Rural Economy.

PLANTS FOR HANGING BASKETS.

What plants are most suitable for hanging baskets? is an inquiry we have before us. We have no special love for hanging baskets, unless they are well got up and kept in good condition. Most of the baskets we see around are unsightly things, and look as though hanging wasn't much better for baskets than for other tolks. In torming ornamental baskets, it is well to remember, in the first place, that they will not bear neglect. A quart or two of earth placed in a basket will very soon become as dry as powder, even if not exposed to the sun. Watering must, therefore, be attended to frequently and regularly. The amount of water and the frequency of application depend a good deal upon the plants grown. A basket of Portulaccas will endure drouth without suffering, that would be sufficient to destroy many other

What we want in hanging, baskets are plants of fine foliage and a constant supply of flowers. For graceful foliage there is nothing better than the trailing Money Wort, Tysimachi Mumumlaria, with dark, glossy leaves, and plenty of yellow flowers at blossoming time.

The Thunbergias are not excelled by any plants we are acquainted with for baskets and all like decorative purposes. They are trailing plants, foliage good, flowers abundant, white, yellow, and orange, with a dark eye. There is only one difficulty with with closed windows and doors, they shut them, and this is not serious—the seeds in as great an enemy as fire, although his germinate rather slowly, and always best in warm places.

Abronia Umbellata is a beautiful plant, with clusters of sweet-scented flowers, rosy lilac, in clusters like the Verbena, which the plant in its habit resembles very much; flowers freely for a long season. The only difficulty with it is a lack of foliage, but this defect is easily remedied by other plants that abound more in leaves and less

The Lobelias, all the trailing varieties, are splendid for basket work, and, in fact, all in-door ornamentation. They will not will not retire to her own room for the bear the sun, but this is not expected of night without having provided sufficiency. basket flowers, and require a good deal of of air for her children, in the same manner moisure. When well treated, they give a that she provides and regulates their night profusion of flowers.

All the Ipomeas and Convolvulus are desirable for baskets, and as they are not lowering a window, and at other times by exposed to the sun or usually to a bright leaving a door wide open, this end may be light, the common Morning Glory will have attained. expanded blossoms nearly the whole day. All such strong running plants can be pinched back, and thus made dwarf in in the same manner, and will give good

The Loasas are very curious plants with singular and pretty flowers, but the branches are armed with stinging hairs that will speak more emphatically to intruders than any sign, "hands off."

The above are all trailing plants, and sufficient to suit all tastes, though others could be added. Many no doubt would prefer the Verbena to some mentioned, and the Maderia vine may be made to run up the wires by which the basket is suspended, with fine effect. For the centre of the basket, plants of more erect habit will be needed to give a full rounded appearance. These should be depended upon mainly for a show of brilliant flowers, while the trailants furnish the drapery

The Nemophilas are very desirable; prevailing colors, white and blue. Petunias and Phlox Drummondii are unequaled for brilliant show. Fenylia Dianthiflora, a most delicate free-flowering little plant six inches in height. Flowers reddish lilac with crimson centre. Leptoriphous are excellent. For fragrance a little Mignionette or Sweet Alyssum will be necessary.

Although we have given a pretty long list to select from, we would not advise crowding plants. Plenty of room should be given for development.—Exchange.

ABOUT PEAT.

"Peat is the spongy substance found in almost every country, filling up cavities in the surface, and constituting what is called bran paste to that of clay in the bank." It blers lost in dipping water. All around, is supposed to be formed by the decay of a the soil was filled with encrustations kind of swamp moss. Its occurrence is frequently indicated by the growth of dwarfish evergreens and rank swamp herbage, and by the elasticity of the crust which supports them. To test a supposed peat bed one has only to dig a little below the roots of the herbage or trees, take out some, dry and burn it. If the swamp be covered enough will be brought to the surface for a sample. The best peat is that which, very little decay. other things being equal, is the most dense. Some kinds are almost as hard and combuswork for market, would answer for the farmer s own use.

In working a peat bed, the first thing to ground." be done, if it is necessary, is to drain it. If only a little is wanted, it can generally be taken out without drainage in the dryest part of the summer. After removing the surface, the peat is cut out in blocks, with an instrument called the Slane. This tool may be made by a blacksmith; it has a handle like a spade, and a blade about eighteen inches long, bent down at right cover for use.

of cutting into blocks.

