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Published under direction of the Board of Agriculture of Nova Scotia.

VOL. I.

HALIFAX, N. S., JUNE, 1871.

No. 68.

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LUCYFIELD, Co. HALIFAX,
May 29, 1871.

Temperature to-day in the shade 84°
Fah. at one o'clock, p.m.

The present season has been an unusually busy one with our farmers; and to this cause may be attributed the paucity of correspondence requiring notice this month. Some of the peculiarities of the season were referred to in our last number. The spring, or farming season as it may be called in this country, commenced at an unusually early period. We had delightful weather, and comparatively warm, during the month of March. April, however, proved throughout a cold, wet, windy, and altogether disagreeable month. When we last wrote there was nothing but mud under foot and drizzle overhead. Since then the weather has upon the whole been nearly everything that could be desired. We had cold, chilly days and nights it is true, during the first half of May, but there was sufficient drought to bring the land into fine condition for working; and although the season is not

an early one, yet the grass is making a strong healthy growth, and we are not unlikely to have a heavy crop of hay. This will be valued by our farmers, for the past winter has been a severe one for those who had nothing but hay to feed to their cattle. The first really warm day of this season was Sunday, the 20th of May, temp. 72°, up to which time seed that had been put into the ground had made but little progress. On the morning of the day mentioned our two summer swallows, the chimney swallow and the barn swallow, both made their appearance for the first time. About the city, stragglers had been noticed on the 21st April and 2nd May, according to report in the *Church Chronicle*. The Camberwell Beauty is our first butterfly, but a very uncertain harbinger of spring, for it invariably appears on the first warm, sunny day, sometimes very early in April. This year it was unusually late, not noticed with us till 16th May, election day, a warm, sunny day, when a good many of our farmers turned back from the plough to go to the polls.

The latter part of May has been warm, some days quite sultry, and vegetation is now making rapid progress. On Whitsunday a singular appearance in the heavens, referable apparently to the class of phenomena called mock suns, was observed before and after 2 p. m. It consisted of a luminous cloud opposite the sun, having a perfectly circular outline, of almost dazzling white in the centre, and with a blue margin, of a deeper hue than the rest of the sky. It was observed for about a quarter of an hour, and gradually faded away into a stratified cloud, as it drifted before the wind and its position changed with respect to the sun. Fires in the woods have been rather unruly in Halifax county. A large fire near Sandy Lake, between the Hammond's Plains Road and Windsor Road continued for several days, and drove the black flies out of the woods into the settled parts in such numbers that cattle had to be shut up in the barns, a very unusual occurrence in the month of May. Mr. Guzmán has lost his extensive saw mill at Stillwater by fire; Dr. Tiernan's

barn at Bedford was burned; Mr. Jos. Ellis, Old Windsor Road, had the roof burnt off his dwelling, and many other injuries and anxieties arose out of the May burnings. Some evenings the whole horizon was lighted up as with a continuous series of beacon fires, and next morning every valley would be filled with a sea of dense smoke that had settled down in the dewy night. The Sackville Bear has been abroad for about a month, and may on occasion be seen crossing the old and new Windsor roads at various points, and walking about in the fields and pastures. He appears to be of a rather good natured disposition, not afraid of mankind, and with no disposition to make mankind afraid of him. He takes away a sheep occasionally, gets fired at from an old rusty gun for his pains, but yet comes around again as friendly as ever. His den is situated a mile or two S. west from the upper part of the Sackville River, in what is called the Big Marsh, whither he is seen repairing in the fall, and whence he returns to civilization in the spring; but his precise dwelling place has not been found, unless the census taker of district 15 may have succeeded in obtaining an entrance for the purpose of registering him as a fur-bearing domestic animal, or as a parent and householder, for "Man comes from a mammal that lived up a tree," as Lord Neaves puts it in his Blackwood song of last month.

The transition from the Sackville bear to the Gooseberry caterpillar is not so violent after all, when we have Darwin's "descent" in view. His caterpillarship is, like protection, an "ojous creatur," and has caused more anxiety to gardeners, amateur and professional, than anything else in the way of pest that has ever appeared in gardens. So far, however, the gooseberries and currants are comparatively free from the vermin as yet; the flies that deposit the eggs are not only fewer, but of smaller size and weaker than formerly, and we may almost hope that the history of the fly in this country will be a repetition of its history in Britain, where after a time it became comparatively powerless for evil.

We hope next month to be able to report upon the appearance of farm crops throughout the Province, and trust that the friends who in former years so kindly furnished information from their respec-

tive districts will be disposed again to aid in presenting to our farmers a general view of the Agricultural prospects of the season. Commercial arrangements depend so much upon the relations between demand and supply that trustworthy information of this kind, timely given, is of real and substantial value to every farmer and merchant. Communications on this subject *should reach Halifax not later than 28th June.*

Our Agricultural Societies still continue to increase. The old North Sydney Society, which has been dead and gone for many years, has come to life again, as was evidenced at a recent meeting, when about 60 persons signed articles of membership. The Western Halifax Society has had the even tenor of its way disturbed by the general election. In the city it is found impracticable, during times of political excitement, to obtain meetings for the calm discussion of peaceful subjects. No doubt another meeting will be arranged soon. The country members have been supplied with seed wheat at cost price.

It was said by Hallam in "Middle Ages": "There are but two possible modes by which the produce of the earth can be increased; one by rendering fresh land serviceable, the other by improving the fertility of that which is already cultivated. This last is only attainable by the application of capital and skill to agriculture, neither of which can be expected in the ruder ages of society." Let us hope that we are getting out of the "ruder ages of society" in Nova Scotia, and that capital and skill are preparing to go in to the cultivation of the soil more fully than they have ever done before.

