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Miscellaneous.

Whole-Milk or skim Cheese.

This question seems to have agitated the dairymen's associations more pointedly, during the past winter, than ever before. It has been charged, at nearly all of them, that the manufacture of both butter and cheese at the same factory, has been the principal cause of decline in our goods in England—that this poor skim cheese has so confused the English consumers, as to the quality of our goods, that our finest make has suffered for the sake of the skim factories.

There is, no doubt, much force in this representation. The amount of skimmed goods has been so large, and its quality has been so various—some of it closely imitating whole milk cheese and, again, of that the poorest quality—that the consumer has been in great doubt as to the quality he is buying. The appeal is made to the creameries to discontinue either butter or cheese making—if butter is to be made cheese making should be abandoned, and the milk fed to pigs or other stock, and not made into cheese to be sent to a foreign market, where it will depress the whole stock more than the price it brings. But is not this a simple appeal to the creamery manager's benevolence—his feeling for the interests of the whole milk cheese maker? How is the butter factory patroned to be benefited by a high or low price for whole-milk cheese in England? If his principal product is butter, then the question with him is how he can make the most out of the skim milk; and if he can make more in cheese than feeding to pigs, why should he sacrifice his product because somebody may mistake it for whole milk cheese? We do not see the justice in preventing him from using his skim milk in any honest way to make pay the largest dividend. It would be reasonable and just that every maker of cheese should be compelled to brand it for what it is, with indelible ink, upon the bandage, so that rascally dealers should not be able to erase it. This would give the maker of every quality an equal chance in the market.

Now, it appears to us little more reasonable to require that only one quality of cheese should be made, than that butchers should produce only one quality of meat from bullock. The butcher must use up all parts of the animal to the best advantage, and sell the different qualities at different prices; so the manipulator of milk may make gilt-edge butter, and then the best cheese can be out of the balance. The injury to price abroad, from the manufacture of skim cheese, can only affect the market in the most temporary manner. Our really prime goods cannot seriously suffer from this cause. We believe there has been more injury to our foreign market from bad curing than from skimming. Let the whole-milk cheese maker study the question of curing his cheese more perfectly, leaving it in a rich, mellow condition, and of a set, nutty, delicious flavor; and styling the art till he cannot only thus cure his cheese, but hold it there until market prices propitiate. When he arrives at this state of perfection he will not be annoyed by skim cheese makers.

But we think it bad advice to urge that the creamery should employ its skimmed milk for feeding pigs. The amount of human food contained in one hundred pounds of skimmed milk is much greater than in the butter taken from it, although it may not bring so large a price; and it is very questionable whether this food, which may, under proper manipulation, be made not only nutritious but palatable, should be diverted from the support of human life and happiness. The creamery is just the place, of all others, where this skimmed milk may be made into most wholesome human food. This also requires a close study of the art of curing; and when this is successfully done, casein may be so broken down and mellowed as to closely imitate in all desirable qualities, our ordinary whole milk cheese.

We think, instead of discouraging the making of skim cheese in connection with butter at our creameries, we should urge a closer study of the whole process, both of whole-milk and skim cheese making, that each may be greatly advanced in quality. Let us so improve the whole milk cheese that the veriest novice shall not mistake a skim cheese for it.

To Recover the Cud.—For cattle that cannot raise their cud, hold three or four at a time of ordinary sized stalks of white pithed elder between the grinders; pass them up as they grind them; keep the animal grinding the elders for ten or fifteen minutes; then put some small ears of corn or a little hay into their mouths. Few, if any cases occur that a timely application will not cure. Cattle that have lost their cud are not likely to take food into their mouths.—*Cor. Rural Home.*

Raising Turkeys.

