

Scott's Rhyme of Merry Christmas

FARM NOTES.

—The pinch of a frosty night will make a big hole in the pocketbook.
—A little neglect at this time of year may start a long winter of loss.
—Keep the horses doing something every day. An idle horse will be a sick horse before you know it.
—With the fall letting up of work, let up on the heavy feed. Like men, horses doing little work should eat little.
—Some of the cracks in the stable can be stopped up more cheaply than you can feed oats to keep the horses warm.
—Mares bred in November will foal the following October, after most of the farm work is done, and the flies are gone.
—Feeding a lot of dry or nearly dry cows in the winter is almost as wasteful as keeping up roaring fires in the house all summer.
—Some men start for the doctor when they have a sick horse. Others feed well, care well and drive well, so they never have to go to the doctor.
—At this time of year, just before cattle go into winter quarters, a dairyman can replenish his dairy by buying heifer calves, often at great bargains.
—Travelers observe that in Holland the cows are always scrupulously clean, winter and summer. If we can not beat the Dutch we ought at least equal them.
—Begin to take the chill off the water you give the horses when the weather gets cold. You can heat it cheaper on the stove than you can in the stomach of the horse.
—Round about Thanksgiving many do not milk more than once a day. Keep on milking twice a day as long as you milk at all. Better milk, better butter, better for the cows.
—Good drainage is important on potato fields. Potatoes will stand less excess of moisture than most farm crops, and unless there is natural drainage resort should be had to artificial drainage.
—One reason why many farmers do not get rid of weeds on their farms is because they try to cultivate too much land. To keep weeds down crops must be cultivated all the time, and if there is more land than can be covered as often as needs be the weeds will get the better of one every time.
—Breeders sometimes have particular months and particular periods of the month in which they breed their stock, with the idea of getting thrifty animals. Others have a superstition that a fat horse breeds better while others still incline to the belief in lean animals for good breeding results.
—The development of lactic acid, or the souring of cream, does not increase its butterfat content. As a rule, when cream becomes sour, it is more difficult to test than when it is sweet. The difficulty in obtaining an accurate test of sour milk or cream lies in the fact that it is not easy to obtain an accurate sample.
—When attending a farmers' institute recently, Professor G. L. Martin, head of the dairy department of the North Dakota Agricultural College, was asked the question, "How much should butter be salted?" His reply was, "For ordinary marketing, from three-fourths of an ounce to one ounce to the pound of butter."
—The people of the United States spend about \$200,000,000 every year for paint and varnish, the three items—white lead, zinc oxide and linseed oil—covering \$40,000,000, a large part of which is expended on farm buildings, fences, etc. The railroads pay yearly about \$20,000,000 of this sum—one-tenth of the country's annual paint bill.
—One of the effects of the use of salt on land is to increase the capacity of the soil for retaining moisture. About one barrel per acre has been known to benefit grass during periods of drought, the salt being applied in May. Kainit contains a large proportion of salt, as well as about 12 per cent. of potash, and may be used in preference.
—Soil that has produced a crop of scab potatoes should be used for some other crop for several years, because the scab spores live over in the soil and will attack subsequent potato crops for five or six years afterward. For potatoes, select, if possible, a northern slope, since the crop will suffer less on such slope during hot, dry weather.
—Horses which have vicious habits are frequently broken of them by harsh treatment, followed by kindly treatment. However, in such cases the horse retains an ill-will for the man who broke him, and if he dare would take revenge. He may fear to manifest his feelings, but he still has the vicious feeling, and such a horse has not the desirable temperament.
—Experiments made at the Pennsylvania Experiment Station show that hill strawberries are not larger and better formed than those grown in matted rows, provided the matted row is a narrow one. Both hills and matted rows produced fruit somewhat inferior to that from narrow matted rows. It is evident that different soil conditions and cultural methods, especially in the matter of manuring, would change these results somewhat more favorably to the hill system.
—Colts should have plenty of exercise to make bone and muscle, and should be allowed to run on pasture or the winter wheat field as much as the weather will allow. They should be salted frequently and given plenty of good, pure water to drink. They should be kept in warm stalls when the weather is too severe to allow them to run out. There is no animal on the farm which will return so good a profit as the young colt. If it is developed properly it must have plenty of feed and attention.
—The Bureau of Animal Industry, United States Department of Agriculture, gives the following recipe for hog cholera, which is claimed by many who have tried it to be invaluable in warding off the disease: One part wood charcoal, one part sulphur, two parts salt, two parts baking soda, two parts sodium hyposulphite, one part sodium sulphate, one part antimony sulphate. Pulverize and mix thoroughly. Dose, one tablespoonful for each 200 pounds weight of hog, once a day.

Heap on more wood: The wind is chill,
But, let it whistle as it will,
We'll keep our Christmas merry still.
Each age has deemed the newborn year
The fittest time for festive cheer.
And well our Christian sires of old
Loved when the year its course had rolled
And brought blithe Christmas back again
With all his hospitable train
Domestic and religious rite
Gave honor to the holy night.
On Christmas eve the bells were rung;
On Christmas eve the mass was sung;
That only night in all the year
Saw the stoled priest the chalice rear.
The damsel donned her kirtle sheen;
The hall was dressed with holly green;
Forth to the wood did merry men go
To gather in the mistletoe.
Then opened wide the baron's hall
To vassal, tenant, serf and all:



THEN CAME THE MERRY MASKERS IN.

