

Rural Economy.

THE OLD-FASHIONED THRESHER.

BY REV. E. E. ADAMS, D.D.

Wield the flail! Gracefully it swings On the pliant skin of the silver eel. The bright grains rattle In bloodless battle; And the broad floor rings. Better in their wars, if nations Would hurl such rations; Not the iron and lead Which strike down thousands dead! Thresher, hail! with your flail, Beating out grain for meal.

THE TILDEN TOMATO.

The Tilden Tomato has already acquired reputation among those who cultivated it. As far as experiments have gone, it would seem that its good qualities consist in its size and shape, the solidity and firmness of its flesh, its excellent and refined flavor, and its quality of remaining long on the vine after it is ripe, without decaying. If these merits shall be satisfactorily established after fuller experiments in its cultivation the present season, it will prove a valuable acquisition to the kitchen garden.

Our experience of the Tilden Tomato is less satisfactory. We have raised it this season from seed obtained from one of the best stores in this city. We sowed them the same day and in the same hot-bed with seeds of the common, smooth red. The two kinds were transplanted on the same day, and placed in precisely similar soil, and sufficiently distant from each other to prevent hybridization. The Tilden, though described in the catalogue as earlier, gave us ripe fruit just two weeks later than the other. In some respects they are superior to the other; the fruit is somewhat larger in the aggregate, and the flesh of it rather firmer, but these points of superiority are much slighter in degree than we had been led to expect. In productiveness it has no advantage. As both kinds are still bearing, we are not able to speak of its comparative "holding on" qualities. We saved the seed of a few of the largest and earliest apples, but shall probably throw it aside, and use, as heretofore, the old smooth red for common use, and for a specialty the Fiji, which is far before the Tilden in all the excellencies ascribed to the latter.

IMPORTANT TO FARMERS.

The following decisions have been given by the Commissioner of Internal Revenue at Washington: 1. Farmers will not be required to make return of produce consumed in their own immediate families. 2. The farmers' profits from sales of live stock are to be found by deducting from the gross receipts for animals sold, the purchase money paid for the same. If animals have been lost during the year by death or robbery, the purchase money paid for such animals may be deducted from the gross income of the farm. 3. No deduction can be made by the farmer for the value of services rendered by his minor children, whether he actually pays for such services or not. If his adult children work for him and receive compensation for their labor, they are to be regarded as other hired laborers in determining his income. 4. Money paid for labor, except such as is used or employed in domestic service, or in the production of articles consumed in the family of the producer, may be deducted. 5. No deduction can be allowed in any case for the cost of unproductive labor. If house servants are employed a portion of the time in productive labor, such as the making of butter and cheese for sale, a proportionate amount of the wages paid them may be deducted. 6. Expenses for ditching and cleaning new land are plainly expenses for permanent improvement, and not deducted. 7. The whole amount expended for fertilizers applied during the year to the farmer's land may be deducted, but no deduction is allowed for fertilizers produced on the farm. The cost of seed purchased for sowing and planting may be deducted. 8. If a person sells timber standing, the profits are to be ascertained by estimating the value of the land after the removal of the timber, and from the sum thus obtained deducting the estimated value of the land on the first day of January, 1862, or on the day of purchase, if purchased since that date. 9. Where no repairs have been made by the taxpayer upon any building owned by him during the preceding five years, nothing can be deducted for repairs made during the year for which his income is estimated. 10. A farmer should make return of all

his produce sold within the year, but a mere executory contract for a sale is not a sale; delivery, either actual or constructive, is essential. The criterion by which to judge whether a sale is complete or not, is to determine whether the vendor still retains in that character a right over the property; if the property were lost or destroyed, upon which of the parties, in the absence of any other relation between them than that of the vendor and vendee, would the loss fall.

HARDY BULBS.

The time is come for planting Dutch bulbs. Every garden should contain a few of them, as they are the first flowers to open in the spring. Of these, "the snow-drop, who, in habit white and plain, comes on, the herald of fair Flora's train," will often peep out before the last remnant of snow has finally taken its departure. Then follows the many-colored crocus, the early and late tulips and hyacinths bringing up the rear.