Turkeys delight in warm weather, and for the chicks it can never be too hot. Warm weather and long rambles along the pleasant fields are good for the growing brood. To be profitable, turkeys must make rapid growth, and to do this they should be kept on hearty food, and dry and warm. A turkey hen never leads her brood across the open fields, exposed to the approach of every enemy, but steals cautiously and slowly along, with one eye on the alert for danger, while the pretty little creatures, sleek and downy out of the way nook and corner for some concealed insect. They are immensely fond of spiders, and from the eagerness with which they search and devour them, the morsel must be very sweet and good to their taste. When fully grown, they will not scruple at swallowing a good sized snake. Turkeys will not bear confinement. Their habitude is the free open air and sunny fields. The mother hen always keeps her brood together with a soft, low cooing sound which they early learn and follow. She generally seeks deep grass and grain fields, wherein the young can hide from the attacks of overhanging hawks. A peculiar sound from the parent hen causes every chick to squat and hide in the tall weeds and grass. They remain thus secreted until assured from her that all danger is over, when the bright little creatures come forth with a happy flutter of glad wings. Turkeys are, perhaps, the most interesting in their shy, cunning ways, of all our domesticated birds. Their habits are always pleasant and clean; in fact turkeys will not thrive at all unless they are kept in a state of comparative cleanliness.

Farmers in general are prejudiced against turkeys. Their roving propensities often lead them into mischief. It is, indeed, annoying to be obliged to put up with the frequent trespasses of a flock of turkeys. They always seek the deepest grass, and trail through, and find the rankest and shadiest grain field. In the early part of the season, they do not damage either grass or grain, other than treading it down; but later, when corn and buckwheat kernels have become tempting, I would not care to be answerable for their depredations; still they will not thrive without their run. If on one's own premises, the damage is slight; if on a neighbor's, a provocation to anger. The better way is to limit their range, if possible, and train them to certain bounds. We have often observed that the later broods, that come off about harvest time, thrive much better than the early hatched; that is, they are more apt to live. One turkey, hatched the last of May or first of June, is worth two hatched in August; has more frame and muscle, and makes altogether a finer bird. Why is it that the late hatched live better than the early? Simply because the parent bird is in a better state of cleanliness, and freed from vermin, and it is the presence of vermin on the body that produces or aggravates every disease. The turkey hen sets over four weeks. The chick comes out in twenty-six days, but the mother's sedentary life is not then at an end, for the young must be hovered, and she has had no opportunity for wallowing before commencing her first period of incubation, and thus riding her body of the winter accumulation. These parasites leave the parent and crowd and breed on the young chicks. With the first brood, this formidable obstacle is to be encountered. Later in the season, the turkey hen is rid of this scourge, and the young do not have the parasites to confront—the weather is dry and warm, and the earth has become so thoroughly heated that the nightly roosting strikes them with no chill. Frequently the later broods require no feeding, as there is sufficient forage of tender herbage, and insects for their supply, but our dependence for large turkeys (and size is an important item) must be on the early hatched.

Frequently, June is followed by cold, beating rain storms, heralded by chilling east winds. All young chicks, and turkeys in particular, must be guarded against these vicissitudes. The best way to do this is to provide a building for their occupation that can be warmed by means of a stove, as the spring chicks require a constant watch over them to enable them to pass safely through the gaps. Warm weather, high feed, and clean quarters will tide them over this terrible scourge. At three weeks, if kept in good condition, they are beyond danger; yet a close observer will, perhaps, note the heavy breathing and hoarse rattling in the throat which always accompany the gaps, although the bird may give no other indication of the presence of the

disease. As long as this slime is loose in the throat, there is no danger, but a sudden cold may tighten it, and then there is no help. While it is loose, and the bird is strong, a vigorous sneeze will remove the difficulty; but when once weakened or reduced in strength, there is no hope. I believe, of late years, all the early broods of both chickens and turkeys are afflicted, to a greater or less degree, with this painful malady, for which there is prevention, but no cure.—*C. B., in Country Gentleman.*

Too Much Land.

I have been convinced for a long time that a large majority of our farmers are laboring under a great mistake in endeavoring to cultivate too much land; and the past season has fully confirmed that opinion, so that now I am ready to speak out my thoughts in regard to it.

I know that farmers look decidedly too much to quantity, instead of quality, through the mistaken idea that if they can only get over a large amount of land they are going to do a big thing and make a big show. They will plow up acre after acre, and plant and sow without dressing—are consequently driven to death throughout the season to work over and harvest so many acres, and in the fall they find that they are woefully deficient in the amount realized. Their big figures have dwindled to small proportions. I hold to the principle that one should cultivate just as much land as he has the capital and ability to cultivate well, and not an acre more. It is far better to get two tons of hay from one acre than from two. Better to harvest sixty bushels of corn from an acre than to go over three after that amount, as many do. So with grain and potatoes. So with everything raised. We have farmers here who will plant ten acres of potatoes and get five hundred bushels, and others who will harvest the same amount from two acres. Here is an evidence of the vast amount of labor entirely thrown away, to say nothing of seed wasted and feelings hurt, all on account of this insatiable thirst for accumulating and running over so much land.

