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Agriculture.

Buckwheat—Its Varieties and Culture.

Of all grains grown on the farm, doubtless buckwheat is one of the most profitable, since the labor employed in growing and harvesting a crop is one half that bestowed in the growing of oat, wheat, etc. In some sections of the country, particularly in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and some of the New England States, this is an important product, for the reason that it flourishes comparatively well on poor soils, and is usually a sure crop to plant. Its uses are various, and the demand always good. Its use as one of our principal breadstuffs is well known, and "hot griddles" are a necessary appendage to every good breakfast, particularly during the winter and spring months. When mixed with other grains, especially corn and oats, it makes a most excellent kind of provender, and is greatly relished by swine; and for winter feeding is excellent, as it is of a heating nature, and for this reason should only be fed in moderate quantities. For poultry it is one of the best grains we have, and is only surpassed for egg production by refuse wheat. Buckwheat requires a light, warm soil, mellow and not over fertile, and, like beans, when planted on rich soil, the straw is more abundant than the grain, and therefore too rich soil is not favorable for a large yield.

Properly speaking, there are only two sorts, the black or brown, and the silver hull. The first variety is mostly planted, and is excellent for all the purposes for which the grain is used. The latter sort is claimed by some to be much superior to the former, while others who have tested it pronounce it inferior. The silver hull ripens a few days earlier and continues longer in bloom, while it is claimed by some growers that the yield per acre is nearly double under the same conditions. The grain is of a fine light gray color, varying slightly in shade, and the corners are much less prominent than in the ordinary variety, while the husk is a trifle thinner. "The flour is whiter, more like wheat, and is quite as nutritious" as the black variety. As a honey plant it is quite valuable, but gives a dark shade to the comb and is heavy bodied, but the flavor is ordinarily good, though not equal to that made from white clover. The seed should be sown from the first to the fifth of July, at the rate of from three pecks to a bushel to the acre, and should be harrowed and bushed in. It is a rapid growing grain, and matures in September, and should be cut before the grain is too ripe, to avoid shelling. Cut when the dew is off; and after the straw is dry rake into little bundles and stand on end, giving the top a little twist, so that the straw will hang together and not fall over.

The yield on good soil is from fifteen to twenty five bushels to the acre, the former figures giving about the average yield. The straw heretofore has been considered worthless save for bedding; but a late experiment made in steaming and adding a little meal has resulted in proving conclusively that when fed in small quantities it can be utilized as a very good mash for stock. There is doubtless very little nutriment in the straw, but when sprinkled with meal it becomes valuable and palatable. It is said to be of a loosening nature, hence it may be fed with decided advantage during the winter. A variety of food for stock especially valuable, and by occasionally feeding the straw in connection with hay and cut straw, will no doubt result in decided good to farm stock. Almost every farmer has some piece of ground adapted to this grain, and, while not rich enough for corn and other grains, will produce a good crop of this sort of wheat. On new land the crop is most abundant, while the grain is plump and large. We can confidently recommend the growing of buckwheat to all who do not ordinarily grow this important product. It will help to eke out the other sorts grown, and the result in feeding will be satisfactory. —*Farmer's Advocate.*

Drying Hay.

The following reasonable hints on drying hay are given by a correspondent of the *Diregg Rural*:— Although there are, and for many years have been, a few farmers who believe that the common methods of drying hay are wrong, and who insist that it is better to put grass into the barn while it is in its natural state, the great majority of practical men still hold to the old system of evaporating the moisture. That some men have succeeded pretty well in keeping their grass when it has been put into the mow in a green state, I do not deny. But there is plenty of evi-

dence that many others have tried the same plan and failed. I have never tried to keep grass without drying it, but with all my care have often had smoky hay. This result has frequently followed the storage of hay which, on account of poor weather or because the grass was extremely thick, did not receive as long an exposure to the sun as was usually given. From what I have seen and heard and read, I am convinced that it is the best way to dry grass quite well before storing it in barns.

Not only does hay need to be dried well but it is also important that it should be dried quickly. The best hay is made from a good quality of grass which is cut in just the right stage of its growth and dried very rapidly. It is very much better when it can be done, to secure a certain amount of drying in one day than it is to have the process extend over two days. With heavy grass it is not always possible to secure a sufficient degree of evaporation in a single day. This is especially true early in the season. As the grass ripens, and the hot weather continues, the hay can be dried in a much shorter time than it can if cut early.

