A Womans's Curiosity.

When the British army held possession of Philadelphia, Gen. Howard's headquarters were on Second street the Fourth door below Spruce, in a house which was before occupied by Gen. Cadwallader. Directly opposite resided William and Lydia Darrah, members of the society of Friends. A superior officer of the British army, believed to be the Adjutant-General, fixed upon one of their chambers, a back room, for private conference, and two of them frequently met there with fire and candles, in close consultation. About the third of December they told Lydia that they would be in the room about 7 o'clock, and remain late, and that they wished the family to retire early to bed, adding that when they were going away they would call her to let them out, and extinguish their fire and candles. She accordingly sent all the family to bed; but as the officer had been so particular, her curiosity was excited. She took off her shoes, and put her ear to the keyhole of the conclave. She overheard an order read for all the British troops to march out late in the evening of the 4th and attack Gen. Washington's army, then encamped at White Marsh. On hearing this, she returned to her chamber, and laid herself down. Soon after the officers knocked at her door, but she arose only at the third summons, having feigned sleep.

Her mind was so much agitated that from this moment she could neither eat nor sleep, supposing it to be in her power to save the lives of her countrymen, but not knowing how she was to convey the necessary intelligence to Gen. Washington, nor daring to confide in her husband. The time left was, however, short. She quickly determined to make her way as soon as possible to the American outposts. She informed her family that, as they were in want of flour, she would go to Frankford for some. Her husband insisted that she should take with her a servant maid, but to his surprise she positively refused. She got across to Gen. Howe and solicited what he readily granted—a pass through the British troops on the lines. Leaving her bag at the mill, she hastened towards the American lines and encountered on her way an American Lieutenant-Colonel (Craig) of the Light Horse, who, with some of his men, was on the lookout for information. He knew her and inquired whither she was going. She answered in quest of her son an officer in the American army, and prayed the Colonel to alight and walk with her. He did so, ordering his troops to keep in sight. To him she disclosed her momentous secret, after having obtained from him the most solemn promise never to betray her individually, since her life might be at stake with the British. He conducted her to a house near at hand, directed a female to give her something to eat, and speeded for headquarters, where he acquainted General Washington with the important information.

Washington made, of course, all preparations for baffling the intended surprise. Lydia returned with her flour; sat up alone to watch the movement of the British troops; heard their footsteps, but when they returned, in a few days after, did not dare ask a question, though solicitous to learn the event. The next evening the Adjutant-General came in, and requested her walk up to her room, as he wished to put some questions. She followed him in terror, and when he locked the door, and begged her, with an air of mystery, to be seated, she was sure she was either suspected, or had been betrayed. He inquired earnestly whether any of her family were up the last night he and the other officers met. She told him that they all retired at eight o'clock. He observed:

"I know *you* were asleep, for I knocked at your chamber door three times before you heard me. I am entirely at a loss to imagine who gave Gen. Washington information of our intended attack, unless the walls of the house could speak. When we arrived near White Marsh we found all their cannon mounted and the troops prepared to receive us, and we have marched back like a parcel of fools.

Why Germans Use Glasses.

"It comes from reading," observed the oculist.

"Yes, but why should Germans be more near sighted than Americans? Do they read more?"

"I don't think they do, but it is the kind of books they read that causes their vision to be defective."

"How so?"

"The German books are printed in the dazzling old English type, which tries the eyes more than any other type in use in civilized countries. It requires such close scrutiny that the eyes are invariably strained. So well known is this fact that recently the Austrian minister of public instruction issued a very sensible decree forbidding the use of books printed in small type in the public schools. Now, with American school books this would not be so necessary, but German books to be harmless must be printed in large, bold faced characters. There is a large party of reformers in Germany who are striving to have the types of that nation officially changed to Roman, and the use of English script has largely taken the place of the German script in correspondence. Educated Germans read one style as readily as the other, and the former is growing rapidly in popularity. It will not be long before all books will appear in the same characters, if not in the same language, and when that time comes the eyes of succeeding generations will be stronger than those of the present, but I don't apprehend that this will happen early enough to injure my business. Reforms come slowly and physicians will find their hands full until the dawn of the "millennium.

