

THE FARM.

BUCKWHEAT.—Take one season with another, no grain pays as well as buckwheat. It is generally regarded as a crop of no importance. If a farmer raises it at all, he generally sows it on a piece of land that he thinks will produce little or nothing else. He raises the crop partly to prevent weeds from taking possession of it. If the land is smooth enough to use a grain-drill and harrow on it it is rarely sown to buckwheat. This crop is a very cheap one to raise. But a small amount of seed is required, and it is not desirable to sow it till all the other field crops are in the ground. It matures quicker than any field crop raised, with the possible exception of millet or Hungarian grass. It can be harvested and threshed without the aid of expensive implements. On the other hand, its growth appears to be positively beneficial, as it shades the ground and causes the turf to rot, while it prevents the appearance of weeds. The grain is excellent for human food, while it is desirable for feeding fowls and animals. In many parts of the country it is cheaper to raise buckwheat than corn for feeding hogs and poultry. No bee-keeper can afford to be without a field of buckwheat, as it produces a very large amount of white honey. In short, "taking one consideration with another," it is far too profitable a crop to be neglected as it is.

The Appleton Gazette says in reference to the stoves for burning hay and straw. A prairie stove must be set so as to have a good draft, a stack of straw or worthless hay, fit only for burning, be placed near the door instead of a wood pile, and six cylinders made of sheet iron, two feet long and fifteen inches in diameter, and then sprung so as to be thirteen inches one way and seventeen the other, in order to more nearly correspond with the shape of the fire-box in the hay stove. These cylinders can be filled with hay as easily as an armful of wood can be picked up and put into a wood stove. One cylinder of hay put into a stove last night, lasted four hours, and warmed two rooms; but when cooking is being done, about two cylinders of hay per hour will be needed. Nice choice hay will burn and make a good fire, but it is not necessary to burn hay for stock. Straw will make a hot fire. Even straw-threshers are run by burning straw. Old dried prairie grass, will make an excellent fire.

STRAW FOR FUEL.

"The Americans burn money, we burn straw," says the Mennonite settler. How they keep warm in winter, and cook the year round with no other fuel than loose straw, is a mystery to the average American. The Mennonite immigrant, when choosing a locality, is quite unconcerned at the total absence of timber, and will settle many miles from wood or coal, with indifference as to the fuel question in localities where an American would never think of making a farm. He sees fuel for the first year in the miles of grass about him; the second and succeeding years he will have the straw for his crops, and straw stacks are his favorite substitutes for the wood pile and the coal bin. We first saw straw in use for fuel at the house of a Russian Mennonite bishop in the colony of McPherson County, Kansas. Dinner for four of us was to be prepared. A vigorous young Mennonite girl vanished with a bushel basket, and returned with it full of loose straw, then placing her kettles, etc., on the top of the cook range, opened the fire-door, and trust in two large handfuls of straw, touched the match, closed the door, and the kettle commenced singing almost immediately. In about two minutes the door was again thrown open, and two more handfuls thrust in and the door closed. Our dinner consisted of ham, eggs, potatoes, Russian waffles, and excellent coffee, all cooked in less time than an ordinary stove could have been made "hot for biscuits." The fire was "dead out" before the dinner was half consumed, and the house none the warmer for the fire, the surplus heat all escaping through the broad chimney.—American Agriculturist.

THE HOUSE.

HINTS FOR HOUSEKEEPERS.—After you have swept your carpets quite clean you may brighten them with a flannel cloth wrung out from beef's gall and water. White paint may be cleaned as well as windows by using whiting and water, while grained woodwork should be wiped with a flannel cloth wrung out of cold tea. Wash pantry shelves with hot alum and water to rid them of ants, water-bugs and other troublesome insects.

Heat the bread knife very hot when about to cut new bread; this will prevent its crumbling.

