

FARM AND GARDEN NOTES

ITEMS OF TIMELY INTEREST TO THE FARMERS.

Bees and Horticulture--Thinning Fruit.
Grapes in Summer--Eradicating Moles from Gardens.

TO GROW CELERY.

Celery requires very rich and yet moist soil. It should be made rich by previous manuring, as a large amount of fresh manure put on the year the crop is to be grown makes the soil too dry, and though the celery will grow rank for a time, it will become dry and pithy. If the soil in which celery is to be grown is found not rich enough, some quick acting nitrogenous commercial fertilizer will be found more profitable as well as cheaper than the quantity of stable manure needed to secure an equal amount of growth. The commercial fertilizer will not dry out the land as stable manure will.

BEES AND HORTICULTURE.

The growing of fruit fits in more happily with the production of honey than does any other occupation. When bees need the most attention the orchard needs least. The next question is: Are bees of any benefit to growing fruit? They certainly are in that they aid in fertilization, and while bees are working on the blossoms other insects do not have an opportunity to injure them. By a proper selection of varieties, the fruit-growing beekeeper can gather fruit and harvest honey until the beginning of winter, at which time he has leisure to plow up his orchard and plant his hives.

BUTTERMILK FOR POULTRY.

Skim milk, buttermilk or curds given to poultry will prove as profitable as when these substances are fed to pigs. When milk is skimmed only the cream is removed. Cream is the carbonaceous portion of milk, and is of little value so far as being an assistant in egg production is concerned, because the elements remaining in the milk consist of very nearly the same as those existing in the egg. The milk is as valuable as it was before it was skimmed, because cream does not carry off any of the nitrogen or phosphates in the milk. The mode of placing skim milk or buttermilk in pans for chickens to drink is not recommended. It answers well in that manner, yet the better plan is to mix it with ground grain, and occasionally, if skim milk is used, it should be heated to the boiling point, and thickened with ground corn and oats for a change. Give the milk to the chickens when it may be put in clean vessels only, for disease may be the result if they are allowed to partake of it when it is filthy or unfit to use.

THINNING FRUIT.

It has been remarked that "when our fruit is most abundant it is of the poorest quality." There is a good deal of truth in the remark, and it comprises a mild kind of censure upon fruit-growers, especially when it is found that a year of great abundance is followed by one of great scarcity. Reasoning abstractly upon this condition of things, it might be concluded that good fruit would be the rare exception as seen in our markets, and the reasoning is not far from being borne out in fact, as all who have studied the various fluctuations of our fruit markets can readily endorse. To secure the best quality of fruit, trees must not be allowed to overbear—that is, to bear more fruit than the tree is able to ripen to a normal degree of perfection, otherwise large quantities of fruit are produced, and that of a very inferior quality, to be followed by a season of scarcity, causing the alternations of a bearing year and a barren year in orchards. The comparatively inferior heavy crop checks the growth of the tree to that extent that the following season is required for its recuperation. This can be obviated by a little careful management in thinning out the fruit when it has set in excess. By this means a moderate crop of the best quality of fruit can be secured yearly and orchards be made doubly remunerative as compared with the let-alone system of management in fruiting. The greatest objection to thinning fruit on trees is its cost, but those who have had the courage to meet this extra labor have found it to be a profitable outlay. It is always wise to economize labor, but that does not mean that it is wisdom to withhold labor when it can be employed profitably, and those who have had experience in thinning out peaches when the trees were overloaded maintain that it is an outlay which pays better than any other expenditure on the farm.

GRAPES IN SUMMER.

Almost all the treatises on the practical cultivation of grapes are intended for large vineyards, where the grape is cultivated for market purposes alone. The amateur gardener who has but a few dozen grapevines to care for can get very little profit from these rules. For the benefit of the amateur we may say that the best time for pruning his grapes will be the spring and summer months. He should have a clear idea as to the number of branches, and which ones he needs to leave grow for fruiting the following season, and, soon after growth has commenced, the weaker shoots that he does not need for fruiting the following season should be taken out. All the vital power of the plants will then go into the branches that are left. They will be strong and healthy and bear fine grapes the following season. Another point to be attended to is that in the limited

room of the amateur's garden it is desirable to keep the fruiting branches as low to the ground as possible, and every effort should be made to make them strong. In the summer pruning, or, rather, "pinching out," of these branches it will be found that the upper shoots are the strongest and the lower ones the weaker. If it is desirable to have the branches low toward the ground, the upper branches, although strong, should be pinched back. This will throw the strength of the plant into the weaker branches and make them as strong as if they pushed out from the upper portions of the plant. It is impossible to teach this in the few words of a paragraph. Much can be learned from actual trials, and if the amateur grower with little experience in grape-growing, and with this paragraph before him, will experiment with a single vine for one year, he will learn more from actual observation than he could by studying a whole book on grape culture for a week.