Peat is extensively used in Europe for fuel. We have no doubt but that it will of the Federal forces, the works, buildings, which would be obtained from a perfect omically used as fuel on railroads or steam-boats.—Rural New Yorker.

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USEFUL PLANTS.

A German author states that the number of useful plants has risen to about 12,000, but that others will no doubt be discovered, as the researches yet made have been completed only in portions of the earth. Of these plants there are 1350 varieties of edible fruits, berries and seeds; 103 cereals; 37 onions; 460 vegetables and salads; 40 species of palms; 32 varieties of arrowroot, and 31 different kinds of sugars. Vinous drinks are obtained from 200 plants, and aromatics from 266. There are 50 substitutes for coffee, and 129 for tea. Tannin is present in 140 plants, caoutchouc in 96, gutta percha in 7, rosin and balsamic gums in 389, wax in 10, and grease and essential offs in 330. 88 plants contain polash, soda and lodine; 650 contain dyes, 47 soap, 250 weaving fibres; 44 fibres materials, and 100 are employed for hurdles and copses. In building, 740 plants are used, and there are 615 known poisonous plants. One of the most gratifying developments is that, out of 278 known natural families of plants, there are but 18 species for which no use has yet been discovered.—Ledger.

VENTILATE YOUR CHILDREN'S ROOMS Most parents, before retiring to rest, make it a duty to visit the sleeping room of their children. They do so in order to be satisfied that the lights are extinguished, ravages may not be so readily detected Poison is there, but slow and deadly.

Morning after morning do many little children wake weary, fretful and oppressed. 'What can it mean?" "What can it be?" the mother cries. In despair she has recourse to medicine. The constitution becomes enfeebled, and the child gets worse. The cause, perhaps, is never traced to over-crowded sleeping-rooms without proper air, but it is nevertheless the right one, An intelligent mother, having acquainted covering; or any other requisite for refreshing slumber. Sometimes by judiciously

In many houses, the day and night nur series communicate. When this is the case, the window, of the further room their habit for basket and other ornamental should be left open, and the doors between work. The Tropeolums may also be treated the rooms likewise open. Even in severe weather, children can bear this arrangement if they are not exposed to a direct draught.—Éxchange.

Scientific.

DISCOVERIES AT SARATOGA.

In the Troy (N. Y.) Whig we find the following curious account of investigations which have lately been made in the bed of one of the Saratoga springs:

"High Rock spring, Saratoga, which has long been regarded as a great natural cuwithout doubt, originally flowed through the round orifice in the top, during the formation of the rock, and probably for years subsequent to that. But ever since the spring has been known, the water has failed to reach the top of the rock, having found some subterranean outlet. Since the spring passed into the hands of its present proprietor, efforts have been in progress, as stated above, to penetrate the mystery, and cause the water to again resume its ancient flow. The first has already been accomplished, and some very

singular facts been brought to light. "A slight excavation has shown that the rock only extended a few inches below the surface, and it was easily removed. Within is was a chamber about two feet in diameter, and below a pit formed by the bog. It varies in color from light brown bubbling water, about ten feet in depth, in to black, and in consistency from that of a which were found a large number of tumformed by deposits from the water; but immediately beneath the rock lay the body of a tree, eighteen feet in diameter, which still retained its form, and was sufficiently firm to be sawed in sections and pulled out. The tree must have fallen before the formation of the surface-rock commenced, and had probably lain there with water, a pole, having a deep groove thousands of years. Several feet further along its side, may be thrust down, and | down, the body of an oak, eight inches in diameter, was found, which had suffered

"After reaching a depth of twelve feet, it became apparent that a few inches more tible as coal; others are like dried turf. | would bring to view the crevice from which Much, however, that would not pay to this fountain unceasingly flows. Here the work was stopped to procure a tube which will bring the water to the surface of the

AN EXTENSIVE SALT MINE.