In England there are every week several sales of whole herds of thorough-bred short horns, and buyers are always ready. At the Stanwick sale the other day, which realized \$11,282.25, we notice that some purchases were made for Australia. The Canadian breeders are continually importing from England, and the English breeders also import from America. Mr. Cochrane's Duke of Hillhurst, a calf raised by him last spring from Duchess 97th by 12th Duke of Thorndale, has been purchased by Colonel Kingscote, a celebrated English breeder, and arrived in England on 29th April. We observe it stated that Mr. Cochrane sold cattle, sheep and

swine to the value of \$110,000 during the past eleven months, principally to American breeders. One head alone, sold to Lord Dunmore for exportation to England, brought \$5,000. Col. Pomroy, another well-known Eastern Township breeder, has sold \$3,000 worth during the year.

Mr. Fortune has introduced from Japan a new Hardy Japanese Primrose (*Primula Japonica*), said to be the Queen of Primroses. It will probably be for sale in London next spring, 1872. The flowers are of a rich magenta colour, arranged in tiers one above another, on a peduncle nearly two feet in height.

Among new publications noticed in the London papers for May we observe: "The Gold Yield of Nova Scotia, by A. Heatherington" (Trubner.)

OPERATIONS FOR JUNE.

From the America. Agriculturist.

KITCHEN GARDEN.

Many of the hardier vegetables were sown last month, and in southern localities the early crop of peas, beets, radishes, etc., are being harvested. Where the ground has been wet and cold, there is little use of sowing seeds until it is warm and dry. All kinds of seeds may be sown this month.

Asparagus may be cut on beds which are two years or more old. New beds may be set.

Beans.—When all danger of frost is over, plant in rows three feet apart. Limas started under glass may be set out after the ground is dry and warm; they may be planted to poles four feet apart.

Beets.—The early plantings must be thinned out and kept carefully hoed; the plants which are pulled up make excellent greens.

Cabbage, and its varieties, Broccoli, cauliflower, etc., all need the same general treatment when young. Set out the early plants from the hot-beds and cold-frames, and keep well hoed. Seeds for later crops may be sown in the open ground.

Carrots must be kept free from weeds, especially when they are small, for if allowed to grow they soon exceed the carrots in size.

Celery.—Sow as directed last month; stir the soil between the rows as soon as up, and weed.

Cress, or *Pepper-grass*.—Sow every week where one has a good locality to grow it well.

Corn may be planted this month, in rows four feet apart, which, in a garden,

is preferable to hills. Plant once in two weeks for a succession.

Cucumber.—Where there are cold-frames or hot-beds from which the plants have been removed, they can be profitably devoted to cucumbers. Plants started in pots or beds early, may be set out when the weather becomes warm.

Egg-plants.—Set out as soon as all danger of frost is over, in a warm, rich spot.

Lettuce.—Set out the early-sown sorts; give plenty of manure. Sow seed for a succession.

Melons need the same treatment as cucumbers. Give liquid manure when convenient; it aids the growth of the plants very much.

Onions.—Weed as soon as up, and keep the ground constantly stirred. A dressing of ashes, worked into the soil between the rows with a hoe, is very beneficial.

Parsley.—Sow in open ground this month after soaking the seed in warm water.

Peas should be bushed before they fall over. Earth up in hoeing. Late sorts may be sown.

Potatoes.—Hoe as soon as up; finish planting.

Radishes.—If a constant supply is wanted, sow every week, and keep clear of weeds; when insects appear, dust with air-slaked lime.

Parsnips ought to be sown early; they require the same treatment as carrots.

Rhubarb.—Do not remove the stalks from plants set last fall. Never cut the leaves, but pull with a slight sidewise twist; remove flower-stalks.

Squashes for late use may be planted the latter part of this month in well enriched soil. The early sorts are managed the same as cucumbers.

Tomatoes. Transplant from hot-bed as soon as danger of frost is over; set four feet apart.

Turnips.—If the black fly attacks the plants, give a sifting of fine air-slaked lime.

FLOWER-GARDEN AND LAWN.

Evergreens, if set early this month, usually do the best; the great secret is to transplant them just as they begin their annual growth. As soon as they are taken from the nursery, see that the roots are protected from the air, as a tree of this kind, the roots of which have become dry, seldom recovers and does well. Among the best for specimen trees, or screens, are the Hemlock, Norway Spruce, Arbor Vitæ, etc. In planting select, if possible, a moist, cloudy day; the soil around the roots should be fine and rich; fresh manure ought never to be used, but, when well established, give an annual dressing of good compost, with plenty of vegetable matter in it.

Margins around beds, or along walks, must be kept cut smooth by the use of the edging-knife. The outlines of the beds may be preserved by driving down stakes even with the surface.

Annuals.—The hardy ones must be sown immediately, while the tenderer sorts should be left until the ground becomes warm and dry, or they may be sown in boxes in the house now.

Perennials may be sown in beds apart from the annuals; keep free from all weeds. Sow seed of those coming into flower as soon as ripe.

Bulbs.—Plant out *Gladioluses*, *Lilies*, etc., as soon as the ground is dry. Tuberoses ought to be started in pots in the house or greenhouse.

Climbers.—Sow seeds of the Sweet-pea, Cypressvine, Morning Glory, etc., to hide old fences and other unsightly objects, or to cover trellises, etc.

Dahlias, which have been started, may be planted out this month.

Lawns.—In order to have a fine close turf, it is necessary that the ground should be rich, the seed sown thickly, and the grass mowed often. Weeds generally flourish best in a poor soil, where the grass does not make a growth strong enough to crowd them out. Lawns must be mowed often to keep the turf thick, and to destroy all annual weeds; the grass ought to be allowed to remain on the ground, where it acts as a mulch and fertilizer.

