

The Messenger Almanac.

February.

Last Quarter, Feb. 5th, 4h. 45m. morning.
New Moon, " 13th, 4h. 4m.
First Quarter, " 21st, 3h. 1m.
Full Moon, " 27th, 3h. 0m. afternoon.

Table with columns: Day, SUN. Rise, Sets, MOON. Rise, Sets, High Tide. Rows for days 1 through 28.

THE TIDES.—The column of the Moon's
Southings gives the time of high water at
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Windsor, Newport, and Truro.

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AGRICULTURE.

WHEN TO PLOW.—E. A. Roby, of
Sparta Centre, says in the Germantown
Telegraph:—I have seen so much
wheat fail from bad preparation of the
soil, that I am constrained to remind
the wheat-growers that nothing pays
better than thorough cultivation of the
soil, and for wheat especially. And a
careless, slovenly way, merely plough-
ing and dragging, won't do for wheat
if it is to be sown in the fall. If I am
to cultivate a sandy loam, I should pre-
fer to plough it in the spring, if for a
summer crop; but of course for a win-
ter crop, in the fall. If I have a clay
soil and want to use it for winter
wheat, I would plow it in the spring
or summer, as soon as the ground gets
dry enough, because to make a good
seed-bed it must be worked to keep
the weeds down, and pulverize the soil
so as to give the wheat a good start.
But plowing a hard, dry, clay soil in
August, is a bad time to get the lumps
slacked so as to cover the seed. The
ground for fall wheat should be so work-
ed that it will be fine and mellow in the
driest time.

FAT SHEEP FOR HEAVY FLEECE.

A writer in the Country Gentleman,
says: "There is much said about ewes
being too fat to breed well. In my ex-
perience of twenty years I have never
seen anything that led me to think so,
providing the flesh was put on with
pasture during the summer and a few
fodds with hay in the winter. The fat-
ter sheep become under such circum-
stances the more valuable I consider
them. There is no time in the year
when it pays better to feed a small al-
lowance of grain daily than in the au-
tumn after the food gets frozen, and it
is not necessary to bring the flock to
the barn. It is an old saying that
'Sheep well Novembered are half-win-
tered.' Keep the ewes fat, and the
lambs will be fat and the fleece heavy.
I do not say it is better to have lambs
come early or late; but whether early
or late they are salable. All ewes
that, with good care, will not raise a
lamb and shear four pounds of washed
wool, should be sold. I have them in
my flock that shear nine pounds and
raise a pair of twins, and it costs no
more to keep one than a sheep that
shears but three pounds. I think that
no one will hear the man who keeps
his flock in this way, complaining because
his sheep are 'run out,' and 'do not
pay him,' and the like._ticks must be
kept out of the flock; they are the
worst enemies of the sheep. If they
are not killed, they will destroy the
sheep. For killing them I have tried
nothing better than tobacco juice."

SHEEP.—A run in a stubble field

when the ground is bare, or the snow is
only three or four inches deep, will be
of advantage to the sheep. Any weakly
ones should be kept out by them-
selves, in a place where they can be
looked after. A constant watch should
be kept over the flock, lest one should
fall into a furrow or drain and be un-
able to recover itself. Ewes may thus
be lost if neglected. Never fail to
count the sheep when they go out and
come in. Never compel them to jump
over bars, but remove the lowest one,
lest legs be broken. If a sheep's leg is
accidentally broken, bandage it with
splints, and keep it by itself for a week
or two, until the fracture is repaired,
which is easily done, without any dress-
ing or other treatment.—American Ag-
riculturist.

POULTRY.—If early eggs are de-

sired, the pullets and young hens should
be fed in the mornings with some
cracked corn steeped in boiling water
until it is only moderately warm. In
the afternoons some corn warmed in
the oven may be given. Between
these meals some mixed feed of pota-
toe peelings, house scraps, and season-
ed with red pepper, will be useful. A
cabbage may be hung in the yard for
them to peck at. Provide a clean,
warm, but well ventilated house, and
nests of clean straw.—Jb.

VARIETIES.

