

Rural Economy.

Selected from the American Agriculturist. NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS. SAFE PIPE FOR DRINKING WATER.

Lead poisoning from water brought in lead pipe is the often unsuspected cause of disease and death. Galvanized iron pipe, wood, and cement pipe, are expensive and inconvenient substitutes, so that people will risk their lives and use lead.

THE EUROPEAN ROOK FOR INSECTS.

Is there any objection to the introduction of this bird into this country? With all our warfare upon insects, they are increasing. "Aliquis," of Michigan, writes: "I think that a remedy, (for insects), is to be found in the English rook. This bird may be considered entirely insectivorous. The only exception I ever knew was in a severe and long continued snow-storm, when some of them paid a visit to a solitary wheat-stack. I am aware that they are badly accused, and many a day I have kept watch with a gun to keep them off the newly sowed grain, and many of them I have dissected, but I never found anything but insects in their crops. They are constantly in attendance on newly stirred land, and hundreds may be seen following the plow and harrow within two or three yards of the plowman's heels. Indeed, if they were a grain-eating bird, no grain could be raised in the neighborhood of rookeries, where millions are congregated. I believe the intelligent part of Scotchmen do not believe they eat grain, and they won't touch carrion. I was told by a relation that, (it must now be 80 or 100 years ago,) he was one of those employed to kill off the rooks, which they nearly effectually accomplished, but ere many years they were glad to get them back, the land having become entirely overrun with grubs and wire-worms."

COAL TAR FOR FENCE POSTS.

Immerse them in coal tar, as far as they go in the ground, and sand afterwards; it will make them much more durable.

COAL ASHES

Will pay for carting a short distance. They contain the mineral constituents of the plants from which the coal was made, and as they are usually found in cities and villages, small quantities of potash and lime from the wood and charcoal used in kindling. Judging from the rapid disappearance of kindlings in our kitchen, this must be an important item. We have often used them for top dressing for moist grass lands. They are particularly good for muck lands and for heavy clays, serving to make the soil more friable.

SUBSTITUTE FOR STABLE MANURE IN MARKET GARDENING.

You can probably, by exercising reasonable vigilance, pick up many fertilizers which now go to waste in your vicinity. The muck and ashes compost with guano would be good, but no doubt you can secure the contents of privy vaults for the trouble of clearing them out, and perhaps even be paid for doing it. Then, too, there is probably a brewery, paper-mill, tannery, or some similar establishment near, in the wastes of which you may strike a mine. The first and last have each peculiarly fertilizing wastes which must be used with care. Make friends with the butcher for blood and offal useless to him, and so before you buy much guano, exhaust home resources.

BRINGING UP RANDY LAND.

You say your sandy land has a red clay subsoil. The means of renovation are then close at hand, provided you can touch the clay with the plow. All you have to do is to bring it up and mingle it with the surface. If the clay lies too deep, then try green manures. Sow rye now and plow it under in the spring, then sow Indian corn and plow that under after about three months. If you cannot trust corn after the rye, sow buckwheat. Lime alone would probably be of little or no benefit, unless the clay comes up.

SHORT-HORN'S HOMEWARD BOUND.

Eight of these animals, from the herd of James O. Sheldon, of Geneva, N. Y., were recently shipped from this port to England. John Bull cannot resist the temptation of the cattle even in America. Third Duke of Geneva, who heads the list, will be heard from across the water.

HOW TO GET RID OF BRIARS.

Blackberry bushes, both the high and the running kinds, wild rose bushes, and other briars, are, when young, very palatable to deer, and if they are cut close in the winter or in the spring, and sheep are turned in to the land before the thorns become stiff and woody, a single season will nearly eradicate them. This will not do upon very wet land, for the sheep will not thrive. On such ground mowing in August must be resorted to in addition to the winter or spring cutting.

VALUE OF BONES.

Ground bones are worth about \$40 a ton. The uncrushed article bears various prices. Thin bones and some other pieces are used in the arts, and bring high prices. Such as are thrown out from the kitchen bring what boys can get for them. We have paid twenty-five cents a barrel for a great many barrels, delivered at the barn, and should have considered them cheap at twice the price. We would rather pay \$10 a ton for old bones than be without them. They are indispensable in planting fruit trees in the older parts of the country, and are good for all crops. A pile of them should

be kept constantly under the shed, and if a bone-mill is not handy, break them with a sledge or stone hammer on rainy days. Such rainy days, we think, will pay the farmer better than clear ones.

AN OLD FARMER'S SLATE.

Writing about improvements reminds me that a farmer does not always think of what is needful and may be done when leisure times occur, and it recalls to my mind the practice of a large and successful farmer, who at his death left his affairs in a prosperous condition, and his premises in complete order. His neighbors often wondered at the ease with which he conducted his operations; he never hurried, but the right thing was always done at the right time and his work never lagged. Much of the improvement he made was in odd spells when the routine of regular farm work was broken by rainy weather, or after finishing the work on a crop and while waiting for another to get to the proper stage. He kept a large slate hanging in the kitchen where all his workmen could see it, and whenever a job occurred to him it was noted on the slate. For instance some of his entries ran thus,—"Make a gate for the brook lot." "Clean out the open ditch in the wheat field." "Lay a new floor on the scaffold over the barn floor." "Bury the large stone in the middle lot." "Get some whitewood trees to mill for making garden fence pickets." "Plant shade trees along the road side." "Dig the alders out of the fence corners and look after the wild mustard that came up where the thrashing machine stood in the field last year." In this way his slate was filled, and if leisure half-day occurred his men all had plenty of work; and if the matter happened to be absent the slate told the workmen what to do. After a time it was his custom to lay out the day's work on the slate each evening previous and when a job was finished the record was erased. To get the slate clean was the ambition of the workmen.—Dr. Bushnell in Hours at Home.