GREENHOUSE AND WINDOW PLANTS.

It has usually been the custom to put house-plants, and most of those in the greenhouse, out of doors during the summer; many plants are injured in this way, and when in the fall it is found necessary to return them to the greenhouse, they often present a very unsightly appearance. By ventilation, and shading of the glass, plants may be kept in excellent condition during the summer.

Shelter.—Plants out of doors need shelter from the sun and winds, especially Camellias; the pots ought to be placed upon a layer of coal-ashes, to prevent the worms from getting into them.

Plunging, or setting the pot in soil up to its rim, is often advisable, to avoid the necessity of frequent watering during very warm weather.

Bedding Plants may be set out in the open border as soon as the ground is warm and dry.

SHORTHORNS IN AMERICA.

BY AN ENGLISHMAN.

Before the present century dawned, some of our best Shorthorn cattle were imported into America; since that early period, both the States and Canada have bestowed great attention on their breeding, and no countries have made so many importations or paid

such large sums for good animals of the most fashionable blood. A history of American Shorthorns is now being compiled by Mr. Lewis F. Allan, the editor of the American Herd Book; therefore my purpose in the following paper is to give merely a sketch of those herds that I saw in a short trip of nine weeks, during which time only several of the leading herds in the States and Canada could be seen, and many good and well-known stocks were passed by, with regret, unseen. Shorthorn breeders, ere this, have been able to form their own judgment upon the cattle that have, since 1861, been sent back into this country, and their offspring have, by their own merit, shown that the blood has suffered little if any degeneracy, even under a change of climate and on different soil and food. Many difficulties present themselves in writing a short narrative of a winter journey. I shall, consequently, endeavour to set down only such things as came before an impartial eyewitness, for, if I mistake not, the public, hitherto, has never received any account of American Shorthorns in their native homesteads and pastures. Winter is not the season for cattle to show to the greatest advantage, but if animals look well at such a time, due allowance can be made for their appearance under more favorable circumstances. It has been generally considered that the American climate is against the growth of hair. The majority of those animals I saw, especially the younger ones, showed as much hair as may be seen in many herds in this country. Nature and fashion, however, adjust themselves to circumstances. The summers in many parts of America are exceedingly hot, hence Nature throws off that coat which is a protection against the cold in winter, and at the shows those animals attract the most notice that are sleek and as well groomed as a horse; consequently, in summer the cattle are well brushed, sheeted against the heat and flies, and not exhibited with that coat of hair so much admired here.

Few strains of blood have created of past years more attention than that of the "Duchess" tribe; the scarcity and demand for it in this country led to its re-importation from America, where, consequently, it has drawn forth as much or even more notice. Although *Duchess 34th*, generally admitted to be one of the finest of the tribe, was offered by Mr. Bates, in 1835 (whilst in calf with DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND (1940), by BELVEDERE), to the Ohio Company for 150 gs., she was not purchased, and the first exportation of Duchesses was made by Mr. Thorne from Earl Ducie's sale in 1853. A period of depression in America ensued afterwards, and it is considered that Thorndale, Dutchess County, New York, situated in a cold hilly district, near the Hudson River, in its deficiency of limestone, was unfitted to the growth and development of Shorthorns. Mr. Thorne sold most of his herd to Mr. Sheldon, whose estate at White Spring Farms, Geneva, is in a good grass region, has a fine Wheat soil, and is thoroughly adapted for cattle. Here the tribe increased, but domestic circumstances led to the sale of Mr. Sheldon's herd to Messrs. Walcott & Campbell, of New York Mills, Utica, where this branch of the tribe is at present located. There are (December, 1870) ten cows and heifers, varying from two to ten years old, two heifer calves, one 3-year old bull, and four bull calves; but all these cows and heifers are not in a breeding state. There is at the present time

great demand for the pure pedigree; the word pure is here used technically, and is intended to convey the blood of the successive bulls used on the family since the death of Mr. Bates in 1850. It may further interest the uninitiated breeder to know that after Mr. Bates obtained the tribe in 1810 he used KETTON 2D (710), whose dam was by a grandson of FAVOURITE (252), out of a cow by J. Brown's RED BULL, then a pure bull, THE CARL (646), bred from the "Duchess" tribe, who in his turn was succeeded by three bulls, of different strains, viz., 2D HUBBACK (1423), of the "Red Rose" tribe; BELVEDERE (1706), of the "Princess" tribe; and NORFOLK (2377), bred by Mr. Whitaker, from Nonpareil, with the blood of NORTH STAR, PUNCEU, and HUBBACK; and these three bulls, be it remembered, were all of Robert Colling's best blood. The CLEVELAND LAD (3407), a bull with three crosses, now generally known as the Oxford Cross, was introduced a few years before Mr. Bates' death, and it is only this cross now that is admitted as pure. Since the tribe has been in America, some of the animals have been kept pure, and the blood of the others has been intermingled with three different families, viz., the Booth blood, through 3D DUKE OF THORNDALE (17,749), and 3D DUKE OF AIRDRIE (23,717); the Knightly blood, through IMPERIAL DUKE (18,083); and the Burgley or ROMEO (13,619) blood, through 2D DUKE OF GENEVA (23,752). It is considered that the Booth and Knightly crosses are failures, because being very closely or strongly bred tribes, with a fixed type, they disturbed the strong current of the Duchess blood; but ROMEO was looked upon as being rather a loosely bred bull, so he therefore seems to have invigorated the tribe without disturbing their good qualities. ROMEO was first used with the Oxfords, and produced a very fine cow, whose son, OXFORD LAD (24,713), was the sire of 3d Duchess of Geneva, the dam of 2D DUKE OF GENEVA (23,752). This strain occurs also in Messrs. Loney's (7th Duchess of Geneva), and Mr. McIntosh's 3D DUKE OF GENEVA (34,753), reimported and sold at Windsor in 1867. It may be possible that this blood, being introduced in an indirect and diluted form, was more beneficial than the others introduced more directly.