A LEAF YEAR INCIDENT.—I hard-
ly know what kind of an offering to
make you for the coming Christmas,"
fondly lisped a young Chicago fellow
to his true love, in her father's
parlour, one evening or week or two
ago. "You don't?" said she. "No,"
said he. "A pause of several mo-
ments here took place, when she
suddenly laid her little head upon his
shoulder and murmured: "An offering

did you say?" "Yes dear," he replied,
"I can't conceive what kind of a
one to make you." "Ah-hem," said she
clearing her throat, and then she poured
forth in silvery cooing notes:—"Ed-
ward, dear, w-wouldn't an engage-
ment ring b-be an offering?" It was
an awful thing to do what she did, but
he didn't seem to care for that—he was
so glad—and besides it was leap year.

Discussion between a wise child and
its Aberdonian tutor: "That star you
see up there is bigger than this world,"
"No, it isn't." "Yes, it is." "Then
why doesn't it keep the rain off?"

The shortness of life is very often
owing to the irregularities of the liver.

SCIENCE.

THE LIFE OF A SPONGE.—Before
they read this paper, I want my read-
ers to procure a piece of sponge, and to
hold it in their hands, and examine it
well, as we try to find out some of the
secrets of its history. No doubt you
have handled it often before, and used it
for many purposes, but perhaps you
have not cared to ask its wonderful life
story. Once it was alive. What kind
of life had it, do you think? Did it
grow like a vegetable, always in the
same place; or did it run about, like
you? Well, it did neither, yet it had
the same kind of life as you have. It
was an animal. If you had seen it
growing on its rock, you would certain-
ly have thought it looked much more
like a plant, and for many years it was
thought to be so; but it has been dis-
covered that it had three characteristics
which no vegetable ever had. In the
first place it did not draw its food from
the ground through roots, but supplied
itself through little mouths; then when
it was young, it could move about; and
lastly, it showed a will of its own by
taking in food of its own accord, just
when it was wanted. So, after that,
naturalists thought it only fair to call
it an animal.

Let us go back to the first birthday
of the little creature you hold in your
hand, and see how it came into the
world. Look at that rock yonder out
in the ocean; growing it is a cluster of
sponge, from which falls a tiny, pear-
shaped jelly. That is a baby-sponge.
What a queer baby, without head, or
eyes, or ears, or feet! Yet though it
has none of these things it is happy, for
it can feel and float. All over its body
are tiny bristles, which it moves about
in all directions, and with which it
draws in food. In this state the sponge
is called a gemmule; and the little bris-
tles are called its cilia or eyelashes.

Merrily the little gemmule floats
along, until far away from its birth-
place, it finds some rock which is to
be its future home. The narrow end of
its body is fastened to the rock, but
its cilia, go on moving constantly until
it is fixed quite secure. Then they lie
down on the rock, and it never moves
them again. Now, as we watch, we
can see a great many dark spots begin-
ning to float in its jelly-like body.
These will some day become the fibres,
which you see in it when it is severed
from the rock. They are made of
substances which the cilia have drawn
out of the water during the short time
in which they had the power of motion.
In a few days they have done something,
the effects of which last a lifetime!
What a lesson for us all to make the
most of our time and opportunities
while we have them!

The little spots of fibre soon join to-
gether into the beautiful network of
holes which you can see in it now. In-
side this framework the living jelly
grows, filling all the holes, and cover-
ing the outside of the sponge. Through
these holes the little creature sucks in
the sea-water on which it feeds, and
when this has well soaked through its
body, it sends out what it does not
want through the larger tubes or holes
at the top.

So the sponge lives until it is torn
from its rock, and then the living jelly
turns into a kind of thick glue and dries
up, which is its way of dying. The
skeleton sponges are gathered eagerly,
some to be employed in various useful
ways; others, and more delicate, that
grow in all kinds of beautiful shapes,
like trees, and trumpets, and even
globes, are preserved in museums and
collections of curiosities.—New-York
Observer.

DOWN IN A COAL MINE.—An Eng-
lish coal mine was recently photograph-
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