

Agricultural.

Retention in Crops. A judicious rotation of crops is absolutely necessary in maintaining the fertility of the soil. This needs no demonstration, for it is universally admitted. But how to rotate to secure the greatest advantage is the main question. No specific directions can be given to suit every case, because "rotation" means "alter cases" very much in regard to this point. The system that would succeed on one farm would fail on another, and vice versa. Governed by general principles, the farmer must decide this matter for himself. Each element essential to its growth and maturity, and by continuous cropping however judicious the rotation may be, the soil will eventually be exhausted. Hence the elements abstracted must be returned to the soil in the shape of fertilizers. This settles one point—that farmers keep stock, and the nearer they come to keeping stock enough to consume what their farms produce the nearer they come to the most improved culture. The usual rotation is from the grass-corn, clover or barley, wheat and then soybeans. Governed by general principles, the farmer must decide this matter for himself. Each element essential to its growth and maturity, and by continuous cropping however judicious the rotation may be, the soil will eventually be exhausted. Hence the elements abstracted must be returned to the soil in the shape of fertilizers. This settles one point—that farmers keep stock, and the nearer they come to keeping stock enough to consume what their farms produce the nearer they come to the most improved culture. The usual rotation is from the grass-corn, clover or barley, wheat and then soybeans.

How Farmers' Wives Break Down. A woman tells this story in the Boston Cultivator, and many can testify to their own knowledge that it is very sad true: "I can get forty women to marry me, within fifty miles of this village," said a man to me the other day, "but I can't find a woman anywhere who will come and help my wife, and she is breaking down every day." Yes, breaking down! Can any one look in her ashy white face and not read the story written there, of hard work, in season and out of season, of her four little girls—the eldest six years old and the youngest three months. Her husband keeps six cows, and cultivates a farm of a hundred acres, employing two hired men to aid him. Three meals must be cooked daily for a family of seven, not counting the baby; four children dressed and cared for; the milk of six cows attended to, and butter made, while the weekly washing and ironing must be accomplished in some way. From four o'clock in the morning until ten, and sometimes eleven at night, one pair of hands and one pair of feet perform this labor, and now the tired body rebels and says: "This cannot be continued."

Let me tell you of another case: The farmer and his wife have four children, all under eight years of age. He employs two hired men, boarding them, and keeps eleven cows. A woman comes in to do the washing and ironing, but that is all the assistance the wife receives, except the few steps her children can save her. She must rise at four o'clock and prepare breakfast, so that her husband and his men can be in the morning field at five. Every other day, however, one of the hired men remains to do the churning for her; but this favor was not allowed her until she had threatened to call in the doctor to declare to her husband her inability to do such hard work. Then it was reluctantly conceded, although two forty-pound firkins of butter were sacked each week; for our farmer prides himself upon his herd of cows—pure Alderneys—and sells his butter at the highest rates, carefully depositing his proceeds in the bank, and rarely giving his wife so much as a dollar bill of it. His last infirmity to the hired hand, "John come just as quick as you can. Don't let Mr. M— keep you for anything else, Hay can't wait for woman's work." There are dishes to wash, milk to skim, pans to scald, beds to make, children to dress, baby to nurse, rooms to sweep, and dinner to cook over the boiling hot stove, and one woman to do it all!

TO PREVENT SMUT IN WHEAT.—A correspondent of the Southern Cultivator says: Make a strong brine and wash or wet the wheat thoroughly; then drain, and before the wheat gets dry, sift on ashes and stir well, so that all the wheat may come in contact with the dry ashes; or, in other words, soak the wheat in strong brine and then dry it with food strong ashes, (air-laked lime would probably do as well, or better), and then it is ready for sowing. It may be prepared any time long as the vitality of the seed might be injured. I have seen it meet that, in succession, and never knew it fail to prevent smut. I also think that the wheat grows off better when prepared in this way, than when sowed dry, or soaked in a solution of bluestone.

WHO IS THE BEST FARMER?—The best farmer is he who raises the best and largest crops on the smallest tract of land, at the least expense, and at the same time annually improves his soil; who understands his business and attends to it; whose manure heap is very large and always increasing; whose corn crib and smoke-house are at home; who is surrounded by all the necessities of life; who studies his profession and tries to reach perfection in it; who keeps a strict account of his out-goes as well as his in-comes, and who knows how he stands at the end of every season. Such a farmer, nine times out of ten, will succeed and not only make farming a pleasant but profitable occupation. Try it, and see how it is yourself, reader.—Farmers' and How to Succeed.

SCRUBS, NAILS.—Most mechanics who work in wood do not appear to understand the eminent superiority of wood screws over brads and nails. In many places one screw is worth three or four nails. When one is securing cleats to barn doors, or cleats to a wagon box, nails are very uneconomical when compared with the efficiency of gimlet-pointed screws. Screws will hold two pieces of wood more rigidly than nails; and if the timber should shrink a trifle, the screws can be turned up tight; whereas it is difficult in most instances, to tighten up loose work with nails in all places where there is an unusual strain on the parts to be held together.

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NORTHERN CENTRAL RAILWAY COMPANY. On and after November 30th, 1874, trains will leave SUNDAY as follows:

PENNSYLVANIA RAIL ROAD. Philadelphia & Erie R. R. Division. SUMMER TIME TABLE. ON and after SUNDAY, MAY 23d, 1875, the train on the Philadelphia & Erie R. R. will run as follows:

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PHILADELPHIA & READING ROAD. ARRANGEMENT OF PASSENGER TRAINS. MAY 15, 1875.

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