Motion is a powerful agent in facilitating the drying process. Hay that is turned three or four times a day will dry very much faster than that which is only stirred once. For several years I have used a tedder and have found that there is a great gain in time, as well as a saving of labor, to be secured by its use. The turning is done quickly and the hay is left so light that it dries extremely fast. By turning both before and after noon, hay which would otherwise need two days' sun can often be sufficiently cured the same day that it is cut. Of course, much depends upon the condition of the weather and the degree of ripeness of the grass. The point to be kept in mind is that frequent and thorough stirring greatly facilitates the drying of hay.

While I firmly believe that it is not merely best, but absolutely necessary that hay should be dried before it is put into the barn, I am also confident that a great deal of hay is over dried. There are extremes in both directions. The best rule is to dry grass just enough to have it keep perfectly and then stop. The hay cured in this manner will have a fresh appearance which over dried hay does not present. If dried too little, the hay will be smoky or moldy. If dried too much it will be hard, brown and of only second quality. Hay which is raked and put into the barn during the first part of the afternoon, while the sun is hot and there are no traces of dew, will keep better than that which has been equally dried, but is allowed to remain in the field until five or six o'clock.

As the value of hay depends, to quite an extent, upon its being properly dried, and as the difference in the various kinds of grass is so great, the weather is so variable, and so many other uncertainties surround the case, it will pay the farmer to make the subject of drying hay a matter of careful thought and study.

Breeding for Milk.

The property of milk yielding is hereditary. It would indeed be contrary to reason if it were otherwise; for milk is structurally a portion of the cow, and even its liquid portions are influenced by the character of the structure through which they must pass to appear in the reservoirs of the gland. We thus find individual cows of great excellence in any breed which has been used in the dairy for generations, as well as other individuals of poor quality, and we are enabled to determine which ones are large milkers by external signs of structure. The popular appreciation of this fact of hereditary quality is evidenced by the generally favourable opinion of the Ayrshire breed as of large milking capacity and the difference of opinion as to the milking quality of short-horns. In the one case a breed kept and reared for milk, and milk in large quantities the recognized product; in the other case, a breed kept and reared either for milk principally or for beef purposes, and hence opinions modified according to the character of the breeding which is under observation. The average yield of the so-called native cow, although she has been subjected to years of unconscious selection and oftentimes careful selection in her breeding, cannot be in excess of 1300 quarts yearly for the best dairy regions of America, although individual selection by good farmers may increase the average yield of first class herds to 1800 quarts annually; the highest average results we can figure for single years being about thirteen hundred quarts per cow. The Ayrshire breed has, however, been bred for milk, and as a consequence the yield of average herds can be at about two thousand

quarts; of superior herds 2500 quarts, and at 3000 quarts even, per cow per year. As we near countries where breeding is not carried on for the purpose of milk we find but small yields.

The wild cow yields but sufficient for the use of the calf, among the table lands of Columbia, where the cattle are but partially domesticated, it is only by allowing the calf to run with the mother by day that a small quantity of milk can be obtained at night. Among the Damaras of South Africa a first rate animal rarely gives more than two or three pints daily, and this only in the presence of her calf. The small cows of Brittany, on the other hand, have yielded, as an average for five dairies including 82 cows, 1,243 quarts in a year; a dairy of the small Keries in Ireland reports 2,337 quarts for an annual yield; the Waushakum herd of medium sized Ayrshires in Massachusetts, as an average for 13 animals, yielded 2,812 quarts per cow in 1872; the herd of six at the New Jersey Agricultural College, of heavier animals under high feeding, averaged 2,258 quarts per cow in 1872. The heavy Friesland and Dutch breeds, 1,490 quarts, and the neighborhood of Harlem, an excellent pasture, as stated by Dr. Starling, Inspector of Dutch Agricultural Schools, to average 3,188 quarts per cow per year. The individual range of cows varies exceedingly. We offer for maxima in this country:—Ayrshire, weighing 900 pounds, 9,593 pounds milk; in Scotland, 13,486 pounds; Shorthorn, weighing 1,400 pounds, 11,705 pounds milk; Holstein, weighing 1,225 pounds, 11,681 pounds milk; cross between Holderness and Durham, weighing 1,590 pounds, 11,118 pounds milk; grade shorthorns, 10,757 pounds milk.—*Scientific American.*

Pruning in Midsummer.