HOW SHEEP DRINK.

There has been some discussion among writers as to how sheep get water in winter. A writer in one of the Patent Office Reports says when sheep come up to the water in cold weather, and they stand by it and do not drink, it is because they are afraid of getting their wool wet around their jaws, and he says he put a plank over the water, with holes in it, and then they would drink. But he is mistaken. I claim that Providence has provided a way for the sheep as well as the horse. The horse breaks the ice with his feet, and the sheep gets water through as thick ice as the horse can. The sheep melts a hole through the ice with its breath. I have seen them melt it through ice three inches thick, and when that man saw them stand by the water and would not drink, the sheep were going through the process of getting water in cold weather. They will stand by good running water and go through the same operation, although the water was frozen over. I observed them seven years before I knew why they would stand by running water when they were dry and did not drink. This may be new to some,—but it is true.—Cor. Rural New Yorker.

Miscellaneous.

MAN'S POWER AND COURAGE UNFOLDED BY GOD'S APPOINTMENT OF DANGER.

About the highest exhibition of power obtained or obtainable by man, is discovered in the command or sovereign mind-grapple he learns how to maintain over causes infinitely above him, as respects their physical efficiency. He is not only not cowed before the tremendous forces of the creation of God, but he steals their secret, and by means of it he actually takes them into service. And in doing it he is often moved by the stimulation of danger, going directly into the chambers where the danger lurks, and working in close precinct with it. His most striking contrivances, combinations, tools, machines, operations, discoveries, are ways found out by his intelligence for keeping at bay, or reducing to subserviency, forces that would otherwise crush him. As he must go mining underground, in halls that are filled with combustible, explosive gas, he learns by a little experiment how to fence about his light with a fine wire gauze, when he has a safety-lamp that commands the gas to be harmless; and walking there underground, through the valley of the shadow of death, with it in hand he fears no evil. Beset by a dreadful plague, that breathes infection round him year by year, carrying off a third part of the world's children, he learns to steal a poison from one of his domesticated animals, and vaccinated with a touch of this, he goes, and lets them go, directly into the bad exposure, doing it as securely as if the plague-infection were wholly at his bidding. The wild, half-demoniacal terrors of alchemy attract his search instead of repelling it, and chemistry is the result. The sea is a terrible devouring element, and the mariner goes eastward cautiously along the frightful shores for long ages, fearing not only the rocks and winds, but vastly more that he shall wander into unknown regions, and be never able to find where he is, or by what course, to reach his home. By and by it is discovered, by explorative genius groping far away among the stars, that by angle and distance, and calculated tables and observations, the random ship that was, can find her place at almost any time, within a mile, and set her course with reliable precision, for any country or harbor on the globe. The sea again he finds a yawning gulf between him and the world; he searches it out with his mind, as the fish cannot with their fins,

maps the still bottom, draws his wire along it, and then sits down to think and talk serenely through three thousand miles of wave and storm. Still more sublime, because vastly more complex, is that wonderful combination of study and experience by which human society learns to organize itself in law and government, so as to keep in safe control those worst infestations of danger that are created by social wrong and passion. The problem is, how to distribute selfishness and set bad power in balance, so as to keep it safe in the maintenance of order and justice. A very cheap, small thing it is to make out navigation tables, even though we go to the stars for our data; but to make out safe navigations for society, and steer the ark of liberty through the perilous seas of wrong and passion—this, alas! is an art that comes more slowly, and yet it comes! We shall have it by and by the world over.—Dr. Bushnell in Hours at Home.

FEAR AS A MOTIVE TO RIGHT CONDUCT.

And why should there be any so great jealousy of fear as a check to heedlessness and bad living, and as a cautionary motive to the consideration of duty? Is it weak to be alive and thoroughly attend to evils about our path? Who is more distinctively wise than the man who can be cautious enough to foresee dangers, provide a way of safety through them, and maintain, as it were, in this great sea of perils, a firmly balanced prudence? Who, in fact, do we all agree to consider more incurably foolish and thick headed, than the man who cannot see any thunderbolt of danger before it strikes him, and then cannot see it afterward because it has struck him? What is fear in this view, but one of the best functions of intelligence? And when we take note of the fact that every human being is organized for the apprehension of danger and pain, the whole skin woven through with nerves of sensibility, to keep it apprised of damage from exposures to fire, and frost and violence; the eye made quick to apprehend and shut its gates against every sort of invasion; the very fingers' ends reticulated with nerves of touch, to make them sensitive to the approaches of pain—when, I say, we note this tempering of the whole body to a mood of precaution, or of quickened sensibility to danger, shall we take it as the Creator's plan to make us weak, organize it into weakness, humble us to a pitiful, dejected way of living under the sway of fear? Exactly contrary to this, he is making us quick to fear, that he may put us on our intelligence; train us to a nobler and more capable prudence; lift us into a wisdom more completely sovereign over the bad liabilities that beset us.—Ibid.

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