The New Orleans Times gives an ex-

three months.

in depth have been sunk through the salt | in proportion as the barometer rose, the rewithout finding any indications of reaching sistance of the current increased, and vice bottom. The salt formation is almost per- versa. In plain terms, a low barometer that it contains about ninety per cent. of a bad one. Another curious circumstance, pure salt. The development of the property is being rapidly pushed, and the product in ever carefully recorded till now, is that pounds per week, with a force of ten hands. only at those hours, the cable is always at This mine is regarded as forming a promilits worst:" This mine is regarded as forming a prominent part of the material resources of Loui-

TRIBULATIONS OF THE INVENTOR OF THE NEEDLE-GUN.

of the toils and disappointments of the in- deemed of special importance and value, ventor of the gun:-

"The needle-gun is well known to be used in paper making; 48 give roofing the product of the long study and perseverance of an English officer, who, while stationed at a solitary outpost in Canada, amused his leisure hours with experiments of the steelyard until the bar broke. Vain the rough construction of a substitute for the rifle which he had damaged by letting it drop down a precipice while in pur- and from the weight required to break suit of a bear. It was almost by accident them, the strength of a bar or plate of that the discovery became palpable to the similar material, an inch square, was obsolitary hunter in the woods. But no tained by calculation. The number of sooner did it become manifest to his senses, than he resigned his commission in the army, returned to Europe, and, as a matter of course, hurried to the War Office with his invention. For more than a year was the inventor kept in suspense. He was bandied about from one official to another during all this time, merely to be told, at last, that the Government did not feel disposed to alter the principle of the arms employed. It was then that, in disgust, he brought his invention to Paris, and obtained an interview with the Emperor, who listened with the greatest apparent interest to the description of the gun, examined the plans and sections brought by the officer, much questioned the superiority of the invention over others which had been laid before him, declared it seemed to him liable to the great objection of being too delicate for field use, and abruptly sounded the little gong which stands upon his bureau, and slightly rising when the usher entered at the summons, dismissed the visitor to admit other importunates. It was then that he betook himself, armed and to whiten the paper simply by addiwith his needle gun, to Holland. But tion of white substances. He proposes, in that his resources had dwindled away to such an extent, that he was compelled to delay his presentation to the king for want This is effected by adding to the paper pulp of proper costume to appear in.

"Meanwhile he became accidentally actime, the inventor handsomely rewarded, no doubt, have a fair trial.—The Nation. and encouraged to establish himself in Prussia."

The Birmingham Post, on the other hand, says :-- "The Prussian needle gun resembles, in all essential respects, an arm invented by two Englishmen, Messrs. Handson and Golden, of Huddersfield, and patented by them in this country on the riosity, has recently been investigated during the progress of excavations carried on to induce, if possible, the water to flow Prussia for two of his guns, and from over the opening in the rock. The water, these models the so-called Prussian needle-

Prussia for two of his guns, and from these models the so-called Prussian needlegun, with trifling modifications, was made."

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HEMP AND WIRE ROPE.

An English establishment has undertaken the manufacture of a new and valuable kind of rope. The tests of its superiority have been made, by means of an improved hydraulic mackine, and from the very satisfactory manner in which it bore the tests applied to it, appears likely to come into general use. The principle consists in making a rope of hemp and wire combined, which is found to give even a getter degree of strength than wire rope, with the pliability of that made of hemp with the pliability of the with the pliability of that made of hemp It is manufactured by placing a single wire inside of every rope yarn, securely coating each wire with hemp, and separating each hard substance, making a sort of cushion for each wire to bed upon, so that when any heavy strain is applied the wires do not cut each other as in all wire rope. Its superiority over hemp rope for mining purposes is its taking the same breaking strain at less than half the weight of hemp rope and, compared with chain, at less than onequarter the weight of ordinary chain. This description of rope has now for some time been in use in the English docks, in hauling vessels in and out of the docks, and the manner in which it has borne this severe practical test has fully proved its efficiency.

TESTING THE OLD CABLE.