YOUNG onions are easily destroyed by weeds or grass, and to have a full crop the patch should be examined often, especially after a rain, as rains induce growth of grass. Hand-picking is often required, and the cultivation should not cease until the crop is nearly matured.

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Capillarity of Soil.

Dr. E. Lewis Sturtevant, in using and explaining the term "capillarity of the soil," has formulated into doctrine what has been observed and desultorily taught through generations. The old writers insist on fine tillage, a rendering of the soil into fine tilth—evenly granulated all through—and the famous exploits of Tull, and of Smith, of Lois Weedon in producing heavy crops continually without manure on heavy clay soils, were results of this intimately fine working of them. A soil may be called capillary when so finely divided (yet without being ground into powder—impalpable) as to resemble the finest sand, the particles of which, as one may see in a heap of broken redstone, lie in close contact, yet everywhere leaves spaces communicating so as to allow water or air free passage. When we take up a handful of damp loam and press it it falls apart again almost as readily as the fine sand, yet not wholly, because the particles hold to each other, when once quite near by the attraction of cohesion. This same attraction also allures the water, as is distinctly seen when one end of a glass tube of any caliber (as a piece of a broken thermometer tube) is dipped vertically in colored water; the water will be seen rising quite far up the narrow interior and even drawn up against the outer face of the glass as far as a one-sided pull can take it. A lump of white sugar with its base just barely touching the same water will immediately draw it to the top, ascended through the interstices. A dry clot of capillary soil—loam—will take up the liquid similarly. If the sugar is compacted into candy, or the soil into a dense clayey lump, this beautiful effect can not occur. Too finely powdered loam, as road dust for example, wetted into a dough and then dried, will be too compact to admit of it. And if we crush this dried cake or the cake of clay into coarse fragments, the interstices will be too wide for the power of attraction to reach across and the water will fail to climb up. It is like a chimney-sweep of the olden time who could mount up a flue with back against one side, and hands and knees against the other, but would fail in chimneys too wide for such a means of ascent.

This principle underlies all soil-working, and should guide continually in the management of heavy soils. It accounts for the better success with wheat or rye sown on corn stubbles without replowing. The sod that was turned down in the spring for corn renders the soil, by the end of September, in the best condition of capillarity, but if we plow it again, tearing out the thick corn roots, we can not restore that same equably fine condition but leave openings, especially among the corn roots which both cut off the capillary ascent of moisture and by becoming filled with stagnant, damp air, form chambers for the growth of molds that are poisonous to the plant roots. The supply of moisture to feeding roots of plants from below is superior to surface irrigation supply in at least three respects: First, it is comparatively inexpensive. Next, it feeds the roots as well as supplies water to convey the food; for the salts that dissolve into the soil water at whatever depth, rise with it to the surface, and it is only there that they separate, as only the pure vapor of water can take wing and rise among the particles of air like as the solution did through the particles of earth. In dry autumnal weather we often see the surface visibly coated with deposited salts left behind in this way. Water or irrigation may bring with it some nutriment in solution, but it is very often the case that its excessive flow carries this means of fertility beyond the reach of the plants, if it does not even carry some of the soil away too. Much of the good effect of irrigation on dry Western soils results from its dissolving salts left at the surface and conveying them down again within the reach of the absorbing root-points. This brings up a third great merit of this capillary supply of the constantly needed water—that its supply is constant as long as there is water below and within reach of the capillary structure of the soil, and also that its supply is never in injurious excess.

Working the Soil.