ERADICATING MOLES FROM GARDENS.

That small, sly rodent, the mole, is a pest to all sections of the country. As to how gardeners shall be entirely rid of them, is as yet an unsolved question. The most effective means, adapted to all sections of the country, is undoubtedly the mole trap. But even the mole trap requires vigilance, patience and perseverance in its use; without these, the trap is ineffective.

Moles do not like to be disturbed in their operations, and if their run ways are destroyed or closed up by tramping the ground above the run ways, they will change their quarters. The mole goes along four or five times a day to catch the insects that have dropped in his path. Moles live mostly on grubs and worms, yet are fond of various forms of vegetable matter. Those who have tried poisoned corn say that it will effectively rid a place of moles. Soak the kernels in arsenic water, and place them in the run ways.

In soil that is not too porous, moles and other vermin can sometimes be drowned out much more easily than dug out, and if there is a large supply of water, this method of destroying the pests may be practicable in almost any soil. Mrs. R. W. Summers, of Napa, Cal., planted caper spurge and claims the spurge drove moles and gophers from her lawns. What would appear a sure but expensive method of prevention would be to dig a trench 1 1/2 feet wide, about the lawn or garden, and perhaps two or three feet deep, and fill with coarse ashes. While this drain would not, perhaps, harbor moles, other vermin would be sure to make their abode.

What seems to be the safest and surest method of mole extermination, in the west at least, is the planting of castor beans. Says a horticultural authority "The castor oil plant seems to be a rank poison to all the animal world; no sort of bird, beast or creeping thing will touch it. Even a goat will starve before biting off a leaf; and insects that will eat every other green thing in sight, pass that by. There is hardly another instance in natural history of a plant being so universally detested by the animal world as the castor oil plant." The castor plant may have such effects in the west, but in the east, similar results are not obtainable, as several trials in the east have conclusively proven. But in the west, the case of Eleanor M. Lucas of California speaks for itself. She writes: "Moles dislike castor beans, as do gophers, and they have both given my garden a wide berth since castor beans were planted, although they had previously destroyed many valuable bulbs and plants. In 1893, moles were unusually troublesome. A few beans were tucked in my bulb bed, a favorite haunt for moles, others in the rose border, some near the violet bed and wherever the pests were most troublesome. A few moles had run here and there, and I at once dropped a bean in their path. Last year I planted only a few beans to keep them at bay, and not a mole has been seen. My moss roses were being laid in a state of devastation by the red spider, but since the castor vines have overshadowed the bushes this tiny pest has also absented itself, therefore I believe it detests the castor beans as all the animal world seems to do."

Bicycles as Calamities.

Business men will presently be looking for a new St. George to demolish the latter day enemy of trade, the bicycle.

One hears the same complaint on every side. "The bicycle has ruined our business."

While this state of the case is doubtless exaggerated there is still a modicum of truth in this oft-repeated wall.

The bicycle fever seems to have spared no one, and as a natural consequence money that was once spent in many directions is now sunk in wheels and the concomitants thereof.

It is well known that no branch of trade has been more visibly as well as radically affected by the bicycle craze than the manufacture of watches. A large number of well known firms which once found it profitable to make watches have abandoned their manufacture for that of bicycles.

This is said to be the case with well known firms in Boston, Canton, O., and Rockford, Ill. These concerns are still turning out wheels, but the wheels are no longer put in gold cases.

The falling off in the demand for watches is justly attributed to the increasing number of twenty-first birthdays which are now glorified with bicycles.

In the good old days his proud father always presented his hopeful son with a gold watch when the latter celebrated his accession to manhood's estate.

The longest Egyptian railroad now extends to Girgeh, 326 miles from Cairo.

Now the boy must have a bicycle. In the brave days of old, when a girl was pretty enough to deserve everything she wanted she asked for jewelry or clothes or diamonds, or a poodle dog. Now she insists on a bicycle.

All of which is refreshing and amusing when considered from the point of view of poesy or athletics, but to the last degree tragical when looked at through the spectacles of the honest tradesman.

For the retail jeweler no longer sells papa watches or diamonds, the dry goods dealer no longer measures out silks and laces, the cigar man fails to sell perfectos to Mary Jane's young man, and is forced to lay in slabs of chewing gum instead. Even the tailors feel the strain. Men roll about so much in bicycle suits nowadays as never to wear out their other clothes.