Power laid his rod of rule aside,
And Ceremony doffed his pride.
The heir, with roses in his shoes,
That night might village partner choose;
All hailed with uncontrolled delight
And general voice the happy night
Brought to the cottage as the crown
That tidings of salvation down.
The fire, with well dried logs supplied,
Went roaring up the chimney wide;
The huge hall table's oaken face,
Scrubbed till it shone, the day to grace,
Bore then upon its massive board
No mark to part the squire and lord.
Then was brought in the lusty brawn
By old blue coated serving man;
Then the grim boar's head frowned on high,
Crested with bays and rosemary.
Well can the green barbed ranger tell
How, when and where the monster fell.
What dogs before his death he tore
And all the baiting of the boar.

The wassail round, in good brown bowls,
Garnished with ribbons, blithely trow.
There the huge sirloin reeked; hard by
Plum porridge stood and Christmas pie.
Nor failed old Scotland to produce
At such high tide her savory goose.
Then came the merry maskers in,
And carols roared with blithesome din.
If unmelodious was the song,
It was a hearty note and strong.
England was merry England when
Old Christmas brought his sports again.
'Twas Christmas broached the mightiest ale;
'Twas Christmas told the merriest tale;
A Christmas gambol off could cheer
The poor man's heart through half the year.
—Sir Walter Scott.

THE WREN BUSH.

An Old Custom Still Observed in Ireland at Christmas.
Among the many odd customs still observed in Ireland at Christmas few are more curious than the practice of carrying about "the wren bush" on St. Stephen's day, and antiquaries are puzzled to explain why the poor little "king of all birds" should be put to death on the festival of the first martyr.
The most probable explanation is that the wren was sacred to the Druids and was used by them in divination and other pagan rites at the festival of the winter solstice, which almost coincided with Christmas, and consequently the clergy urged their converts to destroy the birds which were associated with such unholily rites, just as St. Patrick's relentless destruction of the images of serpents, used in the ancient pagan worship of Ireland, gave rise to the legend that he gave the snakes and toads a twist and banished them all forever!
This seems the more likely because "dread," the old Irish name for "wren," also means "a Druid," and old folk still call "Jenny" the "Druid bird" and say that she has the gift of prophecy and that those who can interpret her twitterings as she hovers about a house or flies from bush to bush can read the future. In the library of Trinity college, Dublin, there is a curious document describing how to interpret the notes of the wren.—Maud E. Sargent in Longman's Magazine.

THE ANGELS' SONG.

The little town of Bethlehem
All calm and silent slept,
While shepherds o'er Judea's hills
Their lonely vigils kept.
High overhead the stars looked down
Through all that peaceful night,
And shed upon the hills below
The radiance of their light.
Lo! suddenly the sky grew bright,
The air was filled with song,
For down from heaven to earth there came
A white-robed angel throng.
The shepherds raised their heads to catch
The tidings, sweet and clear,
Of love and joy and "peace on earth,"
And to all men good cheer.
"In yonder town of Bethlehem
Is born to you this day
A Savior, which is Christ the Lord,—
Go seek him while you may.
And this to you shall be the sign,
In lowly cattle-stall,
All wrapped in swaddling clothes, you'll find
The Savior of us all."
"To God on high be glory given,"
Again the angels sang,
With "peace on earth and sweet good-will"
The hills of Judea rang.
"To God on high be glory given
On this glad Christmas morn:
Peace, peace on earth, good-will to all,
For Christ the Lord is born."
—Lucy G. Stock.

Our Correspondents' Opinions.

This column is at the service of those of our people who desire to express their views on any subject they think of general interest. The "Watchman" will in no way be responsible for their views or statements, nor will it publish anything, the author of which neglects or refuses to give his name—not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee of good faith.

The President Message Omissions.

Sacrificing the Interior for Greater New York. Refuses to Announce Workings of Tariff Revision Downward.

Of foreign commerce for fiscal year are increased import merchandise \$245,899,764 and increased exports \$71,728,405, making total foreign commerce \$2,869,740,212 of which New York obtains \$1,587,977,314, being an increase trade of one year \$201,428,889. The second port of the Union is Boston and the entire foreign commerce last fiscal year was \$199,522,973.

The Payne tariff law reduced the average rate of duties 11 per cent. and are less than under any tariff law for the last sixty years and the free lists, by class, are larger than ever and excessive in the measure of resources that are in the make-up of independent nation and railroad sound feeders by national tariff rate equal to the difference of American and foreign wages and the adoption by the nation, honest commercial method of including all foreign charges in statistical values for clean public documents, where by the people would rule intelligently.

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JAMES WOLFENDEN.
Lamar, December 9th, 1910.

—All work that is to be done with bees in the winter time must be done on warm days, while the bees are flying. On no other time must they be disturbed.

Medical.

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