Every close observer must assent to the fact that proper culture at the proper time will go far toward carrying a crop of anything over a dry spell, and I think that the advantages derived are chiefly due to breaking the capillaries, and also to the fine surface acting as a mulch. To suppose that the moist soil two inches below the surface of a finely-pulverized soil is due to absorption to any great extent, I can not conceive. Last season, during our almost unprecedented drought, when there was not moisture enough many nights in the atmosphere even to be visible in the form of dew upon cool blades of grass or foliage (the most favored surface for condensation), a careful observer would have noticed in the evening, and again in the morning, that the moisture from beneath a fine pulverized surface was fully one inch nearer the surface in the morning than in the previous evening, which could not be attributed to any other cause than attraction from beneath.

Again, if we lay a board or flat stone upon a well pulverized spot of ground in which there is no visible moisture for say two inches, in a few days you will find the moisture from beneath rise to the surface, not from absorption from the air, but from beneath. Another cause, in favor of proper cultivation, may be ascribed to the fact that a fine pulverized surface, loose and porous, having all the little interstices filled with air, not a circulating, but to a degree dead air, acting as a non-conductor of heat, greatly prevents evaporation by the hot rays of the sun, thus making the soil much more retentive of moisture held by capillary the principle. Let us never allow a crust to form upon the surface, and we shall complain less of dry weather.

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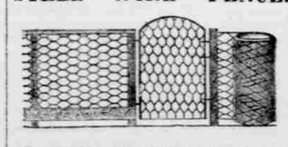

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CONSUMPTION

Working the Soil.

Every close observer must assent to the fact that proper culture at the proper time will go far toward carrying a crop of anything over a dry spell, and I think that the advantages derived are chiefly due to breaking the capillaries, and also to the fine surface acting as a mulch. To suppose that the moist soil two inches below the surface of a finely-pulverized soil is due to absorption to any great extent, I can not conceive. Last season, during our almost unprecedented drought, when there was not moisture enough many nights in the atmosphere even to be visible in the form of dew upon cool blades of grass or foliage (the most favored surface for condensation), a careful observer would have noticed in the evening, and again in the morning, that the moisture from beneath a fine pulverized surface was fully one inch nearer the surface in the morning than in the previous evening, which could not be attributed to any other cause than attraction from beneath.

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THE neglect of the habit of accuracy seriously limits a man's personal influence, and also his personal enjoyment.

Raising Calves on Skim Milk.

You ask me in relation to raising calves on skim milk and if this is a practice among farmers where I reside? I would reply that it is, and one that has been followed for a long time by many farmers. This State is largely devoted to the dairy industry and in Franklin county especially, every farmer keeps cows; the herds will average from ten to fifty, so you see there is a large amount of skim milk to dispose of, as but very little cheese is now made; this is fed to calves pigs and poultry. To keep up these herds it is necessary to raise quite a number of calves every year; besides this many are fed either as veal or to be otherwise disposed of, ontside of the State. Sometimes they have been sent west and south.

These calves are raised princially on skim milk, as the farmers could hardly make it pay to feed new milk. After the first few days the milk is skimmed, at first while it is yet sweet, then not until all the cream has risen.

This, of course, is where the large and small open pans are used, and not the deep, cold setting, or the seperator process, where the milk is sweet after all the cream is obtained. The milk should be warmed to an equal temperature with that drawn from the cow before it is fed. This should be so managed that it will not become thick or cheesy, if it is sour, as it usually will be.

The calves should be fed regularly and not too much at a time. This is very important, as by over feeding scouring is likely to result, the animal will not do well and sometimes die.

With our common stock two quarts at a feed twice a day is enough, until several weeks old. To succeed with this method of feeding it should be followed up during as large a part of the season as there is milk for the purpose.

When the weather gets warm there will not be as much trouble in preparing the milk. I find it profitable to boil a small quantity of wheat middlings in water and put in the milk a tablespoonful or two of the middlings for the calf. They will do much better with this than with milk alone.

I think that oil meal would be excelent for the purpose, and where flax seed is cheap, that can be made to answer an excellent purpose, boiling in water and putting a little of the jelly in the milk. This will take the place in a measure, of the fat removed in the cream.