"Oh! well," says one, "my land is poor and I must plant over a good deal of land to get much of a crop." That is precisely what has made your land poor, my dear sir, and it will continue to grow poorer with such treatment. By going over so much you don't half cultivate it, and weeds are allowed to grow, taking a good share of plant food to themselves, and your crops literally starve for want of nourishment and care. You have no time to collect weeds, leaves and muck for the manure heap. You are running too many different ways at the same time. Running over too much land, running in debt, and running down hill in the agricultural line. You had better run away from your farm and give some one else a chance to run it in a different way. A few weeks since, while in a pasture with the owner, I remarked that the grass and weeds and bracks which burdened the ground would be valuable if cut and used for bedding under horses and cows, and to work up into manure.

"Worth twenty dollars," he replied, "but it is impossible for me to cut it; I am so pressed with other work."

This is but an example of thousands of farms and farmers in this State. Having so much land under cultivation they cannot seem to find time to cultivate, otherwise than in a slipshod way; have no time to attend to minor details so necessary for successful farming, and every succeeding year finds their farms poorer, themselves weaker and more discouraged, and the traces of decay gradually mark the family possessions.

Our main object should be to reverse this picture; cultivate less land and cultivate it well; beautify our homes; educate our immortal minds, and progress instead of retrograding.—*Germanown Telegraph.*

The California Agriculturalist says:—There are 2,000,000 bee hives in the United States. Every hive yields, on an average, a little over twenty-two pounds of honey. The average price at which honey is sold is twenty-five cents a pound; so that, after paying their own board, the bees present us with a revenue of \$8,000,000. To reckon in another way, they make a clear gift of over a pound of pure honey to every man, woman and child in the vast domain of the United States. Over twenty-three and one third million pounds of wax are made and given to us by these industrious workers. The keeping of bees is one of the most profitable investments that our people can make of their money. The profits arising on the sale of surplus honey average from fifty to two hundred per cent. on the capital invested.

The Decline of the Grange.

From the annual report of the National Grange it appears that both in number of granges and grangers, the order has suffered a serious decline, comparing 1876 with 1875. In eighteen States, representing every section of the United States, over 9,000 granges have gone out of existence, and membership has fallen off 180,000 since the report of 1875 was made. The decline is most marked where the movement had its origin, that is, the Western States. In Missouri 974 granges with a membership of 42,529, report from 1876, against 2,034 granges, with 89,079 members in 1875. The South-west and North-west are next to show weakness. In the Eastern and some of the Middle States, where the movement was later in appearing, it remained almost at a standstill in 1876. The table below gives the changes in a few of the States:—

| State | No. granges, 1875 | No. members, 1875 | No. granges, 1876 | No. members, 1876 |
|---------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Alabama | 105 | 1874 | 117 | 3129 |
| California | 53 | 174 | 1125 | 3585 |
| Illinois | 12 | 12 | 480 | 328 |
| Georgia | 78 | 277 | 3708 | 1813 |
| Indiana | 124 | 12 | 292 | 289 |
| Iowa | 2036 | 1048 | 5712 | 32019 |
| Kansas | 2201 | 1018 | 182 | 3710 |
| Kentucky | 1072 | 874 | 3021 | 2455 |
| Michigan | 108 | 108 | 108 | 108 |
| Minnesota | 49 | 77 | 255 | 3017 |
| New Hampshire | 49 | 77 | 255 | 3017 |
| New Jersey | 12 | 12 | 12 | 12 |
| Ohio | 1216 | 1214 | 5087 | 3537 |
| Pennsylvania | 615 | 638 | 2271 | 2874 |
| Wisconsin | 314 | 291 | 1726 | 12786 |

Weeding the Flocks.