TO CLARIFY DRIPPING.—Take the dripping hot from the fire and pour it into a basin with half a pint of boiling water, stir well and let it stand till cold. The impurities will settle in the water and at the bottom of the cake of fat; this can be scraped off with a knife, when the dripping will be quite pure. Or you may put the dripping into a basin with a little water, and let it simmer in the oven for half an hour (taking care that it does not burn). When cold the water and sediment will sink. The dripping should then be scraped, and will be ready for use. Another plan is to have a stewpan kept for the purpose, into which all dripping may be put indiscriminately. Add to this a very small proportion of water (about half a small teacupful); place over the fire until it begins to steam, which shows that the water has evaporated. Turn out into a basin at once to cool. Bacon fat, which is too often wasted after frying, may be clarified likewise, and forms an excellent substitute for lard in pastry making.

PARSNIP OYSTERS.—Boil parsnips until tender and mash well. To a pint of mashed parsnips add a table-spoonful of butter, three well-beaten eggs, salt and pepper to taste, and enough flour to hold the mixture together. Make into small flat balls and fry in butter until brown.

COCONUT PUDDING.—Remove the shell and brown skin from the nut; grate fine, mix with the grated pulp of one coconut three ounces white sugar and half the grated peel of a lemon, add milk for two pies, put it into tins lined with paste, and bake it not too brown.

PAPERING WALLS.—To make wall paper stay on whitewashed walls use one pound of glue and one-fourth bar of soap, dissolve in six quarts of scalding water. Let it stand until only blood warm and apply with a whitewash brush, let it dry thoroughly and paper.

Potato flour, or the dried pulp of the potato, is attaining great importance in the arts. It is stated that in Lancashire England, 20,000 tons of it are sold annually, and it brings at present in Liverpool about double as much in the market as wheat flour. It is used for sizing and other manufacturing purposes.

The general food of the Norwegians is rye bread, milk, and cheese. As a particular luxury peasants eat "sharke," which are thin slices of salt hung meat, dried in the wind, but this indulgence in animal food is very rare indeed. A common treat on high days and holy days consists of a thick pastry pudding or porridge of oatmeal or rye meal, seasoned by two or three pickled herrings or salted mackerel.

RUMP STEAK PUDDING.—Cut about two pounds of tender steak into pieces an inch and a half square, and season these with a dessert spoonful of salt and a teaspoonful of pepper. Line a shallow, thick-rimmed pudding dish, well buttered, with a good suet crust half an inch thick, and leave about an inch of pastry over the edge. Lay in the steak and add a quarter of a pint of stock, gravy or water. Cover the meat with a circular piece of pastry that was left over, press it closely and tie the dish rather loosely in a cloth which has been wrung out of boiling water and floured. Plunge the pudding into boiling water and keep it boiling quickly until done enough. Either serve it in the dish, round which a napkin has been tied, or turn it carefully

upon a hot platter after allowing it to stand five minutes. If liked, a circular piece of pastry may be cut out of the top of the pudding and a slice of butter may be put into it to enrich the gravy.

The domestic animals of a majority of our farmers can be more than doubled in value by more careful breeding, feeding and selection.

HEALTH HINTS

REASONS FOR LOW VITALITY IN WOMEN.—A stuffy room, with air constantly heated to 75°, is the most efficacious invention ever devised for ruining health. But it is equally true that habitual warmth is the very best preserver of constitutional strength in middle and old age, and undoubtedly this is the best maintained by a temperature of 63° and plenty of clothing.

A very important aid to warmth is a proper diet. Many women who suffer continually from a sense of chill below the tide of healthy life, have yet constantly at hand an abundance of nourishing food. But they eat one day at one hour, the next at another; they don't care what they eat, and take anything a flippancy-minded cook chooses to send them; they wait for some one, when themselves hungry, out of mere domestic courtesy; and when their husbands are from home they take tea and biscuits because it is not worth while giving servants the trouble of cooking for them alone. In all these and many similar ways vitality is continually lost, and with every loss of vitality there is a correspondent access of slow chills, shivering inertia.