Perhaps, after a time, if the calves will eat ground oats dry, these might be substituted for the porridge or jelly. When a few weeks old they will eat hay, and then should have is as regularly as cows. It is better to have them seperate so that they will not suck each other, and thus contract bad habits. It is also very important that they be kept clean, dry and warm. Some will keep in barns during a considerable part of the summer and feed hay, considering that better than turning to grass while they are having milk. All of these details require care, but if success is expected it will pay to bestow it.

Many farmers are now grading up their herds with Jersey blood. We find it somewhat more difficult to raise calves from this breed than used to be the case with the old native stock, but properly managed, they make fine animals, and are ready to commence giving milk at an early age. Where calves are to be fed for veal or to be sent out of the State, when size is an important requsite, some of the larger breeds are more desirable. The calves that are to remain on the farm should be kept thrifty and growing from the time they were born until they commence giving milk. This here, is usually at two years, so it will be seen how important it is that they have proper care all the time, in order that they make profitable cows.

Generally it is found that the way of disposing of the skim milk pure described is fully as profitable as feeding to pigs—sometimes more so—and helps to put to a good use product of which we have an abundance, and that otherwise might go to waste.

Western Sod Shanties.

To begin with, there is something forbidding and repulsive about the very name of shanty. We associate it with a condition of dirt and dilapidation, although there is no reason why a shanty should not be neat and clean both inside and out.

The word is said to be derived from two Irish words meaning an old house; therefore, a shanty need not be small, dirty or out of repair. In this country, shanties are chiefly found in the West, and although they present no feature to gratify the artistic sense, they are better than they look.

The sod shanty marks the crest of the advancing wave of civilization, and it is never built with a view to more than temporary occupation, giving way in time to commodious and stylish dwellings or substantial farm houses and spacious barns and outbuildings.

But, while it lasts, the sod shanty possesses qualities of more practical importance than mere beauty of form and color. It is warm in winter and cool in summer, and no other dwelling affords more secure protection against the storms which sweep across the country from the extreme North to the Gulf of Mexico.

Most of these shanties are finished inside in a style that renders them more than comfortable. Narrow boards are set against the inside of the walls, and nailed to the floor, as well as to horizontal strips built into the wall for that purpose. Thin, cheap cotton cloth or building paper is tacked on these strips all around the room, and wall paper is then pasted on in the usual way. The roof is of boards or earth sodded over.

Thus, with ingenuity, taste and a few hundred feet of pine boards, the enterprising settler and his wife will soon build a comfortable, if not elegant, dwelling, to shelter them until the increasing wealth of the settler warrants a better change.

But, at its worst, the sod shanty of the West is far superior to the Irishman's hovel, the Mexican adobe hut, or the "auld clay biggin" which sheltered Scotland's plowman bard.

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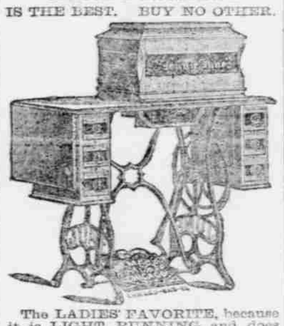

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All Sorts of Paragraphs.

Its a nod thing to see a man asleep in church.

The old cure—wet clay—is always a good application for a bee sting.

A railroad man is more liable than any other man to have a carbuncle.

Skirts are growing wider, but the difference is made entirely in the back widths.

The boss rooster of the barn yard refers to hens as the lay members of his congregation.

Leprosy exists in this country in Minnesota, in the Caucasian parish in Louisiana and in Nova Scotia.

After a hard fight a few days ago near Delia, Pa., a rabbit prevented a crow from eating her little ones.

Nola Twigg, a servant girl of Portland, Ore., has fallen heiress to a fortune of $200,000 in England.

The lessons of life make deeper impressions than the lessons of books, because they touch the heart before they reach the head.

