

THE FARM.

CORNTALKS AND STRAW FOR FUEL.—A story told by Eli Perkins has some interest for Northwestern farmers:—

The smartest man I've met in Iowa is a farmer near Fort Dodge. His name is Bill Ruggles. He has a 400 acre farm, a splendid dairy, a coal mine under his farm, and a fine belt of hard timber within sight of his house.

When I went into Mr. Ruggles' large sitting-room I noticed a very large stove. It was the shape of a parallelepiped—about four feet long, three high, and the same broad. It heated the sitting-room and hall very nicely.

"I see you burn wood Mr. Ruggles," I remarked as I held my hands up to warm them. "No, sir—I can't afford to burn wood; it's too much work to cut it."

"Then coal I suppose?" I continued. "No sir—too much work to dig coal. I'm burning something that beats coal or wood—cheaper than either of them, though I have both coal and wood on the farm."

"Well, what can you burn cheaper than coal or wood?" I asked, desiring to solve the problem.

"Why, I burn cornstalks, sir. Cornstalks are the cheapest and best fuel on earth. It is ten times as easy to gather cornstalks and tie them into bunches as it is to cut down those trees. Why, I can go into the cornfield with two men and in a day bundle up cornstalks enough to warm my house all winter."

"Let me see you put some cornstalks into the stove," I said. Mr. Ruggles stepped to the door and brought in a bundle of cornstalks about two feet through. They were bound tightly together. The bundle weighed about thirty pounds. Then, lifting the top off the stove, he laid them in upon the glowing embers and closed up the front damper.

"How long will they burn?" I asked. "Three hours. I don't let them burn with a flame. My stove closes air-tight. I let them burn slowly without flame. I get all the heat there is in them. The stove is large, with an immense radiating surface. It doesn't have to be very hot."

"Now," said Mr. Ruggles, "five such bundles a day keep my sitting room warm—or 600 bundles for the winter. I can bind up 600 bundles of cornstalks in two days alone. I couldn't chop the wood to warm this room in a week. Then in the spring I have a load of strong ashes for my wheat field, while my neighbors have to cut up the same cornstalks in the spring to get them away from the harrow. It makes me smile when I hear about these idiots up in Minnesota who have fifty acre corn-fields, and still go cold or buy coal. Why, I'd rather burn cornstalks than cut maple wood in sight of the house."

"How would wheat straw do?" I asked. "Just as well, only the stove would have to be twice as large. I'd have it made of sixteenth-of-an-inch boiler iron, four feet long and four feet high, with one little damper, which could be closed air-tight."

These stoves can be made of sheet iron. Any tinner can make them. They should be large airtight vats, with little pipes, and one little damper, which can be closed tight by drawing a piece of sheet iron over it. These stoves can be made three-cornered, and set in the corner of a room out of the way. To keep them from burning the partition, put a layer of mortar or a row of bricks between the stove and the partitions, also have brick and mortar under them. This thick brick and mortar will serve as a reservoir of heat, and one hot will remain hot for hours.

One man in Minnesota showed me a stove for burning straw, which was built of brick. It was set into the side of the house so as to warm two rooms and was fed from a third room, which was the wood-shed. Thus the dirt, ashes, and straw all littered up in the wood shed, while the clean heat came in the house. On each side of the stove, between the stove and the partitions, were layers of brick a foot thick, which acted as heat-reservoirs.

THE HOUSE.

Borax is better than soap in cleansing the hands, and it softens the skin. For washing the hair, cleansing brushes and combs, in extracting dirt from clothes without rubbing, in driving away ants and roaches, it is the housekeeper's friend.

STEWED CLAMS.—Of clams and how to stew them, "Bob the sea Cook" writes thus enthusiastically:—"Take a quantity of them and scrub the shells well, and put them in a clean iron pot, stirring them occasionally, when they will open of their own accord; take out the meat and put them on a strainer, and pour a little cold water on them, because, do what you may, a little sand and grit will remain if you don't do this; then take a stew-pan and put in that a quarter of a pound of butter, some chopped parsley, some cracker dust, a little pepper, not much salt, and the juice of a lemon, and when it is right hot, then put in your clams and cook just five minutes.