Not alone from the soil are found springing the tares that militate against the greatest success of the genuine and desired crops, but they are found in the cattle pens, the pig sties, the sheep yards, the stables and chicken coops. In the human family we find the odd and doubtful member that reduces the average which otherwise would be high; and in the animal family can we expect more, or always depend on perfection? All will not be good; weak and puny ones will appear, demanding more care and costing more than they are or can be worth. Such should be weeded out. Understand this—every mouth you are feeding on the farm is a machine that is doing its best to destroy and reduce your products; if the animal is good, the material consumed is undergoing a change that will increase its value; if poor, it is absorbing your substance with no prospect of return or compensation. If sheep are staple in your breeding, give no place to any but those which yield the heaviest fleeces and the greatest amount of meat. If cattle, select those that will attain a maximum of weight in two instead of four years. If hogs, select a breed that will not only eat and be satisfied, but when they have converted corn into pork will yield a maximum number of pounds for a minimum number of bushels. If the kind you are breeding will not do this, you are wasting your substance. A lean, uneasy hog eats most; a scrubby, scrawny steer is never satisfied, and will never satisfy the owner; a plug of a horse will keep a common man poor, and never be anything but a plug; poor sheep are expensive; in a word, poor stock of any kind is a burden and expense no man can afford to carry, and the weeding out of these useless, expensive parasites cannot be too promptly accomplished. Fewer and better is a good motto; don't wait until next year to begin this eliminating process, but do it now. Save this winter's feed by at once disposing of the tares of the flock.

Deep Soil.

Among the peculiar features of the exhibit of Iowa at the Centennial, is a sample of her soils. She has long glass cylinders over a foot in width and many feet in length, and in this is placed earth, just as it exists. On the top is the black prairie soil, then the subsoil, and so on down to a 'hard pan,' solid bottom, or whatever the end is called. This enables the stranger to see how rich is the deep black soil, and is very attractive to visitors. There is a glass pillar for every county, and the soil of each county, just as it is, is represented each by itself. There is no doubt it is one of the very best methods of showing how deep is the soil of Iowa, and that the fact will have at least its due weight to those who are seeking homes in the West.

But after all, we must remember that it is not alone deep soil that is to make good farm land. Though black rich soil is a hundred feet deep, it is only the first foot or so that is of any material value to a good crop. Some roots go deep, but the chief feeding roots are near the surface, and in time they will exhaust the soil, and unless the lower strata are brought to the surface, at some expense, the crops will be poor. This has been found the case in Ohio. Here was a deep rich soil, as deep as anyone could wish, but in a quarter of a century it gave out, and many a wheat field has been laid down again to grass, and cattle now graze over land which was once

the grain-raiser's pride. The subsoil might be brought up to the top, but that is too expensive. No way is like the old way in many things, and no way of keeping up the fertility of the soil is like the old way of feeding it annually with manure. Soil may be as deep as one chooses, and laughter and 'pity' may be bestowed on our Western journals and Eastern farmers who talk about manuring, but the richest Western soils are no exception, and the time will be when these deep Iowa soils, as represented in those Centennial glass collections, will have to be annually manured like all the rest.

Even the deep plowing, the turning up of this rich subsoil, is not always the best plan, even when the expense of turning it up is not so great an object, for, notwithstanding the advice of the great farmer of Chappaqua to 'plow deep,' practical men appreciate it. The universal testimony is, that in breaking prairie for cultivation the shallow plowed land yields the best crops. There is reason for it, but we need not give it here, where only the undoubted fact is of consequence.

In the name of good farming we must point out that for permanent and genuine agriculture it is of little account. The English have no virgin soil, no deep black bottoms to their land, but by judicious and cheap management it yields to-day crops which the black lands of Iowa might feel proud.

Protecting Against Frost.

M. G. Vinard proposes a method for protecting vines against frost in spring, which embodies the idea of smoke as a blanket to scure the earth against the influence of extreme cold. The plan, which is said to have proved successful, and is of easy application, is described as follows:—It consists in carefully mixing gaster with sawdust and old straw, and piling up this mixture into large heaps in the vineyards. The mixture remains easily inflammable in spite of rain or weather, for more than a fortnight. When required for use, smaller heaps are made of the large ones, or about two feet in diameter, and are distributed in and around the vineyard. If there is a little wind, these heaps burn freely for about three and a half hours, and produce a very dense smoke. The artificial cloud which thus envelops the vines considerably decreases the radiation from the ground, and when it counteracts frost, which is greatest toward the morning of calm spring nights, and which does so much harm to the plants.