When a man has once forfeited his reputation or his integrity, nothing will then serve his turn, neither truth nor falsehood.

A rattlesnake was recently killed by Mrs. L. A. West, of Crooked Creek. The reptile was engaged in playing with a pet cat near the house.

A nugget of ruby ore weighing 1,600 pounds and estimated to worth $10,000 was taken from r mine near Elko, Cal., a few days ago.

"Hoodlum" comes from the German huddler, meaning the loafer, or idler; so "bummer" from the German bummler, a word of similar import.

Frank Mills, a Aarusrd student, died recently from the effects of opium smoking, which he indulged in to excess in a Chinese joint at Cambridge.

Recently a disgusted, Oshkosh, Wis., juryman offered to pay the sum in dispute if the claimant would dismiss the case. The offer was refused.

Walter Cooper, a prominent English gypsy, died recently, and his body was drawn to the churchyard by a favorite mare. The mare was then sacrificed.

A colored minister in Nevada prayed the other day that the indelicate might be made delicate, the intemperate temperate and the industrious dustrious.

A little Burlington girl persisted in singing while her grandfather was taking a nap. She explained that she was "trying to sing granpa's nose to sleep."

The fastest run on an American railroad was made on the Philadelphia and Reading road, when a train ran 92 miles in 93 minutes. One mile was made in 46 seconds.

The population of Canada is less than that of the State of New York; and yet while New York has a debt of only about $7,000,000, Canada has a debt of nearly $240,000,000.

It has just been discovered in Austria that one of the four State executioners is a woman. She is large and muscular, has a heavy voice, and has adjusted the nooses for twenty-six victims.

Electric rifles are the latest. Instead of the ordinary percussion firing device, a dry choloride of silver battery and a primary coil will, so it was lately stated before the American institute, fire the rifle 35,000 times without recharging.

In the coffin of the dead Emperor ex-Empress Victoria placed a small gold chain, to which three lockets were attached containing minatures which she had taken during their courtship, and which he had always worn until his last illness.

Food For Thought

Temperate anger well becomes the wise.

Light cares speak, great ones are dumb.

As base as slander is, it is never lost for the want of listeners.

A man never can be happy unless his first objects are outside of himself.

Sometimes a noble failure serves the world as faithfully as a distinguished success.

The happiness or unhappiness of old age is often nothing but the extract of a past life.

We can furnish nothing in this life; but we may make a beginning, and bequeath a noble example.

If a man is doing a good business he should not tie up his surplus or take a venture on the street.

Noah was the first man who strictly observed Lent. He lived on water for forty days and nights.

Contentment is a good thing until it reaches the point where it sits in the shade and lets the weeds grow.

What delights, what emancipates, not what scares and pains us is wise and good in speech and in the arts.

There were never too many flowers in this world, and not one kind word too many has ever yet been spoken.

Success doesn't impose itself on any one. Those who win must reach for things, and at the same time cultivate their grip.

Elevate your business. Remember that the more elevated your business character the more easy it will be to get money.

Society is composed of two great classes, those who have more appetite than dinner, and those who more have dinner than appetite.

Pests of the Corn Field.

In corn planting time the farmer is worried by many pests. Crows and blackbirds pull up the sprouting seed, and if this is truly done in pursuit of nefarious cutworms and pestilent grubs the damage is in no way mollified or lessened. Squirrels and chipmunks dig up the seed and cutworms sever the tender sprouts. It is useless and unreasonable to complain when simple and effective precautions are ignored and neglected. Seed stirred in just sufficient hot water in which a table-spoonful of tar has been mixed by agitation to coat each grain with a film of the tar will not be attacked by crows or cutworms or squirrels. We have steeped the seed in a solution of saltpetre in hot water, with the result of hastening the germination by two days, and thus lessening the danger of mischief by these pests, and by adding a few drops of carbolic acid to the quart of solution the odor of the seed becomes too offensive for all the common pests combined.