It is many years since, from our own experience, we recommended people to prune at midsummer, although we knew it was opposed to the views of many eminent horticulturists. At that time it was regarded as a bold innovation on established rules; and we have often since seen articles to show that summer pruning must be wrong. The reason by which that is supported is no doubt very good. It does seem by the reasoning we have referred to that it ought to be wrong to prune at that season; but on the other hand we have the evidence of our own senses not only that no harm, but absolute good resulted from the summer pruning of trees. But it seems to be forgotten by many good people that there are two sides to every story, two sides to winter pruning and two sides to summer pruning. Few of these horticultural operations are unmix good or unmix evil. In any case what we have to accomplish is to be gained, sometimes at a little expense of good points—good if we are after some other object. So in this summer pruning question. It is said by persons whom the whole horticultural community respect, that "winter pruning strengthens while summer pruning weakens trees;" and if one were to deprive a tree of the whole of its foliage this would probably be true enough to work serious injury. It is on the principle on which noxious weeds are destroyed. Denuded of every leaf as fast as one appears, a plant is often killed in one season. But may not this be different when only a few branches are taken off? The remaining leaves and branches have more food at their disposal. What was intended for a thousand branches is now to be divided among nine hundred. But we are not supposed to enter into these minute points of physiological science. It is enough for practical men to know that the cutting away of a few branches has never been known to work any serious injury; while the ease with which the wound heals over is in striking contrast with the long time it takes a winter wound to get a new coat of bark over it. We have seen in a vigorous, healthy tree a stout branch of two inches in diameter taken off, in which the new bark nearly covered the stump in two years; in winter the same spot would have been several years in closing over, and perhaps the parts would decay first, and thus lay the foundation of future disease in the tree. So well is this known that, in many places where winter pruning is practiced to any great extent, it is not unusual to have shellac or some other composition ready to paint over the wounds, to keep out the weather until it shall have closed over the new bark.

Of course a heavy loss of foliage would be a serious loss to a tree; but it is very rare that any tree has been so much neglected as to need the half or even the fourth of its branches taken off in summer time. But there are in many cases branches here and there along the trunks of trees which

it is an advantage to the tree to lose; and thinning which may be done in various ways to advantage, and in such cases summer pruning will tell a good tale.—*Germaniston Telegraph.*

Another Plea for polled Cattle.

Some five years since, we purchased a polled cow that had had a good reputation as a milker (and, by the way, this was about the only point sought after in making our purchase; we cared but little about horns or no horns), but, after observing her quiet, gentle ways, we became a thorough convert to the idea that polled cattle are the safer and more profitable when kept for the dairy or for beef purposes than horned cattle of like excellence in all other respects.

Had we statistics to show the amount of damage done by such cattle worrying each other and goring horses and sheep, to say nothing about the human lives lost, the converts to this idea would multiply rapidly.

During the past summer, a neighbour of ours had a valuable mare running in pasture with his cows. One day he found her dead in the field, with pools of her blood lying about her, and yet he was slow to believe that one of those gentle cows was the culprit. The blood-stained ornament that adorned the head of one of them convinced her in open court.

Such cases as this we hope are rare ones, yet they are known more or less to every community in the land. Some thirty years ago, Gideon Platts, of Honeoye, N. Y., was a breeder of shorthorns. One day, while riding along the road near Pittsburg, he saw two polled animals in a field adjoining the highway, one a cow, and the other a two year old heifer. The thought occurred to him to purchase them and breed them to his shorthorn bull as an experiment. The cow was purchased at once, but the owner could not be induced to part with the heifer till some months later. The result of the cross has more than equalled Mr. Pitt's expectations. The heifer dropped a promising half calf the following spring which developed into a noble animal, possessing in a marked degree the type and characteristics of his shorthorn sire, with a crown as smooth as a Norfolk red.