The few still pure do not attract additional notice. One of the handsomest Duchesses (10th Duchess of Geneva) in the New York Mills herd was by 2D DUKE OF GENEVA, who was used by Mr. Edwin G. Bedford, an old established breeder in Kentucky, where there are several of his offspring. The bull's skull is still retained, and Mr. Bedford affirmed that it was the skull of the finest bull he ever saw. The chief merit, however, in the American Duchesses appears to be in their production of bulls, which, when used in other herds, produce a fine quality of stock. The cows themselves were stylish looking and large, in one or two cases almost approaching coarseness; the chest deep but often narrow, causing the fore-legs to stand somewhat closely together, the ribs well sprung and round, with great space from them to the hip, and great length of quarters, which had the effect of lightening the thighs. But they possessed that fine head and sweetly-curved face for which the tribe is distinguished. The eyes were singularly bright and prominent, but this was noticeable in the majority of American cattle. The calves

were being excellently managed—each had a good dairy cow as nurse, and they showed much vigour and wonderfully good coats of long hair. 4TH DUKE OF GENEVA, the sire in use, was a fine noble looking bull, having several good points, a deep red in colour, and with rather harsh hair.

The Oxfords, at New York Mills, comprised ten cows and heifers, only one pure—a hopeless breeder; two aged bulls, BARON OF OXFORD (23,371), 15 years old, and ROYAL DUKE OF OXFORD, 12 years old, both pure; three yearlings and two bull calves. Mr. Sheldon disposed of two of his best Oxford heifers to Col. King, of Minneapolis (who has since re-sold them to Mr. Cochrane), before the entire herd was sold. One of Messrs. Walcott & Campbell's heifers, with the MARQUIS OF CARABAS (11,789) cross, was a very good yearling, and Gem of Oxford, by 2D GRAND DUKE (12,961) from OXFORD by ROMEO (13,619), a good cow, rather small, but of excellent quality, and very full of rich roan hair. The two aged bulls were still in use. This tribe is considered in the States to be slightly coarse, but improved by the Duke crosses. The herd at New York Mills was first started with Rosamond, imported from Mr. Mason Hopper's herd, and descended from the "May Rose" or "Georgiana" (by Fitz-Remus) tribe. There were several of this family, one of which, Rosamond 7th, beat the recently imported prize heifers, Baron Oxford's Beauty and Charming Rose, in the 2-year-old class at the New York State Fair in the year 1870: although a good animal in high condition, she lacked length and elegance.

There were several good descendants of Mr. Wetherell's Roan Duchess (the "Blanch" tribe), and of Mr. Holmes' Victoria (Mason's No. 1), the latter with excellent forequarters. The herd also contained some of Colonel Towneley's Bampton Roses, some Gwynnes, and J's. There were two or three fine animals of the "Mazurka" family, a very favourite strain in America, which will be mentioned hereafter. The herd was well managed, and the cattle housed in large, airy, commodious houses, being seen inside them, they appeared somewhat to a disadvantage, and, although a good lot, apparently wanted uniformity of character. The farm is large, and one portion near the River Mohawk is very fine pasture land. Good hay, hardly so full of herbage as in England, is grown and stored in lofts over the cow-houses, very little cake is given, and shorts (fine bran) with a little corn (Maize) meal, is the principal food.

Two years ago the British public was much astonished at Mr. Cochrane's purchase of Duchess 97th for 1000 gs. from Capt. Gunter: last year he bought two more Duchess heifers, besides a very large number of the best animals that could be obtained throughout the country. In 1867, prior to the purchase of Duchess 97th, his agent, Mr. Simon Beattie, selected and bought Lady Pigot's prize heifer, Rosedale, at the Duke of Montrose's sale, and the bull BARON BOOTH, of Lancaster, from Barclay, of Keavil. These two animals were exhibited at various agricultural shows (called State Fairs) in Canada and the United States, and carried everything before them. Indeed it was difficult to keep the crowd from them, as these shows are much more numerous attended than at home, and are held on the same ground year by year, the sheds or boxes, with a large covered amphitheatre for judging, remaining fixed. As they were said to be of Booth blood the attention of breeders was more drawn to them, and demand for the strain arose. This led to further importations, and last year nearly 40 animals were sent out in one vessel, most of them at high prices. A few of these animals have been sold, but the larger and better portion has been kept for breeding, so that the herd, numbering about a hundred head, is looked upon as one of the best and finest stocks in the country.

With most of these animals, several of them being our Royal prize winners, the public is pretty well acquainted; the short time they have left England has not altered their character; indeed in several instances they seemed to have improved.

Mr. Cochrane's farm at Compton, Province of Quebec, is situated in a comparatively new country; the rough timber fences trailing snake-like across the fields, tree stumps standing a couple of feet high, the slight wooden houses and three-storeyed farm buildings, the water troughs of hollowed logs, present a striking contrast to one accustomed to Old England. White Clover and Timothy-grass grow luxuriantly in summer, and make good hay; capital Turnips are also grown. These are pulped, mixed with chaff, and with the addition of cake and mixed meals, makes an excellent food when the cattle are housed. The face of the country is generally white with snow for at least four months in the year, and the thermometer often marks 20° below zero, yet the cattle thrive exceedingly and do well; the calves suck their dams, or a nurse, and pick a little hay or meal as soon as they will, consequently they are in good condition, and have long coats of hair. One bull calf by 11TH DUKE OF THORNDALE, from Duchess 97th, of great substance, and with abundance of deep red hair, was particularly promising. The two Duchess heifers had improved since they were shipped last year, each having produced a fine healthy heifer calf; and the cattle generally showed the great attention and excellent management that was bestowed upon them.