They are all perfectly hardy, and will grow in most kinds of garden soil, although they prefer it somewhat sandy and free from stagnant water. The time to plant is October; it is better to have them by themselves, and in a sheltered nook if possible, not that they will not stand the cold, but that they open their flowers so early that the cold winds are apt to mar their beauty. Tulips, hyacinths, and narcissuses should be planted four inches deep; crocus, snow-drops and other small bulbs, two inches; but after planting, spread over a mulch of manure three or four inches deep, which must be raked off at the end of winter.

Besides the kinds mentioned, there are the crown imperials, of various colors, remarkable for exceedingly quick growth early in the spring, with various colored flowers and quite showy. The lilies also may be planted in the fall. Of these there are many kinds, embracing the Japan lilies, which are exceedingly beautiful. There are two kinds of hardy gladioli also, that may be planted in the fall with white and red or purple flowers. Another old friend is the grape hyacinth, a neat little thing with blue flowers, quite early in the spring.

For out-of-door planting, home-grown bulbs are just as good as any; but for pot purposes in the green-house or windows, the imported bulbs are much the best, though now rather dear.—Prairie Herald.

Scientific.

LOST ARTS.

In regard to colors we are far behind the ancients. None of the colors in the Egyptian paintings of thousands of years ago are in the least faded, except the green. The Tyrian purple of the entombed city of Pompeii is as fresh to-day as it was three thousand years ago. Some of the stucco, painted ages before the Christian era, broken up and mixed, revealed its original lustre. And yet we pity the ignorance of the dark-skinned children of the ancient Egypt. The colors upon the walls of Nero's festal vault are as fresh as if painted yesterday. So is the cheek of the Egyptian prince who was contemporaneous with Solomon and Cleopatra, at whose feet Caesar laid the riches of his empire.

And in regard to metals. The edges of the statues of the obelisks of Egypt, and of the ancient walls of Rome, are as sharp as if but hewn yesterday. And the stones still remain so closely fitted, that their seams, laid with mortar, cannot be penetrated with the edge of a penknife. And their surface is exceedingly hard—so hard that when the French artists engraved two lines upon an obelisk brought from Egypt, they destroyed, in the tedious task, many of the best tools which could be manufactured. And yet these ancient monuments are traced all over with inscriptions placed upon them in olden time.

This, with other facts of a striking character, proves that they were far more skilled in metals than we are. Quite recently it is recorded that when an American vessel was on the shores of Africa, a son of that benighted region made, from an iron hoop, a knife superior to any on board of the vessel, and another made a sword of Damascus excellence from a piece of iron.

Fiction is very old. Scott had his counterparts two thousand years ago. A story is told of a warrior who had no time to wait for the proper forging of his weapon, but seized it red-hot, rode forward, but found to his surprise, that the cold air had tempered his iron into an excellent steel weapon. The tempering of steel, therefore, which was new to us a century since, was old two thousand years ago.

Ventilation is deemed a very modern art, but this is not the fact, for apertures, unquestionably made for the purpose of ventilation, are found in the pyramid tombs of Egypt. Yes, thousands of years ago, the barbarous Pagans went so far as to ventilate their tombs, while we yet scarcely know how to ventilate our houses.

NITRO-GLYCERINE.

M. Emile Kopp, a very good authority, reports to the French Academy the successful use of nitro-glycerine in some sandstone quarries near Saverne. The peculiarity of the case is that the nitro-glycerine is all made upon the spot just before it is wanted for use. The very dangerous transportation of this fulminating material is wholly avoided. The materials from which it is made are not dangerous, though somewhat inconvenient to transport. M. Kopp recommends the following method of preparation, which he considers simple enough to be executed by an ordinary workman under any temporary shelter in the quarry itself. In a large earthenware pot or basin, placed in cold water, the workman mixes a quantity of fuming nitric acid (50 degrees Baume) with twice its weight of the most concentrated sulphuric acid. In another pot he evaporates some commercial glyce-