FLOWER SEED IN POTS.—A few general rules are applicable to all seeds sown in pots:—

1. All pots and pans used for seeds sowing should be well drained in the ordinary way, and, as fine soil is much employed in seed sowing, a layer of dry moss or of roughish soil should separate the drainage and the fine soil above.

2. The soil on the top surface of all pots, pans, &c., used for seed sowing, should be finely pulverized by sifting.

3. Good sandy loam may be taken as the basis of all soils used for seed growing, but it should always have at least half its bulk of finely pulverized leaf mould, peat, or some vegetable soil in it, and fully one fourth of the whole should be sand.

4. The soil should be made perfectly fine and firm in the pots, particularly in the case of small seeds.

5. All seeds sown in pots, frames, or houses, require shading during sunshine, and it is particularly necessary for the smaller seeds on the surface.

SWILL BARRELS.—A swill barrel on the farm, where every waste substance is thrown to sour and rot, is a piece of furniture we have little respect for. There is no place for it in the house, nor in the dairy room, nor in the barn, it is far better to abolish it entirely or else keep enough swine to consume all the waste of the kitchen, dairy, and farm in a fresh condition.

RAISED DOUGHNUTS.—One-half pint of new milk, one cup of sugar, scant half cup of shortening (I use equal parts of lard and butter), two thirds cup of good yeast, one egg, mix up hard with patent process flour, let it rise over night, or until perfectly light, then roll out, cut in shapes, and place on a cloth sprinkled with flour (the cloth, of course, laid on a board), let them rise until very light and puffy, then fry in hot fat, two-thirds lard and one-third suet. They are nice, and as healthy as doughnuts can be, for they do not soak fat.

NORFOLK DUMPLINGS.—Make a very light dough with baking powder, as if for bread, with milk or water and salt added. Have ready a large steppan of boiling water. Make the dough into balls the size of a medium dumpling, throw them in and boil them for twenty minutes without taking off the lid. To ascertain when they are done enough stick a fork into one and if it comes out clear it is done. Before serving tear them apart on the top with two forks, as they become heavy by their own steam. Serve with butter, sugar, or syrup.

SKIM MILK, being really the life-sustaining and most valuable part of the milk, will not always be wasted as it is at present. It will be utilized as human food and acquire an increased value, and this while it will enhance the income of the producer, can not fail to have a bearing on other dairy products. Considerable advances have already been made in this direction. The enormous waste of flesh forming food through this channel is becoming appreciated, and will not long be tolerated. Some way will be advised to turn it to better account.

USEFUL HINTS.—If your coal fire is low, throw on a tablespoonful of salt and it will help it very much.—In icing cakes, dip the knife frequently into cold water.—In boiling meat for soup, use cold water to extract the juices. If the meat is wanted for itself alone, plunge in boiling water at once.—You can get a bottle or barrel of oil off any carpet or woollen stuff by applying dry buckwheat plentifully and faithfully. Never put water to such a grease spot, or liquid of any kind.—Broil steak without salting. Salt draws the juices in cooking; it is desirable to keep these in if possible. Cook over a hot fire, turning frequently, searing on both sides. Place on a platter; salt and pepper to taste.—Beef having a tendency to be tough can be made very palatable by stewing gently for two hours, pepper and salt, taking out about a pint of the liquid when half done, and letting the rest boil into the meat. Brown the meat in the pot. After taking up, make a gravy of the pint of liquid saved. A small piece of charcoal in the pot with boiling cabbage removes the smell.—Clean oilcloth with milk and water; a brush and soap will ruin them.—Tumblers that have had milk in them should never be put in hot water.—A spoonful of stewed tomatoes in the gravy of either roasted or fried meats is an improvement.