He proved very positive as a sire in this particular; nearly all calves of his get were polled, whether the dam was a shorthorn or of the common stock of the country. A few years since, John G Briggs, of Honeoye (now deceased) had an excellent herd of his descendants, that like him were essentially shorthorn in form and contour. Quite a number of this race of cattle are still owned in the vicinity; and of late years they have attracted considerable attention from a few breeders. Nearly half of the cattle on exhibition at the two last fairs of the Hemlock Lake Agricultural Society were polled cattle: some of them were pure Norfolk reds.

Recent experiments with the shorthorn cross like the one made by Mr. Pitts have given the same results. We believe there is no one feature or characteristic among cattle more readily obtained when the right crosses are made, or more positive transmissible, than this of being polled or without horns. When our American cattle breeders wish to secure this excellence in their herds they need not go far, nor expend a large amount of capital to secure it.—*Wallace's Monthly.*

The Cattle Export Trade.

The Toronto Mail, in a late article, on the movements of the cattle export trade from Canada this season, which has been successful hitherto, holds that there is every reason to think that it will go on increasing. It refers to the part which Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick is taking in it. It says:—

Although the cattle export trade from this continent to Europe has already reached large proportions, its continued development is assured by the dearth of cattle in almost every continental country as well as the United Kingdom. France, especially, is said to be falling behind in its domestic supply, and is obliged to import more largely than hitherto to meet the requirements of an increasing population. The importation of cattle into Germany, chiefly from Russia, shows an increase of 20 per cent. from 1872 to 1878; that of hogs, 110 per cent., and of sheep, 214 per cent. Even Belgium is now importing live stock from Denmark. Russia and Austro-Hungary are reported to be the only nations which can furnish their neighbors with surplus cattle. These facts afford good ground for the belief that the cattle trade from America to Europe will steadily increase and furnish encouragement to our farmers in extending their stock-

raising operations. Among the new features of the trade are the preparations of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick farmers to enter into stock breeding for exportation; the proposal to ship store cattle to Ireland; and the prospect of Canadian American butchers' stalls being opened in London and other British centres for the sale of American beef at American prices. English papers received by the last mail refer to the fact that foot and mouth disease was detected in a cargo of sheep landed from the United States, and entertain the apprehension that the Order-in-Council for the slaughter of cattle and swine landing in England from American ports will be immediately extended to sheep. Last year the United States exported 43,740 sheep, and recently the shipments have been on a large scale. Should the order prescribing compulsory slaughter at the port of entry be so extended and continued, of which there is every prospect, as pleuro-pneumonia still prevails extensively in the Eastern States, the demand for Canadian cattle and sheep will be increasingly brisk. The outlook for the trade is an exceedingly favorable one, and farmers may rely upon obtaining good prices for good stock.

Do Not Mow too Close.

There was true economy in the advice of the farmer who recommended that the lower joint of the grass be left in the field for the old blind cow, rather than be cut and cured for her. He was one of the numerous army of mowers who had learned that is nothing gained by cutting too close. The testimony with respect to the height from the ground at which it is best to cut grass is conflicting, and tends to confuse and oftentimes mislead a novice in the hay field. Cultivators vary in practice from one half inch, or as close as possible, to four inches. The general tendency is, however, to cut close, and many fine meadows have been seriously injured therefrom.

Close observation has taught that timothy cannot be cut low, in dry weather especially, without inflicting injury. All attempts at close shaving the sward should be avoided. Many of our most successful farmers cut timothy nearly or quite four inches from the ground. Others, in gauging mowing machines for this grass, take care to run them so high that it will not be cut below the second joint above the tuber. Close mowing of upland meadows ought also to be avoided, as the action of the hot sun and dry weather following the harvest affects the roots of the grass unfavorably when left without some protection. On the other hand, low mowing grounds will bear cutting as close as possible; these are benefited by the influences which would dry and burn up an upland meadow. Again, where the practice is followed of top dressing the meadow immediately after taking off the grass, the mowing may be done low, and a smooth surface left to cut over the next time.

Generally speaking, grasses cut two inches high will start much quicker and thrive better than when shaved close to the ground; the finer grasses as a rule, when the season is not a very dry one, can be cut lower with safety than coarser sorts.—N. Y. World.