Theatrical managers complain bitterly that the bicycle is hurting their business. Sweethearts used to go to the theatre together when they felt the need of a let up in the ardent exercise of spooning. Now they go bicycling together. A prominent manager says that the loss to theatres on account of the mad craze for wheeling was simply incalculable. He declares that persons who never in the past were known to go out at night unless they went to the theatre now fly about on bicycles every night and never darken a theatre's doors.

He declared that unless a change for the better occurred very soon the theatres must inevitably go to the wall. If men and women flew to the wheel with the same persistency for another year there would literally be nobody left to support the theatres.

Indeed, the bicycle appears to be "hogging" everything. It confers few benefits upon the world of trade, except in the domain of confectionery and soft drinks.

Saloon-keepers are by no means satisfied with the drift of things. They say that they are selling very little hard stuff, and still less beer, to bicyclists. It appears that the wheelmen find it necessary to stick to soft drinks in order to stick to their saddles.

An immense quantity of candy is consumed by both sexes. Women are said to be incessant chewers of gum and sweets when on the road. Men are becoming converted to the habit, and instead of smoking, as they used to do, now munch mint stick, suck lemon balls or chew gum.

Wheelmen have also discovered that cycling and smoking are irreconcilable. What is the result? Retail tobacco dealers will tell you that there is a tremendous falling off in their receipts. An authority on the tobacco trade told me that the bicycle had lessened the output of the manufacturers by 70,000,000 cigars annually. Chewers also find it inexpedient to use the weed in their rides, and many have even gone to the length of giving up the habit altogether.

In conclusion, attention is called to the phenomenon that some of the Chicago theatres have given up their Sunday performances because the patrons who used to flock to them now pedal their ways into green fields and over asphalt roads.

The bicycle already rules the world, and its reign has been joyfully accepted. But what is the business man going to do when the woman upon whom he relies for his fortune spends all her pin money in outing suits?

Our Court Costume.

The American Minister to Russia is Colonel C. R. Breckinridge. Minister Breckinridge attended the coronation ceremonies of the Czar in satin knee-breeches, silk-stockings, diamond-buckled shoes and a gorgeously embroidered and "frogged" coat. He also wore a sword.

Minister Breckinridge wore this costume several times. He was much pleased with himself after his first appearance in court dress.

All of this is against the law of the United States. Here is Section 1688, Title XVIII, of the United States Revised Statutes:

"No person in the diplomatic service of the United States shall wear any uniform or official costume not previously authorized by Congress."

The bloomer costume worn by Minister Breckinridge was never at any time authorized by Congress, asserts the Journal, of New York, with emphasis. The only uniform a Minister could wear under the law of this country was that worn by Admiral Selridge, or by General Anson G. McCook, at the coronation of the Czar, that of an officer in the American Navy or Army.

CARSON CITY MINT THEFTS

SUPT. MASON TELLS THE STORY OF TRACING THEM.

Jones Pocketed Bars of Bullion and Substituted Others That Contained Less Gold and More Silver.

One morning, about a year and a half ago, J. W. Adams, Superintendent of the Mint of Carson City, received a communication from Hirsch Harris, the melter and refiner of the Mint, containing the rather startling statement that a clean-up of the refinery had revealed an apparent shortage in gold bullion of, approximately, 3,000 standard ounces. Superintendent Adams apprised R. E. Preston, Director of the Mint at Washington, requesting that some competent person be sent to Carson City to investigate.

Mr. Preston selected Mr. Andrew Mason, Superintendent of the United States Assay Office in this city. Mr. Mason reached Carson City on March 15, 1895. The result of his investigation was the trial and conviction of one man who had robbed the Mint of nearly \$100,000, and of another who had stolen about \$30,000.

The investigation revealed some other things which may bring about radical changes in the conduct of all the Mints, and in the appointment of Mint officials.

Mr. Mason has just returned from his last trip to Carson City, and at his home in Orange recently, he told a New York Sun reporter an interesting story of how the thieves were caught and finally brought to justice.

Upon Mr. Mason's arrival in Carson he took charge of the melter and refiner's department. He was informed by the superintendent of the Mint that the bullion involved in the robbery was that delivered to the melter and refiner from June 1 to December 31, 1894.

"I am very much obliged for your information," said Mr. Mason to Superintendent Adams, "but, if you don't mind, we'll have a general clean-up of all the bullion delivered to the melter and refiner between June 1, 1894, and to-day. That clean-up will begin at once."

Mr. Harris, the melter and refiner, was only too glad to have the clean-up as thorough as possible. The discovery of the shortage had nearly given him nervous prostration. Further than that, he had assumed the duties of his office only a short time before the shortage was discovered, and that made him doubly anxious.

