the oftener the better. If there is not moisture enough in the skin to dissolve the salts, put a little water into the latter. We are assured that no moth will attack furs the pelts of which have been thus prepared.

WASHING CLOTHING.—The use of soda for washing linen is very injurious to the tissue, and imparts to it a yellow color. In Germany and Belgium the following mixture is extensively and beneficially used: 2 lbs of soap are dissolved in about 5 gallons of water as hot as the hand can bear it; then is added to this fluid three large sized tablespoonfuls of liquid ammonia and one spoonful of best oil of turpentine. These fluids are incorporated rapidly by means of beating them together with a small birch broom. The linen is then soaked in this liquid for three hours, care being taken to cover the wash tub with a closely fitting wooden cover. By this means the linen is thoroughly cleansed, saving much rubbing, time and fuel. Ammonia does not affect linen or woollen goods, and is largely used as a washing liquor in the north of England.

AT THE annual dinner of the members of the Penrith Farmers' Club, the secretary read the report, which after detailing the work which the club had performed during the year, concluded with the hope that

Yourselves in judging our horses and hogs,
Your sheep on the hills and your swine in the sty,
Your crops of potatoes, wheat, barley and rye;
But if some misfortune should cause you to sigh,
Such as seeing your turnips cut off by the fly,
Or prices be falling and wages rise high,
Will keep up your spirits and never say die.
And now your committee may wish you good bye,
And hope you won't say the report's 'all my eye'.

WICK UP this good advice: If you get a moment to spare, spruce up; put the gate on its hinges; put a little paint on the picket fence you built last year; trim up the door yard; make it cosy and inviting. Do not say you can find no time to attend to these things. The fact is, you have no right to be slovenly. It can do you no good, but on the contrary, it will mar your peace, wound your self-respect, and impair your credit. Then, by all means, spruce up a little, at odd times and at even times too, for that matter. It will make you feel vastly better, and maybe a trifle proud of your pretty homestead. Your wife and children will be made happier for it; your neighbors will be enriched, beautified and blessed by it; and your farm will be worth more money in the market, and of greater value to you at home, if you spruce up a little now and then.

PIE PLANT PIES.—Never stew your pie-plant before making your pies. Peel the stems of rhubarb and slice them in half-inch lengths, holding several stems in the hand at one time. With these fill the pie, sweetening it generously—about the same as for a lemon pie, a small teaspoonful of sugar for a medium sized pie—moisten with a great spoonful of water, dust over this a little dry flour, to thicken the juice a little, cover it with the upper crust and bake it slowly and thoroughly. Such a pie is too rich for some stomachs, and there is a way of dispensing with part of the sugar without having the pie too sour. Not by the use of soda? No indeed. But pour boiling water over your sliced rhubarb, letting it stand ten or fifteen minutes. Pour this off and make your pies of the rhubarb, with less sugar. If you stew pie plant for sauce, you can pour off a part of the juice before it is done, using it to make jelly if you like, and supply its place with more water, thus economizing sugar.

SOIL FOR VERBENAS.—I have been not a little amused at the dogmatical directions issued by some persons as to the necessity of a fresh soil yearly being necessary to grow good verbenas. It is all a sheer absurdity, as my practice and observation of over a quarter of a century has taught me. The verbenas takes very little from the soil, its food is gathered mainly by its foliage; but to supply that, the soil must be deep and permeable to moisture and air, so that after a dry, hot day or season, moisture or food, by reason of capillary attraction, may be distributed both to the roots and the foliage, the underside of the latter always having its mouth open for absorption. An old bed deeply dug and supplied with some vegetable substance to decay, at from ten to twelve inches below the surface, is just as good to grow the verbenas as new fresh soil. *—Atch, in Rural New Yorker.*