Pumpkins as Milk Producers.

The pumpkin is stated to be by those who used it, "an important auxiliary in producing milk. When analyzed, it has been found that of the whole pumpkin, there is about 10 to 12 per cent of dry substance. It has a large per cent of water, but not more than the parsnip or fodder corn. It is comparatively rich in albuminoids. In producing milk, some dairymen have got a prejudice against it, from the effect of the seeds when given in too large a quantity. The seeds have a diuretic effect, operating on the kidneys, and this has sometimes lessened the flow of milk; but if a small portion of the seeds is removed, the danger is wholly avoided. And probably the cases of injury have been occasioned from feeding more than the due proportion of seeds. Thirty pounds of pumpkins fed to each cow per day will increase the yield, and improve the quality of the milk; but more than this should not be given. They are very cheap food, since it requires very little labor to raise them. From two to three tons may be grown, with a good yield of corn, per acre, requiring little more than placing the seeds, at distances of 20 feet apart, in alternate rows of corns, after the corn is up. The cultivation of the corn will be sufficient attention to the pumpkin crop; and this will often be worth as much as 10 to 15 bushels of corn per acre. This crop is appropriate to the whole country, and will

well repay the attention given to it. Pumpkins are a good fattening food for cattle, sheep, and hogs. They are a good food for pigs, serving to counteract the heating effect of corn. They are easily kept from freezing, and may be fed in cold weather. They are cheaply gathered and stored costing much less than any root crop, according to value.

The Month.

Work, work, constant work is now calling your attention. Keep a little ahead if possible. Cultivate and destroy the germs of the weeds before they show the green leaf; this is the cheapest way to kill them. Do not be afraid of stirring the ground, especially if it gets dry. You increase the crop by sowing. The earth, if stirred, absorbs the moisture.

Do not let your hay crop turn to a woody substance before cutting; hay and grain are both better by being cut early. Keep down the Canada thistles; do not let them break in your fallow or among your hood crops.

See how comfortable your neighbors' cows and sheep are under the shade of those fine trees. If you have none, make up your mind you will have a shade for yours in a few years. If your poor beasts have to suffer in the hot sun, do you not think it would pay you to set up a few posts and lay some boards on them, or get some green branches and put on the top to make a shad? There is nothing like making animals comfortable if you wish to make the most profit from them.

You may perhaps complain about the price of butter or cheese. Do you think either of them will improve in quality while in your possession? If not, sell. Tons of cheese were sold last year for two cents per pound because it was kept till past its prime; tons of butter were sold for grease at five cents per pound. By keeping you may perhaps realize these figures. Keep the potatoes free from the Colorado bug by applications of Paris green and plaster. If you do not perhaps you may lack potatoes in the winter.—*Farmer's Advocate.*

Controlling Vicious Horses.

A new and very simple method of training vicious horses was exhibited in West Philadelphia recently and the manner in which some of the wildest horses were subdued was astonishing. The first trial was that of a kicking or "bucking" mare, which her owner said had allowed no rider on her back for a period of five years. She became tame and gentle in about as many minutes, and allowed herself to be ridden about without a sign of her former wildness. The means by which the result was accomplished consisted of a piece of light rope, which was passed around the front jaw of the mare, just above the upper teeth, crossed in her mouth and thence secured back to her neck. It was claimed that no horse will kick or jump when thus secured, and that a "bucking" horse, after receiving the treatment a few times will abandon his vicious ways forever. A very simple method was also shown by which a kicking horse could be shod. It consists in connecting the animal's head and tail by means of a rope fastened to the tail and then to the bit, and drawn tightly enough to incline the horse's head to one side. This, it is claimed, makes it absolutely impossible, for the horse to kick on the side of the rope. At the same exhibition, a horse, which for many years had to be bound on the ground to be shod, suffered the blacksmith to operate on him without attempting to kick while secured in the manner described.—*Lebanon Courier.*

How to dry Flowers with Sand.