The Times correspondent who accompanies the Atlantic telegraph expedition, says that not a day has passed since the fracture of last year's cable, that its insulation has not been almost hourly tested at the Irish end. These tests show its condition up to the broken end, 1260 miles from shore, to be absolutely perfect. There is always a certain amount of resistance to an electric tended account of what is considered the current entering a cable, which is called purest and most important natural deposits retardation, and is measured by millions of of salt in the world, located on the coast of units. A submarine wire of a certain Louisiana, at Petit Anse Island. The de-posit was known as early as 1698-9, but off, as it were, and its insulating and conangles through the middle. This takes out all knowledge of it appears to have been ductive powers ascertained to within a mile the peat in blocks very nicely, and it is lost until after the commencement of the of a fault by the time the current takes in only necessary to dry them and store under recent war. During that period, when entering the wire. These tests, as we have the supply from other sources was cut off, said, have been carried on hourly with last Sometimes the peat is so brittle that it the mine was discovered by residents of year's cable, and the result as to millions will not admit of being taken out in blocks the interior, who had resorted to the island of units has corresponded, day by day, in with the slane. In that case it is shoveled for the purpose of procuring salt by boiling, the most remarkable manner. Of course, out; roots, stones and sticks picked out, and for two years nearly the whole of the both its "conductivity" and resistance and it is dried on the green sward. It is trans-Mississippi region was supplied from have varied as earth currents arose or magworked and trodden, like mortar, and when that source, no less than two hundred thou netic storms prevailed; but nine times out dry it attains consistency enough to admit sand pounds having been taken from it in of ten the resistance test has been the same even to a millionth unit, day after When the island passed into the hands day, and these tests are identical with those be profitable to resort to it in many parts of the West, where it may be abundant and other fuel is scarce; but it is not yet estabother fuel is scarce; but it is not yet estabwho, in developing the property, has found also afford the most curious data, which, until
lished that it will be extensively or econthe salt-rock from thirteen to twenty-two now, have been almost entirely overlooked

feetly pure, chemical analysis showing meant a good cable, and a high barometer has already reached two hundred thousand between twelve and two in the day, and

STRENGTH OF IRON AND STEEL.

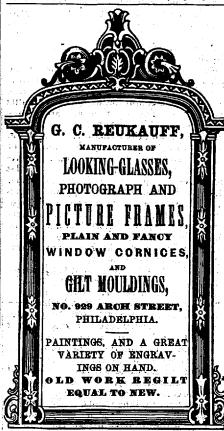
The tensile strength of iron and steel is point to determine which various series of experiments have been instituted by The Paris correspondent of the Liver- scientific and practical men; among others, pool Journal gives the following narrative those made at Glasgow by Mr. Napier are on account of the great care exercised in every operation. The mode of testing was simply to fasten the lower end of the bar securely, attach the upper end to the hook of an enormous steelyard, and load the end rious sized bars and plates were tried, which, however, were carefully measured, experiments made was six hundred and twenty-five; and from these it appearsamong other results—that a weight of seventy four tons may be suspended by a rod of the very best cast steel, an inch square, while a rod of the same size, of the poorest quality of steel, will support only about twenty-three tons. It also appears, from these and other experiments, that steel in bars is considerably stronger than in plates, and it is almost as tenacious across the plates as lengthwise.

WHITENING OF PAPER. That some paper manufacturers are accustomed to increase the weight of their products by the introduction of pipe-clay, plaster of Paris, and other heavy colorless substances, is notorious, though the act is not usually spoken of in terms of com-mendation. But a technical chemist in Europe now proposes, without any reserve, to do away with the usual processes of bleaching with sulphurous acid or chlorine, when he arrived at the Hague he found short, to introduce by chemical means a quantity of sulphate of baryta (barytes) directly into the texture of the paper solutions of alum and of chloride of barium, together with a quantity of slaked lime. quainted with one of the gentlemen at tached to the Prussian Legation at the gether with a quantity of hydrate of alumi-Hague, and to whom he recounted his bit na, is precipitated in and upon the fibres, ter grievances. This time he was listened which, in the subsequent process of felting, to with interest. The brother-in-law of his are converted into paper. The sulphate of new friend held some appointment at the baryta, being of a brilliant white color, will, Court of Berlin, and he lost no time in re- of course, tend to conceal the coloring matpairing with the Englishman to Berlin. ters of the original fibre. As the sulphate The needle gun was tried, examined, and of baryta is very heavy, and as paper is sold accepted in the shortest possible space of by the pound, the method in question will,

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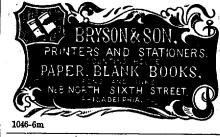
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