11TH DUKE OF THORNDALE, purchased in 1867, by 6TH DUKE OF THORNDALE, out of a sister to Duchess 71st, was in service; he is a fine animal, red, with the distinctive white spots on the forehead and flanks, and of great depth and substance. Mr. BOOTH's ROYAL COMMANDER, also in use, had grown into a very handsome yearling.

One large wooden house, built on a stone foundation, contained 32 cow-stalls, and 30 boxes on the ground floor, with places for Turnips, pulping, and mixing; two inclined roads led to an entrance at the side of the building on the second floor, which contained 28 heifers and a large number of bull boxes; over this the hay and straw were placed. The sheep were also housed, but had a yard to run in as well. These houses were warm, clean, comfortable, and well ventilated; all the animals were turned out twice a-day to water, and appear in as good condition and as well managed as at home.

Except during a severe gale cattle crossing the Atlantic usually stand the voyage well, losing their food only for a day or two after starting, but in a storm their bellowing seems to denote their fright and suffering. One of the shipments last year met with a heavy gale, some of the animals burst from the strong boxes that had been put up between decks for them, and getting much bruised

took a long time to recover. A handsome mare broke from her box, and was so cut and knocked about by the rolling of the vessel, that she was obliged to be thrown overboard. It is found that cows and heifers usually travel better in calf, and if warmly housed a few days before going on board do better on the voyage. With judicious and careful feeding they keep up their condition well, and when unslipped, often by their antics appear to show their joy at landing. Few know the sufferings of sea life, and the risk and anxiety occasioned by the transport of valuable stock.—*From Mr. Thornton's Short-horn Circular.*

ASPARAGUS AND MUSHROOMS.

Why is it that these two delicious articles for the table are either so dear or so rare? is a question often asked. I fear the cultivation of neither is understood. Lately coming into the possession of a large farm in Montgomery county, almost within stone's throw of Philadelphia, I found on it an acre, more or less, of Asparagus, but it was, according to my preconceived and book knowledge, good for little and probably nothing. It was overgrown with the worst kind and most persistent of grasses, including the couch—the farm having been rented to a careless fellow—and I expected nothing less than to plough up the whole, and try to get rid of the nuisance. In this frame of mind, came on the Asparagus season of 1870, when, beholding! I had the most delicious crop—so declared by all who partook of it, that they had ever tasted; abundant and most succulent and flavorful. I gave it away by bushels daily, and had an over-supply besides. Now how is this? We learn from books that it must be planted so and so; stones must be placed to keep the roots from roaming, no grass or weeds, plenty of manure, and hogsheads of salt. The two latter are no doubt very useful, as I proved on a small corner, where the product was larger, but no more toothsome, as I thought on one year's trial.

Soon after the cutting season, it became necessary to make a deep road through the bed. We cut down five feet in some parts, and everywhere the Asparagus roots were to be seen, often four feet deep and more. Here was the secret: the covering of grass on the top seemed to have no influence whatever, the roots strayed and rejoiced in their liberty, and derived nourishment from great depths. I was willing to believe a discovery had been made. Now how does this tally with Mr. Editor's theory, that surface stirring is so all important?

MUSHROOMS. I find, like my own case, very few are able to get Mushrooms from their own greenhouses, or to buy them, except where nature provides for a few short day's supply. Tell us why? Every gardener you engage says he knows the secret—that they can be grown any-

where and everywhere, in cellars and outhouses, and under the slats of the walks of the greenhouse; and in all these situations have I seen them; but the sight was the exception, and I have come to the conclusion that gardeners either don't like to gratify their employers, or don't like the trouble. To say I have spent many dollars for spawn—very many—would be to say the truth; but I never had more than a turcen full of the fruits all told. A lady near Baltimore some years ago did find a gardener who understood the culture, and undertook to pay the cost of a fine greenhouse and large garden by selling mushrooms. She did so, and showed me her accounts, with a profit on the right side. Now we have in our great cities fruit stores selling, in winter, readily, long cucumbers at 75 cents each,—and by the way I priced Vicar o. Winkfield pears there in January, and the modest price was 75 cents a piece,—they were large and fine. Now let somebody who don't mind a little trouble, engage in raising Mushrooms, which it is easy enough to do. I will take at once, product to the value of two dollars a week, and be thankful—*Gardener's Monthly.*

DEVONSHIRE BUTTER.

The day has long gone by when any agricultural process could be stereotyped even in imagination. New circumstances arise, and new wants pave the way for new appliances. In the cheese manufacture what changes have occurred within a few years in this country and America: instead of the tenant of every little holding making a host of small cheeses from driblets of milk, the cheese manufactory has sprung up, and the milk is carried to that centre from a radius of several miles, which to the farmer is merely a matter of cartage, the distance being of no great moment to him; yet if we take the trouble to reckon the weight of the milk of a dairy of 100 cows, it will be a large item, even at the very moderate figure of only 4 gall. a day for each cow. This, at 10 lb. to the gallon, will give nearly 2 tons of liquid to be carted daily, and it will be frequently over 3 tons with cows newly calved, and no stint of grass. But it is the weight of milk, as regards the making of butter, to which attention has now to be directed; for it will be seen that where it is the custom to churn all the milk to make butter, the churning of 2 or 3 tons of milk daily is no small matter, and we find a horse employed to do the churning at the large farms. Where the farmer professes to make cheese only, the whey is boiled and skimmed, and the "flectings" churned to get all the fat out of the milk that can be got; and this whey butter, when first made, is very good, but it does not keep sweet for any length of time.