It is a great mistake that women are taught from childhood that it is meritorious in their sex to conceal their own wants, and to postpone their own conveniences to that of fathers, brothers, husbands, and even servants. For in the end they break down, and are left in a state of ill health in which all the wheels of life run slow. The trouble, in a sentence, is, that women have no wives—no one to remind them when they are in a draught, or come in with wet feet, no one to get them a warm drink when chilly, and ward off the little ills which soon become great ones by living, thoughtful, constant care and attention.

When the joints are stiffened with rheumatism or a settled cold, the following applications are said to be capital, and enable the sufferer to move with ease: Cut into small bits (or grate) one ounce of castile soap, and a heaping tablespoonful of cayenne pepper. Have these in a small pitcher, and then pour on to them half a pint of boiling hot water. Stir until all is dissolved, and add a little cider, or alcohol, when bottling. An application of the above brings the blood in a glow to the joints, and on rubbing a little sweet oil to relax the muscles, the patient will be enabled to walk with perfect ease.

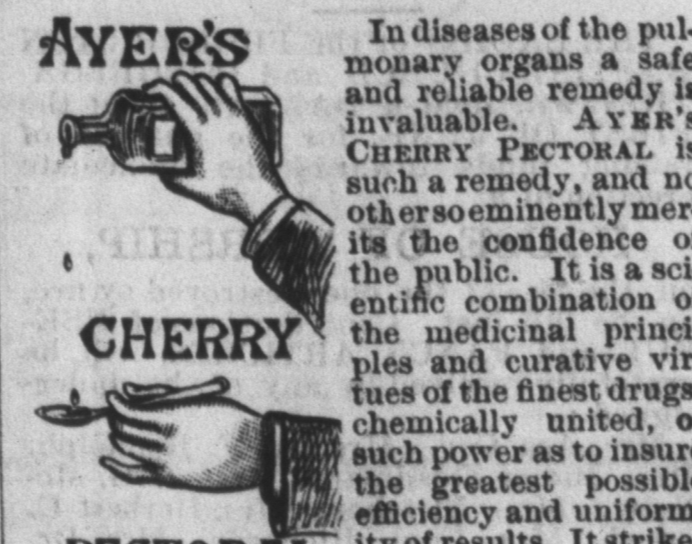
WEAR FLANNELS.—The value of flannel next to the skin cannot be overrated. It is invaluable to persons of both sexes and all ages, in all countries, in all climates, in every season of the year, for the sick and well; in brief, I cannot conceive of any circumstances in which flannel next to the skin is not a comfort and a source of health.

HOPS have many uses. A handful of them steeped in a quart bowl (always steep in earthen) of water until the strength is extracted, and sweetened with loaf sugar, and bottled for use, is as good or better than any hop bitters ever purchased. Dose, one glass full taken three times a day; is a good antibilious alterative and tonic for ordinary family purposes. For outward application, make some small bags of cotton six inches square and fill with hops. When the face aches, or the head is in pain, or the throat and chest are sore, heat one or more of these bags very hot, up to scorching the cloth even, and apply to the suffering part. It is a great improvement on wet cloths, or wet applications of any kind.

It is now announced, on authority of an eminent physician, that it is not healthy to rise before eight o'clock in the morning. This applies only to husbands. Wives can rise as early as seven, and start the fires as heretofore.

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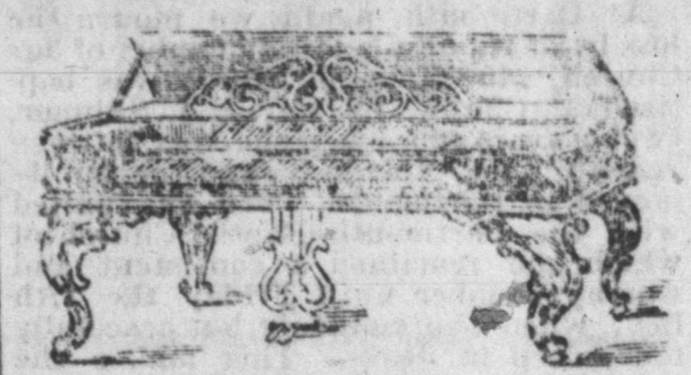
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