This method of protecting vines and trees from frost by smoke, has been tried successfully at O. C. by using scraps of tom leather procured at our trap factory, and put in heaps near vines and ignited when danger threatened from frost. These can be used to advantage by growers of fruit, especially peaches and plums. During a cold winter there are generally a few days of extreme cold weather which frequently destroys the entire crop of fruit by the killing of buds. If growers would be watchful and vigilant by procuring a quantity of leathers, which cost but little and burn a long time and produce a dense smoke, they would, with little trouble, by burning them when the proper time came, save their crop of fruit, and during harvest time would realize much more than those who took no precaution in the time of need.

THE USEFULNESS OF SPARROWS.

The much-abused sparrow has a use in the economy of nature which makes it a valuable aid to the cultivation of the soil. Of their services to the gardener Peter Henderson, of New York city, writes thus:—"We observed immense flocks of sparrows actively engaged for days in picking up something in our rose beds, and had imagined it to be seeds obtained from the refuse hops that we had used as a mulching. At times we felt inclined to believe that they would pick the tender leaves of the rose, to use by way of a salad, having always believed them to be strictly vegetarians, or seed eaters. Finding, however, that we were less troubled with the rose slug than usual, it occurred to me that perhaps we were indebted to our noisy, feathered friends for our immunity. To test the matter a victim was necessary; accordingly a pineshrike-looking fellow was shot, when, sure enough, his crop revealed seeds, rose slugs, and Aphid, or green fly, in great abundance, demonstrating, beyond question, the great value of these birds as insect destroyers." Thousands of sparrows have been killed on mere suspicion in England just as we here destroy on sight crows, hawks, owls, and any other birds.

Screen for Dairy Windows.

A dairy should, if possible, be lighted by a window with a north aspect. Bright sunlight upon the milk pans is injurious to the color of the butter, as is also perfect darkness. A subdued diffused light is preferable. Besides, the temperature of the dairy is rapidly increased by the sun's rays in the summer time, and the quality of the butter will be damaged by their admission. But sometimes it is impossible to so place the dairy that a north window can be secured, then a window screen should be used. Two yards of yard-wide brown sheeting, costing about 11 or 12 cents a yard, will make a screen for a window of more than usual size. The ends should be hemmed over a strong cord, leaving a loop or ring at each end of the cord. A hook is fixed at each upper corner of the window frame, upon which the loop or rings may be fastened by means of a light pole, with a short wire croch or fork at the top. On each side of the window sill a screw eye should be fastened, to which the bottom of the screen may be tied by the ends of the cord. Or if it is thought preferable to have the screen not tied closely, but held away from the window a few inches for the admission of air, a short strong wire or wooden rod may be fixed to each lower corner of the screen, which may be hooked into the screw eyes in the sill. A light stretcher of wood should be fitted across the lower part of the screen, to keep it extended. Window screens of this kind will be found very desirable for the kitchen or dining room as they will admit a plenty of light and air, and permit an outlook.

How To Make Good Butter.

X. A. Willard's 'Practical Butter Book' gives the following method of making the celebrated Philadelphia butter: The milk is skimmed after standing twenty-four hours, and the cream is put into deep vessels having a capacity of about twenty gallons. It is kept at a temperature of 55 or 59 degrees until it acquires a slightly acid taste, when it goes to the churn. The churn is a barrel revolving on a journal in each head, and driven by horse-power. The churning occupies about an hour; and after the milk is drawn off, cold water is added, and a few turns given to the churn and water, the water then drawn off. This is repeated until the water as it is drawn is nearly free from milkiness. The butter is worked with butter-workers—a padded cloth mantle while being pressed upon it to absorb the moisture and free it of butter-milk. The cloth is frequently dipped in cold water and wrung dry during the process of 'wiping the butter.' It is next salted at the rate of an ounce of salt to three pounds of butter, thoroughly and evenly incorporated by means of the butter-worker. It is then removed to a table where it is weighed out and put into pound prints. After this it goes into large tin trays and is set in the water to harden, remaining till next morning, when it is wrapped in damp cloths and placed upon staves, one above another, in tin-lined cedar tubs, with ice in the compartments at the ends, and then goes immediately to market. Matting is drawn over the tub, and it is surrounded again by oil-cloth, so as to keep out the hot air and dust, and the butter arrives in prime condition, commanding the highest price.

