

The Farm.

Winter Care of Apple Trees.

The apple orchards of our farms are all-important because we have them, but many of them are not as profitable as other crops because they do not receive proper attention. They are not cultivated in the sense that corn and potatoes are cultivated. Why is it so? Much money and time are expended to grow the trees, valuable land is devoted to them, and through carelessness the whole is at least two-thirds lost.

We know that land occupied by any one crop season after season for many years, will become, for that crop, "land-sick" and unproductive. This may not be true of carrots, onions and grasses, but it is true, generally speaking. Grassland, even, will not remain healthy and productive unless cultivated by mowing, pasturing, fertilizing and harrow-working, with reseeded. Agitation by the hoofs of animals is cultivation, and renews vigor; mowing does the same and imparts new life, if such work is done before the seed matures. The orchard does not provide self-cultivation. In neglected orchards the bark becomes dull and lifeless, a limb cut or broken off, leaves a dead stump, and decay ultimately recedes with blighting effect into the heart of the tree. Many hundreds of little suckers fill its body, and thereafter such trees will not produce clean or full-sized fruit. Such results are the direct effects of neglect, either from want of knowledge or attention. Orchards of this class may be resuscitated and made profitable by the application of the pruning-knife and scraper at this season, and other care later on.

Winter pruning should be done carefully, removing as few of the large limbs and as little healthy wood as possible; but do not fear to open the tree so that no limbs cross, and so that daylight will flow freely through in every direction. Three barrels of first-class fruit can be quickly gathered, easily marketed and will bring more money than twice that number of inferior stock. Do not fear to cut. Then scrape away all dead or weak, small limbs, rough bark, and, as far as possible, leave only healthy wood and an occasional strong "sucker" to fill the head. Crisp, bright, sound fruit will grow only on absolutely healthy wood, no matter what amount of ground cultivation, tree pruning or spraying you may do.

One growing season's management of an old orchard is worth separate and special attention, particularly when such management will produce results beneficial to the orchard and profitable to the owner. But put the above work in hand at once. —D. R. Howatt in Country Gentleman.

Brightening November.

Late autumn is a weeping, sorry time at best, and requires that we give special thought to its amelioration. I am particularly comforted at this season by a group of trees that hold their foliage a few weeks later than the rest of the trees. They are mostly of English origin, and have not learned Yankee habits. Nearly every native tree is defoliated by the end of October, but the English oak and the English elm hold fast their leaves till close upon Thanksgiving. The oak especially is very rich in its leafage in this almost leafless season. The Norway maple is also slow to let go its superb great golden leafage. You may sit under its branches where the reflection is so yellow that it seems like a sunset—so deeply golden are the leaves. On the shrubbery the lilacs are often fresh in November, and so are the dentzias; while the forsythias and mock orange have been in no hurry to get ready for winter. The apple orchard is another place where one may generally get a bit of November comfort and freshen his memory that all the world was lately green. But if you wish to have a really brilliant spot on your lawn at this season, plant a good sized crop of euonymus. These bushes are in their glory just about Thanksgiving time. The seed pods burst open and display the most gorgeous crim-

son hearts—as fine as the soul of a pomegranate.

These will not endure the very heavy freezings of midwinter, but are eminently the glory of late autumn. You may reasonably plant around such a group the mahonia, which being an evergreen, will furnish you clippings much later in the season. Of course you have a plenty of barberries to sight. If not, you are neglecting a real friend. There is no bush so cheerful or one that so positively refuses to recognize winter blasts. A hedge of barberry is not a bad thing if you can have it in sight of your windows. It is a neglected bush simply because it is so common and so generous. Over it should stand a few high bush cranberry trees. These, if well cultivated, will stand fifteen feet high and loaded with crimson fruit. Every one should also consider the advantages of windbreaks during the cold days. I have seen dandelions blossoming of late under the lee of a good row of closely planted hemlocks. So you can, by forethought, make your home proof against the sullenness of November as well as the rawness of December. Let our city people who are crowding out of the cities and taking up our farms remember these hints when they do their first planting. —(E. P. Powell.

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Crossed and Thoroughbred Hogs.

It is natural that the offspring of pigs brought up under adverse circumstances should be more hardy than those which are carefully bred. The real value of thoroughbreds can be classed differently. One might be raising thoroughbreds for the butcher, another might be raising for distributing breeders to all parts. But we find it a very good and profitable method to do both. If you can so arrange your sow as to be supplied at all times with pigs of all ages, first weed out the litter and those marked well and suitable for breeders, and dispose of such, which can very easily be done if bred of first class stock. The remainder of the litter fatten for the butcher.

Another safe rule for those who raise for the butcher is to crossbreed, if room permits. Take good grade or common sows, and breed only to thoroughbred boars. A grade hog may look just as well perhaps even better, but he is wholly unfit for breeding purposes. Not only should the boar be purely bred, but should be a good representative of the breed to which he belongs. There is a vast difference in thoroughbreds and only the finest should be used. If you pick out common sows for crossbreeding, be careful you don't choose a razorback. If you do, you can never expect squarely built pigs. A bunch of razorbacks are much more difficult to fatten than hogs of good shapes. When ready to market they will not sell as well. —(G. W. Harlacher, in American Agriculturist.

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More Cargoes, by W. W. Jacobs, author of "Many Cargoes." Paper, 50 cents; cloth, \$1.00. To those who read and chuckle and read again the quaintly humorous sailor yarns which Mr. Jacobs collected into "Many Cargoes," this second volume, will need no introduction. Each story in "More Cargoes" is just as delightfully original and just as uproariously funny as those in the preceding volume, and if possible more so. These stories consist mainly in practical jokes played among the crews of the small sailing vessels which ply their trade along the English coast. Every one of them is worth reading, for Mr. Jacobs shows endless ingenuity in turning the tables upon the original joker in the most unexpected way and the shrewd wit of his characters is most amusing.

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Russia, it is said, has decided to establish a permanent diplomatic agency in Cabul next spring. The Ameer's consent has been obtained, and pour parlers have been exchanged between Count Muraviev and Great Britain.

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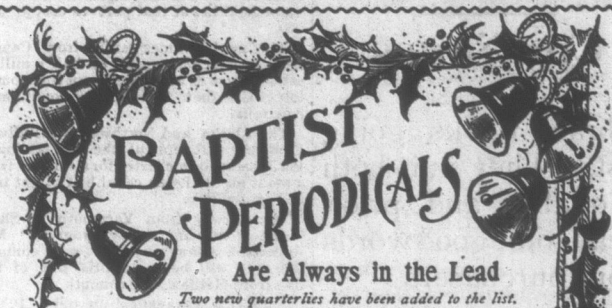
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