A firm at Syracuse is manufacturing barrels from straw paper pulp, subjected to a powerful hydraulic pressure, and when reduced to the required thickness the halves are cut off at the ends. The pieces are then placed in the steam drier and the sides are trimmed evenly and the substance thoroughly dried. The advantages of the barrels over wood-ones are lightness, cheapness, durability and the prevention of floor sitting out while in transit. They are constructed entirely by machinery, and the halves are cut so true that any pieces of the same will readily fit together. They will not cost more than one-third the price of wood-ones, are lighter, and fit so nicely in the grooves that there is no chance of the floor sitting through, which loss forms a heavy percentage in the use of other kinds.

When Mr. Alexander Gunn was dismissed from the Customs at Leith, in consequence of his having sent in a wrong return, the entry made in the books against him stood thus: "A. Gunn, discharged for making a false report."

An important case was tried before the Criminal Court of Columbia. An old coloured man was on the witness stand. Tired of asking fruitless questions, the district attorney suddenly put a leading one:—"Have you ever been in the penitentiary?" "Yes, sah." All eyes were now turned upon the witness. The district attorney smiled complacently, and resumed: "How many times have you been in the penitentiary?" "Twice, sah." "Where?" "In Baltimore, sah." "How long were you there the first time?" "About two hours, sah." "How long the second time?" "An hour, sah. I went there to whitewash a cell for a lawyer who had robbed his client." The attorney sat down, amid the laughter of the spectators.

A little child was addressed by a gentleman the other day. "How old are you, my dear?" he asked. "O'd!" said the child indignantly, "I am not old at all. I'm quite new."

A devotee to Mammon once received a lesson that it is to be hoped proved useful to him. "Do you know, sir," blustered the rich man, "that I am worth a hundred thousand pounds?" "Yes," was the reply, "I do; and I know it is all you are worth."

"Frightened mouse" is the latest fashionable colour. It is described as a pale grey, with a dash of greenish-brown in it.

A woman who has four sons, all sailors, compares herself with a year, because she has four sea-sons.

Says Punch—"Pat, Jr., (in answer to enquiry by Saxon tourist)—'There's foive of us, yer Honour, an' the baby,' Saxon—"And are you the oldest?" Pat, Jr.—"I am, yer Honour, at present."

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DEAR SIR,—Having been induced to try your Emulsion Cod Liver Oil, as a remedy for influenza, with Cough, Cold, &c., I have much pleasure in testifying to its beneficial results as compared with any remedy ever previously used. Unlike most Cough remedies, it neither nauseates nor weakens, but pleasantly invigorates the general health.

ASA TONIC FOR CONVALESCENTS, recovering from Diphtheria, Fever, and all exhausting diseases where the whole system is run down and requires building up, great benefit will be found by the use of

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DEAR SIR,—I have used your Emulsion in my family for the simple cough, as well as for the more obstinate kind, also for general debility. In every case it has given the utmost satisfaction. I cheerfully recommend it as an excellent family medicine.

AS A BLOOD PURIFIER It will be found to exceed the many medicines now offered, as it supplies the BLOOD WITH IRON,

which is a constant and necessary constituent of the body, and must be regarded as an important FOOD, and so highly and justly recommended by the Faculty in the treatment of PALE, WEAK AND ANEMIC WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

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Has paid to the Widows and Orphans and Beneficiaries under its Policies, \$6,379,975.37. Has paid to Surviving Members under Endowment Policies and Annuities, \$1,992,316.91.

And has returned to its Policy-holders, in the way of Dividends, \$3,396,668.04. And for Surrendered and Lapsed Policies, \$5,116,955.80. Total payment to Policy-holders, \$17,425,916.12.

This is the ONLY Company that issues Policies giving the benefits of the MAINE NON-FORFEITURE law, and specifying in definite terms by its Policy Contract, that there can be NO FORFEITURE of the Insurance by non-payment of premium after three annual premiums have been paid, until the value provided for is exhausted in EXTENDED INSURANCE.

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Further information relative to the plans of the Company furnished on application at office, Hollis St. March 23.

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