Bees consume large quantities of water when building comb and raising brood. Want of water is one of the causes of dysentery among bees. Knowing the great importance of water for bees, we again call attention to it. A bucket, tin pail or trough filled with water, with a few pieces of old combs or sticks for floats, for the bees to alight upon and drink in safety, should be kept near the hives, unless some stream of water is near.

The Main Building of the Centennial has been turned into a permanent exhibition which will be opened on May 10. About one-sixth of the ground floor will be devoted to agriculture, under the three following heads:—Agricultural and animal products, Land and marine animal culture and apparatus for some living and preserved specimens, Agricultural implements and processes. The location of the department in the north-western portion of the building, fronting on the park, and on Belmont-avenue, is the best possible, and its proximity to the machinery department in the south-western portion of the same building permits of the ready transmission of power to the agricultural machines to be exhibited in motion. Many of the finest displays in the Agricultural Buildings have already been transferred to the Main Building, and will be arranged in this section, and several States and Territories are providing collective exhibits of their

wealth in agriculture and forestry. Some very interesting foreign displays will be made, and the entire exhibition promises to be of the highest character.

Home-Made Manure.

Waste means poverty; savings mean wealth. Farmers throw away each year, directly, a handsome interest on their investments, and indirectly a half a crop of all their land's produce. We mean that the value of the manure that is neglected and washed away with the rain storm, or blown away with the wind, is not compassed by a few dollars. The western farmer does not appreciate this so much, because his soil is rich and yields bountiful harvests; but the man who is tilling the old farms of New England, or even the Middle States, realizes the meaning of "worn out farms." The way to prevent wearing out is to feed the soil with the material that nature provides in her economy; the stables and stock are producers of the essence of life to the ground, and it but needs the carrying out of the great design to reap the benefits. It is wicked to waste these vitalizing influences; cheap means can be employed whereby it can all be retained and utilized, and should not be neglected. We see it stated in an exchange that a cow or ox, properly littered, will make a ton of manure a month, saving the liquid with the solid; a pair of horses as much as one cow; a hundred sheep, if yarded every night and littered, will make a hundred tons of manure in a year. These things speak of the value of the cleanings of the stable and pen. It is valuable directly in dollars, and of more worth when applied to the soil. Save it.

Keep Bees.

Bees are as useful as chickens, and as easily raised. They afford us a luxurious food—healthy, and might be cheap. Bees require no feeding, and little expense and attention. They want only a comfortable home, covered from the storm and sun, and protected from the marauding millers. They will make their own living, and do considerable towards the living of the farmer. Not many swarms can be prosperously kept in one place, but every farmer may raise honey for home use and a little to spare. Every gardener, every villager might do it. A single swarm of bees, well attended to, will soon produce as many swarms as can be successfully kept in one place. All that bees make is clear honey. They get their treasures from flowers. We should have been enough in the country to have one always sipping at every flower. The flower is all the time producing honey. The bee should be all the time gathering it. If we had a bee all the time at every flower, honey enough would be produced to supply the world. It is a means of wealth, health and pleasure. Let bees be cultivated—let every farmer have them. They are as useful as cows, and are less trouble. A little attention will teach one to manage them.—*Rural World.*

Rules for the Care of Sheep.