rine until it becomes sirupy, and marks 30deg. to 31deg. Baume. When both these liquids have become perfectly cold, the workman places 3.3 litres (5.8 pints) of the mixed acids in a glass globe or earthenware pot, which must be kept cool by immersion in cold water. He then pours into the acids 0.5 litre (0.88 pint) of the concentrated glycerine in a fine stream, with constant stirring. It is important to avoid any sensible heating of the mixture. After waiting ten minutes, the workman turns the mixture into five or six times its volume of cold water. The nitro-glycerine falls to the bottom as a heavy oil. Washed once more with a little water, it is ready for use. It is still slightly acid and watery, but these impurities do not hinder its effectual working. The oil is employed for blasting in open quarries in the following manner: Let the object be to detach a considerable mass of stone from a ledge. At 7 to 10 feet from the edge, a hole 2 inches in diameter is sunk to a depth of 7 to 10 feet, and well cleaned out. Three to four pounds of glycerine are then poured in. Next the workman lowers down upon the oil a little cylinder of wood or tin, about 1 1/2 inches in diameter and 2 inches high, filled with gunpowder. This cylinder is held down by means of a common fuse, which is attached to the cylinder, for the purpose of carrying fire to the powder. Holding the fuse straight, the workman fills the hole with fine sand. No tamping is necessary. The shock caused by the inflammation of the powder explodes the nitro-glycerine. The explosion is so sudden that the sand has no time to be thrown from the hole, and no pieces of rock are projected into the air. Formidable masses of rock are cracked off and slightly displaced; but the rock is not broken into small pieces, and there is but little waste. Herein lies the principal advantage of nitro-glycerine over gunpowder in blasting. M. Kopp is of opinion that the transportation of nitro-glycerine, whether by land or sea, ought to be absolutely prohibited, and that its use in the covered galleries of mines would be dangerous, on account of the very poisonous properties of its vapor; but if manufactured on the spot at the time of using, he believes it may be safely and advantageously employed in all blasting operations conducted in the open air.

IRRIGATION IN AUSTRALIA.

The project of collecting and storing water upon the large scale, so that it may be had in abundance at all seasons for domestic and agricultural purposes, has long been under discussion in Australia. Lately it has acquired political importance, and the idea now bids fair to be put in practice. Victoria, the wealthiest and most enterprising of the Australian States, has recently determined to spend a million of pounds sterling toward carrying out the project. The rain-fall of Australia, on an average of years, is sufficient to supply the wants of all the inhabitants, but the conformation of the country affords little natural storage. If the experiment now in progress prove successful, it may alter the character of the cultivation throughout the entire country. In Queensland, in the districts below the Darling Downs range, it is thought that artesian wells may be found useful, and it is proposed to sink such wells at once, as an experiment. The supporters of this scheme find encouragement in the experience of the French, who have derived great advantage from wells bored in the deserts upon the outskirts of Algeria.

THE INDO-GERMANIC RACES.

Professor J. Oppert, well known by his researches on the Assyrian cuneiform inscriptions, has published an address to the students attending the Sanscrit class at the Imperial Library of Paris, which contains some new and interesting matter. He controverts the views held by many students of comparative philology, concerning certain "Aryan" ideas pervading the whole of the so-called Indo-Germanic races. Such an "esprit aryen," he holds, has no more real existence than the much vaunted "idee semitique." Nor do, in his opinion, the Aryan and Semitic races differ from one another in a physiological point of view, nor have they been subject each to different influences of climate or locality. On the other hand, he attributes to Semitic influence a very considerable portion of the elements of which the Greek race more especially is composed. He promises to develop his ideas on this head in a larger work on the origin of the Greek and Latin races.

ANOTHER SCIENTIFIC EXPEDITION.

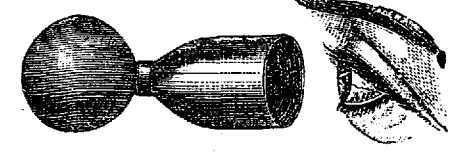
It is stated the French Government contemplate sending a scientific expedition to Armenia. The venerable M. Dulaurier has been offered the command of the expedition, and it is said he will accept it, despite his great age, delicate health and weak eyes, and, I may add, despite the fact that this distant and perilous voyage cost Schultz and Hommaire de Hell their lives. The expedition will be absent a year, and after exploring Russian, Turkish, and Persian Armenia, will repair to Jerusalem to study the numerous interesting MSS. contained in St. James' Convent.



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