The wise man said truly that the churning of milk brought forth butter, but in Cheshire, at least, this is true of whey. The churning process has in all ages been a heavy item, and has been performed in so many ways that a large volume might be written on the art of churning. The Eastern churn which we read of was worthy of the time and of the people, and consisted of two leathern bottles (skins), filled half full of milk, and placed on the back of a camel, one on each side, and as the camel lifted his right fore leg and his right hind leg at the same time he would raise the right bottle of milk, and when he moved the left fore and hind legs, he would raise the left bottle, and produce that rocking motion from side to side that would be quite a pattern for a churnmaker. However painful it might be to the rider, the driving of the camel round and round churned the butter. The manufacture of churns has lately assumed large dimensions, as any visitors at the gatherings of the Royal Agricultural Society may see. Who is there in a small farmer's house—husband and wife, son and daughter—who has not suffered the torture of being obliged to churn cold cream in cold weather, till the temper of the whole household as well as their skins were warmed? To such weary wights we promise emancipation from the slavery of churning, for we have trustworthy information now before us to show that excellent butter can now be extracted from milk without the aid of any churn now in use, from the jolting of the camel to the latest patent timed to churn new milk in 10 minutes.

One of our correspondents has transplanted the Devonshire process of making better from scalded cream into farms scattered over the country, and has made good Devonshire cream in Scotland, in Lancashire, and in Wales, although it has always been said that the process was peculiar, and could only be done in part of Devon and in part of one of the adjoining counties. Clotted cream is merely rubbed for a few minutes in a smooth wooden tub by the hand, when the butter is ready for washing; and the amount of buttermilk is so small, that to every pound of butter there would not be more than half a pint of buttermilk. It will thus be seen that the great weight of this department will be removed from the farmer's shoulders, for if it takes 2 gallons of milk churned to yield 1 lb. of butter, the weight of the milk will be 20 lbs., whereas 1 1-2 lb. of clotted cream will yield the same weight (1 lb.) of butter. Where all the milk is made to pass through the churn, there will always be an ocean of buttermilk to be disposed of. This is by no means a desirable article to have on hand; but by the system of making butter from clotted cream there is no buttermilk, but in its place plenty of sweet

skim-milk, available for feeding calves or for the making of cheese, as well as for domestic purposes, purposes which butter-milk could not serve.

The scalding process is a very simple one. The milk is kept in tin pans and subjected to a heat a little under the boiling point, and this after it has stood from the previous day, so that all the milk of yesterday would be scalded this morning, and be set again in the cool till to-morrow morning, when it would be skimmed and the cream made into butter. The heat must be raised slowly, and no smoke must be in the apartment where the scalding is done. It has, moreover, to be kept still, not agitated or shaken, in order to get the cream to raise well, as it has only the slight difference of its specific gravity to enable it to raise at all. If allowed to raise to the boiling point by neglect the object is defeated. There are several points of detail besides what are here stated, but these will give our readers some idea of the principles of the system; the thing is no novelty, and it is in full work in the locality stated. The most convenient shape and size of the tins are as follows:—Diameter of bottom, 10 inches; diameter at brim, 16 inches; depth, 7 inches; made of strong tin-plate, with a wire handle at each side.

The vast amount of capital embarked in live stock on the farm makes every little item connected with their management of importance; every leakage is a loss, however small the cranny may be by which it is let out; and, on the other hand, every item of profit, however small, secured from materials running to waste, adds up in the balance-sheet to the credit side. The scalding process is a cleanly one, it is therefore a change for the better, and deserves a fair trial if for no other reason than to get rid of the slavery of the churn.—*A. F. in Gardener's Chron.*

ERADICATING THISTLES.

Many methods have been given, by which our crops could mature, without being interspersed with thistles; but the difficulty in the way of disposing of them, by summer fallowing, is the great expense in labor, etc., to accomplish it, and with this only. You must begin early with an energetic, willing plowman, good team and sharp points, because if the stalk is not cut off by the passing of the plow, you have only transplanted it, ready to come through to breathe the air again and grow. Now, the secret in disposing or ridding our fields of noxious weeds, is by really depriving them of the breath of life.

This is more particularly the case with quack (or switch) grass; plowing or cultivating land infested with it, to destroy it, has but little effect, unless in an uncommonly dry season, and a vast amount of handling of it, from the fact, that if there

is but one joint left in the soil it will send forth blades and grow, and it certainly cannot be plowed or cultivated, without more or less leaving them in that position. With the system of rotation of crops, no farmer need be much troubled with thistles, but with quack grass it is quite different.—*Cor. Country Gent.*

WHEN TO SOW GRASS SEED.

A correspondent of the *New England Farmer* says:—It has been the practice of most farmers to sow grass seed in the Spring, with wheat, barley, and oats. This will do, if the land is in good condition to seed down in April, or early in May. But when the land is too wet to work until late in May, or early in June, it is better to sow grain without grass seed, and when the grain is taken off, plow in the stubble, put on the manure, sow on the grass seed, and lay the ground down smooth. It is better for the following reasons:

1st. The young grass will make a more vigorous growth than when sown late in May, with grain, because the grain will grow up quick and overpower the young grass which will be feeble at best. And when the grain is taken off, it will sometimes die out by drouth and the heat of the sun, and if it does not die, it will make but a sickly growth.

2d. The land is generally dryer in August and in better condition to seed down, and it puts the stubble out of the way, and farmers have more time to do the work well.

THE SWALLOW NUISANCE.