Keep sheep dry under foot with clean litter. This is more necessary than roofing them. Never let them stand or lie in mud or water. If a ewe loses her lamb, milk her daily for a few days, and mix a little alum with her salt. Never frighten sheep, if possible to avoid it. Separate all weak, thin or sick sheep in the fall from those that are strong, and give them special care. If any sheep is hurt, catch it at once and wash the wound with a healing lotion. If a limb is broken, bind it with splinters, tightly, loosening as the limb swells. If a sheep is lame, examine his foot, clean out between the hoofs if unsound, and apply tobacco with blue vitriol boiled in a little water. Shear at once any sheep commencing to shed its wool, unless the weather is too severe. Keep none but the best, and see that they are properly attended to. **Plowing or Burning.**—The *Journal of Agriculture* says: "The time was when it was thought that everything on the top of the ground should be plowed under, and that a crop of weeds, grass, and dilapidated cornstalks would materially benefit the soil. That they possess some value is an admitted fact, and, if turned under in the fall season, so that it will rot by spring, are of good advantage to the soil; but should they remain until spring they should be burned. The insect world is possessed with wonderful powers of multiplication, and we know of no method equal to good burning to destroy them. In the early settlement of the country, when the prairies were burned regularly every

year, many insects now common and injurious were unknown. We think we can in a very great measure attribute their absence to these fires. Lands thus cleansed are more easily cultivated than those not so treated. Many noxious seeds are destroyed and farm implements do their work much more perfectly than when they are dragging through great masses of weeds and grass. These considerations induce us to advise the burning over of fields before plowing, and we believe all doing so will be pleased with the experiment."

THE MUCH-ABUSED CROW.—This is the title of an article in the *Rural New Yorker* in which the writer contends that the crow is unjustly assailed by ornithologists. He says:—"We are not taking anybody's assertion as to the facts but our own experience, having for some years domesticated quite a number of crows, watching their habits closely during the time. In addition to these tame birds, there is a wood near by which is a favorite resort for crows, and hundreds nest there and raise their young; still, despite the proximity of this great number of enemies of small birds, according to recent writers, our garden and grounds abound with flocks of all species common in the climate and locality. No wild crows have ever been shot at or killed on our grounds since they came into our possession, and all crowdom is permitted to come and go as they please, to our mutual pleasure and satisfaction. We could really fill a volume in recording the peculiar traits of these most intelligent of all our American birds. Of course, it must be admitted that he does sometimes commit overacts; but these are the strong points in his history, for they show a high order of intelligence, just as we know that man, although the highest of all animals, can, and often does, descend to do meaner acts than is possible among less intelligent beings."

HONEY PRODUCTION.—Notwithstanding the fact that the estimated value of the honey and wax produced annually by the bees in this country is twelve or fourteen millions of dollars, honey has, until lately, failed to attract attention as an article of commerce. This year's yield will be simply enormous. The honey interest of California bids fair to soon exceed that of Missouri; Louisiana—a single apiarian offers to this market five car loads of honey, and Capt. Hetherington of this State, will have for sale this year at least \$75,000 worth of his own produce. The great yield and the limited means for its disposal will, no doubt, bring honey down still lower. It is the producer's hope, that with the increasing interest of merchants in the article, it may always be disposed of at remunerative prices.—*Am. Grocer.*

Mr. Roger Leigh, in an address lately delivered in England, gave an interesting description of a system adopted in France whereby the children attending 30,000 primary schools in the rural district receive instruction in the culture of the soil. The child is shown the soil which best suits a certain plant to be cultivated; he is made to prepare it for planting, to sow it, to free it from weeds, to wage war against insects and grubs, and finally to record in his school-books the advantages derived from the selection of special soils, the application of new manures and variations in the time of planting. These lessons are never forgotten, and the land allotment of the French peasant is made to produce a variety of vegetables fit for any man's table. The agricultural societies throughout France cordially second the Government in its efforts by bestowing on pupils and masters their counsel and assistance, and offering prizes for competition.

ROUEN DUCKS.—The *London Agricultural Gazette* in giving some directions to a breeder of Rouen ducks, says: "Rouen drakes and ducks should be the counterparts of wild ducks in color. The drake should have a narrow white ring round the neck—a broad one is a defect. The duck must have no ring, if she have, she should go into the kitchen. She must not be bred from, with yellow sides and point; leaden or green bills are both disqualifications. Duck and drake alike must have dull orange-colored legs; they cannot be too large. Oats and barley are good food. The young want meal, gravel and growing grass, put in a shallow vessel with water; the same is good for adults. A little raw meat adds much to their weight.

"When I die," said a married man, "I want to go where there will be no snow to shovel." His wife said she presumed he would.