There are many of our brilliant flowers—such as dahlias, pansies, pinks, geraniums, sweet Williams, carnations, gladioli, which may be preserved so as to retain their color for years. White flowers will not answer for this purpose, nor any succulent plant, as hyacinth, or cactus. Take deep dishes, or those of sufficient depth to allow the flower to be covered inch deep with sand. Get the common white sand, such as is used for scouring purposes, cover the bottom of the dish with a layer half an inch deep, and then lay in the flowers, with their stems downward, holding them firmly in place while you sprinkle more sand over them, until all places between the petals are filled and the flowers buried out of sight. A broad dish will accommodate quite a large number. Allow sufficient sand between. Set the dish in a dry, warm place, where they will dry gradually, and at the end of a week pour off the sand and examine them. If there is any moisture in the sand, it must be dried out before using again, or fresh sand may be poured over them the same as before. Some flowers will

require weeks to dry, while others will become sufficiently dry to put away in a week or ten days. By this simple process, flowers, ferns, &c., are preserved in their proper shape as well as in their proper color, which is far better than to press them in books. When arranged in groups or mounted on cards or in little straw baskets they may be placed in frames under glass.

Make the Table Attractive.

A great deal of enjoyment of a meal depends on the appearance of the table. A clean, smoothly ironed tablecloth and napkins are the first requisites. If these are carefully folded after every meal and laid in a box kept for the purpose, they will look well for several days. Where there are small children, a square white oleothold bound with scarlet braid or simply pinked around and laid under their plates, will prevent much soiling of the tablecloth. A few bright pretty dishes add much to the appearance of the table. Now during the summer a pretty ornament may be secured for every meal by merely running into the yard or garden and gathering a few buds and flowers and sprays of green for a bouquet. This habit, if once commenced, will so grow upon the taste that the spoons or napkins will hardly be more indispensable. It is well to let the children furnish the table bouquets from their own flower beds. One day when our Willie gathered a cluster of apple buds and blossoms for the dinner table, a friend who sat at the table said to him, "Those blossoms if left on the tree would have grown to be apples." "I would just as soon have the blossoms," was the answer. A pretty ornament for the table is made by placing a goblet in a shallow glass fruit dish and filling both with flowers. If the scarlet radishes are laid on the green lettuce in the salad bowl, it makes almost a bouquet for it.—*Cor. Farm and Fireside.*

Preparing Rennet.

It is always an advantage to the cheese that the rennet be prepared some time before it is wanted for use; an English dairyman recommended that it be made in February or March, and that as large a quantity be provided as can be consistently with the size of the dairy. They find large olive jars useful for steeping the rennet, some of which will hold thirty gallons. A hole is made at the bottom to draw the rennet, and they think it much better to draw this way, from the bottom, than disturbing at the top by dipping out. A wooden tap should be used, as the acidity of the liquid has an injurious effect on a metal one.

They have a piece of board, with holes perforated in it, to put into the jar under the veils or rennet to prevent their getting to the bottom and obstructing the liquid running out. The rennet is prepared by first making a brine strong enough to bear an egg. It is then boiled for half an hour, and when quite cold, put into the jar. For every two gallons of brine six veils are added and one lemon sliced. An ounce of saltpetre is also added to every two gallons.

They claim that rennet should also be prepared at least two months before using.—*Germaniston Telegraph.*

The Habits of the Colorado Beetle.

The editor of the *Maine Farmer* (who by the way, does not appear to have heard of or come across "the treatise" of Professor Riley, entomologist of State of Missouri on this pest) writing of its habits, says:—

The habits of this beetle are briefly as follows: The eggs are deposited by the female to the number of six or seven hundred, at intervals during forty days, on the leaves of the potato, in somewhat regularly arranged loose clusters. After the lapse of about six days they hatch into larvae which feed upon the foliage of the plant about seventeen days; they then descend to the earth where they change into pupae. The perfect beetle appears ten to fourteen days after the pupae is formed, begins to pair in about seven days, and on the fourteenth day the young female commences to deposit her eggs, thus requiring about fifty days from egg to egg again. This period is subject to variation, according to the condition of the weather and supply of food when in the larva state.

White hellebore is the best remedy for the currant worm. Begin with it as soon as the worms appear and use as often as they show signs of mischief.

It is related of a Kentish farmer that he condensed his practical experience into this rule: "Feed your land before it is hungry, rest it before it is weary, and weed it before it is foul."