Whilst the swallows are cheerful visitors, and beneficial to the husbandman as industrious insect destroyers, they are apt to be troublesome. The barn swallow does not give much annoyance, but the chimney fellow, should his family take up their quarters in a bedroom or sitting room chimney, is a great nuisance. From dawn to dusk peace and quiet are banished from the room, the droppings fall down upon the grate, and occasionally the eggs and some of the young birds as well; now and again, indeed, a complete nest (made of twigs glued together by the salivary secretion of the bird) will fall down, nestlings and all, the parent birds flying helplessly after them. They also introduce parasitic vermin into dwellings. There are two methods of preventing the building of their nests in chimneys. One is to put a piece of large mesh wire netting over the top of the chimney-pot; this plan is applicable where fire is used during the summer. Where a fire is not to be used for a time, the simplest plan is to stop up the chimney pot with an old mat or carpet

for a few days after arrival of the swallows, until they have commenced nest-building elsewhere.

TEACHING A HORSE TO STOP.

When I get a new horse, and that is not very often, I make it my first business to teach that horse to stop suddenly: when I first say whoa, by gently jerking up the lines, the horse soon begins to understand you. He should first be taught to stop while walking, then stopped on a gentle trot, and when, finally, driven rapidly. There isn't a horse in the world that cannot be taught in a day's time by a short, sharp whoa, without drawing on the lines. And they should learn to do this as quick as they can. Presently no matter how badly frightened the horse is, he will stop when he hears the word. Many horses become unmanageable when they get their tails over the lines, so if anything touches their heels, the word of the driver should be as potent as the stoutest lines.

Let me illustrate the value of my suggestions, by relating what I have saved in this way. Not long since, I purchased a spirited young horse, and the first lesson I gave him was to stop when I spoke to him. Soon after, I hitched him into the buggy, and got into it with all my family. I dare not say how many of us there were, lest some of your readers should envy me. Enough, that with what I had at my side, and on my lap, I could scarcely see the horse.

An unlucky whisk of the horse's tail brought the line under it, and quicker than I can tell you, the horse made two sudden bounds, and would have run away, but my timely "whoa" brought everything up standing; and I found the line as fast under the tail as though it were in a vice. The united strength of my whole family could hardly have pulled it out. After standing a moment it came out itself. Then the whole family breathed easier, and the reporters of the daily press lost a good item.

One day my horse and buggy were standing in front of my office, and a heedless expressman drove up with a top wagon, and fairly ran into my establishment. The fluttering of the expressman's curtains, and the rattling of his rickety wagon, frightened my horse so badly that he flew back, and tore the bits out of his mouth, broke his hitching strap, and started on a run. Looking out of the window, I saw with most indignant eyes the whole transaction, I sprang to the door and spoke a loud, sharp "whoa." And though I was some five or six rods from the horse, he stopped as though he had met a stone wall in his road. I breathed easier again, for I had saved fifty dollars, or seventy-five, the amount of the threatened smash-up.

Another day my horse was standing hitched, and kicking flies, got his feet entangled and fell down. While struggling to rise, the rump strap broke, and feeling himself loose, he sprang to his feet and started on a lively run, with the buggy in the rear. An old farmer gentleman just passing, instinctively cried out "whoa." "My gracious master, I never saw the like of that; why, if I had hit that horse over the head with a club, he wouldn't have stopped any quicker; fine horse, well broken; been one of my horses, sir, your wife would have plenty of kindling wood. Never stopped a horse that way before."—*Cor. Ohio Farmer.*

Miscellaneous.

SLEEPING FLOWERS.

Almost all flowers sleep during the night. The marigold goes to bed with the sun, and with him rises weeping. Many plants are so sensitive that they close their leaves during the passage of a cloud. The dandelion opens at five or six in the morning, and shuts at nine in the evening. The goat's beard wakes at three in the morning, and shuts at five or six in the evening. The common daisy shuts up its blossom in the evening, and opens its "day's eye" to meet the early beams of the morning sun. The crocus, tulip, and many others, close their blossoms at different hours towards the evening. The ivy-leaved lettuce opens at eight in the morning, and closes for ever at four in the afternoon. The night-flowering cereus turns night into day. It begins to expand its magnificent sweet-scented blossoms in the twilight; it is full-blown at mid-night, and closes never to open again with the dawn of day. In a clover-field not a leaf opens till after sunrise. These are the observations of a celebrated English author, who has devoted much time to the study of plants, and often watched them during their quiet slumbers. Those plants which seem to be awake all night, he styles "the bats and owls of the vegetable kingdom."—*Horticulturist.*

A MUSHROOM CAVE.

A correspondent of the *London Journal of Horticulture* thus describes a visit to a French mushroom cave:

We first found out Madame Froment, whose son kindly accompanied us, and in due course we were conducted to one of these openings, having first provided ourselves with candles, etc. To those who have descended coal mines or such other subterranean retreats, and who, like Lieutenant Warren in his exploration of Jerusalem, are said to delight in groping, it is nothing; but to staid and sober people like myself who affect the upper air and

level ground—whose backs do not bend so easily as they used, and whose heads are none of the steadiest for such work, the descent is an ordeal of no common nature. You looked down a large opening of about 70 or 80 feet in depth, and by an ingenious contrivance had to swing yourself on to a very rickety-looking swing ladder, which had to be repaired before we could venture on it; but I was committed to it, and so down we went. When we reached the bottom we were very soon *in medias res*. Galleries were on all sides, and into these we soon dived. As we wound along, the owner narrated to us sundry funny adventures he had had with visitors, amongst others of a certain Lord Mayor from the Emerald Isle, whose copious rotundity was considerably in his way in some of the passages, and who puffed, fumed, and steamed through them. Our conductor, besides being thoroughly used to it, being a thin spare man, could thread his way along easily where his more corpulent companion found considerable difficulty. All along these passages were long narrow beds of varying heights and sizes, but all small, and entirely different from anything we are used to in mushroom culture. On these beds, which were covered with a peculiar calcareous soil, were mushrooms of all sizes, from tiny little pins' heads up to good-sized tea-cups, some as white as driven snow, others with a faint tinge of buff. On we went. Sometimes we had the greatest possible difficulty to get along, so very low was the ceiling; and now and then we came upon an opening where a larger portion of the stone had been obtained, and here the beds were sometimes four, five, and six deep, but all of the same form—slightly rounded and low. The *champignoniste* would every now and then stop, bid us admire some fine cluster of his productions, and expatiate on their beauty. Some idea of the extent to which this culture is carried on, may be gathered from the fact that this one man had ten miles of these beds in this subterranean garden, from which all through the year immense quantities are sent into Paris.

GRASSING A TERRACE OR BANK.—

"To use the most improved method of covering a bank of earth with grass, there is just one satisfactory way," if time and uniformity of the surface are important. This is to cover it with sods, taken from a road side or from an old pasture-field. A heavy seeding of white clover and red-top will make a good finish where the soil does not wash and gully away; but alone they are hardly reliable for terrace work. Upon very steep surfaces the turf may be held in place by means of wooden pins driven through it into the bank. Pieces of lath, a foot long, answer the purpose very well.

TOMATOES FROM CUTTINGS.

W. W. Canada says: The *Canada Farmer* of Feb. 15th contains an article upon the Tomato, in which it is stated that cuttings of this plant should be taken in the fall, kept through the winter, and set out in the spring, and that this mode of propagation is better than sowing seed in spring, etc. Now it seems to me that the tomato being an annual, cannot be propagated by cuttings taken in the fall and kept through the winter. Am I right, or is the writer in the *Canada Farmer* correct?

[Any annual can be perpetuated for an indefinite number of years, by cuttings each year. It is reasonable that tomatoes would be somewhat earlier this way; of course it involves extra trouble. We supposed the *Canada Farmer* was dead, as we have not heard of it for two years.]

We copy the above from the *Gardener's Monthly*. It appears that in the matter of Tomato-raising, Halifax is ahead of all Canada and the outlying Republican States, for Mr. Harris regularly grows his Tomatoes from cuttings, and not from seed, and finds that by this means they fruit much earlier and more abundantly, and as regards robustness of plant, no seedling grower can hope to compete with him.—Ed. J. A.

EARLY CHICKENS.—The season of the year has now fully arrived when breeders ought to have their stock mated and placed in their breeding pens, and whenever a hen shows signs of incubation, no time should be lost in placing eggs under her. The early hatched chicken has many advantages over those of later birth; it should be borne in mind that it is in early chickenhood the frame is made that will hereafter place it in the ranks of the large birds of its breed. And although feeding has much to do in the production of size and maturity, other things being equal, the early chicken is sure to be the best. It behoves breeders, then, who wish to excel in this respect, to produce early chickens, although at the cost of considerable more care and attention than is necessary in the raising of those at a later period in the season.—*Poultry Chronicle.*

IS POULTRY KEEPING PROFITABLE?

Upon this subject the *Western Rural* makes the following just and sensible remarks, giving some cogent reasons why poultry should be kept upon the farm, and as to the profits arising therefrom.

"For several years poultry have been very profitable, eggs and chickens com-

manding a high price. By a little attention to their breeding and management, poultry may be made very valuable to the farmer in many ways, one of the most important being the excellent manure which they make. A comfortable frost-proof poultry house should be constructed, in such position that the hens will have access to the orchard, for they are exceedingly useful for destroying the curculio, the apple worm, and other hurtful insects. Plum trees in a poultry yard generally yield an abundant crop of fruit, perfectly free from the attacks of the curculio. The best breed of fowls are always the most profitable; but even these should not be kept more than two or three years. Old hens should be got rid of, and young, vigorous pullets put into their places. The floor of the poultry house should be covered with wood ashes, dry muck, or old sawdust, for the purpose of absorbing the offensive smell. The house should be cleaned frequently, and the manure kept in a shed, or in large casks or boxes, until required for use in spring; its effect on field or garden crops is remarkable."

TANNING LEATHER—I send you a receipt for tanning leather, which may prove useful to any farmer who is not acquainted with it. Soak the hide eight or nine days in water, then put it in lime; take it out, and remove the hair by rubbing it, and soak it in clear water until the lime is entirely out. Put one pound of alum to three of salt, dissolve in a vessel sufficiently large to hold the hide; soak the hide in it three or four days, then take it out, let it get half dry, and then beat or rub it until it becomes pliable. Leather prepared by this process will not do so well for shoes, but answers well for ham strings, back bands, and various other purposes on the farm.—*A., in Southern Cultivator.*

A lady florist says, to grow a very pretty vine from the sweet potato, put a tuber in pure sand or sandy loam, in a hanging basket and water occasionally. It will throw out tendrils and beautiful leaves, and will climb freely over the arms of the basket and upward toward the top of window. Not one visitor in a hundred will know it, but suppose it to be some rare foreign plant.

HOUSEHOLD WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.—Wheat flour, one pound is one quart. Indian meal, one pound two ounces is one quart. Butter, when soft, one pound one ounce is one quart. Loaf sugar, broken, one pound is one quart. White sugar, powdered, one pound one ounce is one quart. Best brown sugar, one pound two ounces is one quart. Eggs, average size, ten are one pound. Liquid measure, sixteen tablespoonfuls are half-a-pint.

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King of the Earlies or Fifty Dollar Potato—The earliest, most prolific, and finest of all the American varieties. 133 lbs. raised from one. 25 cents lb.

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