Before his appointment Mr. Harris had been prominent in Democratic politics in Carson City, but knew little about the work in a Mint, or of any of its departments. He was recommended to President Cleveland by the Chairman of the Democratic State Committee of Nevada.

For the actual management of the business of his department Mr. Harris relied upon John T. Jones, the assistant melter and refiner, who was a hold-over appointee of ex-President Harrison. Jones was really the acting superintendent of the melting and refining department.

The work of cleaning up had gone on for five days. One day Mr. Mason had brought to him a number of the "melts" or bars of bullion, which had been delivered to the refinery in the period specified by the superintendent of the Mint, and which contained, according to the stamps they bore, a large percentage of gold. It was re-assayed, and showed only forty-six ounces of gold, instead of 1143.

Mr. Mason was with the assayer during all the time that the re-assay was being made, and when the assayer finally announced the result his face was as white as chalk. In one "melt" alone a theft of about \$21,000 had been discovered.

"Who, if anyone connected with the Mint, would know about this bogus 'melt'?" asked Mr. Mason of the assayer. The man seemed not to hear the question. He was as dumb as an oyster.

"I have not discovered any defect in your hearing so far, my friend. Please answer my question," said Mr. Mason.

"Well, sir," replied the assayer, "I suppose Mr. Jones must have known about it."

"Mr. Jones is the assistant superintendent of the refining department?"

"Yes, sir."

"Would it be possible for this melt to have been assayed and stamped, and put into the vault without Mr. Jones knowing about it?"

The assayer thought for a moment, and then replied very slowly, "No, sir, I don't think it could be possible. In 'act I'm sure it could not.'"

"All right, my friend," replied Mr. Mason, "you will say nothing about this discovery and we shall see what we shall see." Then a number of other melts were re-assayed, and the loss of \$75,000 in gold was accounted for. Other discoveries led to the belief that someone had stolen from the Mint, between June 1, 1894, and June 15, 1895, nearly \$100,000 in gold. After Mr. Mason had the results of the re-assays officially submitted to him, he walked into the office of the assistant superintendent of the refining department, and asked for his book of records of the assays and refittings.

"Certainly, sir, I'll get it from the safe and send it to you," said Jones. "I'll not trouble you to do that. If you'll get it now, please, I'll take it with me," Mr. Mason responded. Jones turned white, then his face flushed, and then turned pale again. He seemed to have difficulty in moving in his chair. Finally he pulled himself together and went to the safe for the book. During the conversation Mr. Mason had noticed what seemed to him to be a curious circumstance. The door of the vault containing all the "melts" in the Mint was just at the right of Jones's desk and not a foot away from it. After rummaging around the safe

for some time Jones found the book that was wanted, and gave it to Mr. Mason.

When Mr. Mason was able to make a careful examination of the book the first thing that attracted his attention was that nearly a dozen pages had been torn out. Next he discovered in Jones's own handwriting the entry of the very "melt" in which, by re-assaying, the first evidence of the thefts was discovered. It was entered as having been received into the vault and charged off. Then, to cover the shortage in gold and the surplus in silver, the same melt was entered as having been sent to the refinery again, and again entered as having been received at the vault. In other words, Jones had made two entries upon his book of something he did not have.

It had been rumored about Carson City that there were some irregularities at the Mint, and one of the Carson papers made some reference to the fact, making the statement that, while nothing definite could be learned, it was commonly supposed that some error had occurred in counting the money.

This statement fell under the eye of a man named Beck, proprietor of the Reno Reduction Works. On reading the statement Beck immediately told Superintendent Adams that a man named James H. Heney, who was a silver dissolver at the Mint from December 1, 1891, to June 30, 1893, had, several months before, sent to the Reno Reduction Works to be melted, and had subsequently sold to the Selby Smelting and Lead Company of San Francisco \$23,000 of fine gold. When this intelligence was received at the Mint the books of the assistant superintendent of the refining department were gone over again, and it was found where Jones, in order to cover up his own stealings, had been obliged to cover up Heney's as well.

The evidence collected by Mr. Mason was submitted to the Grand Jury, and both Heney and Jones were indicted. Heney, at the time, was not in Carson City. Jones was a prominent man in the town politically, and his family were prominent socially. Great pressure was brought to bear upon the Grand Jury to take no notice of the case.

Jones was arrested as soon as the indictment was found, and he gave bail. Heney was pursued by Secret Service detectives through California, New Mexico, Arizona, and was finally taken at Leadville. Each man went through two trials before convictions were obtained. Both Jones and Heney were sentenced to imprisonment for eight years, and to pay a fine of \$5,000 each.

Jones accomplished his stealings by simply appropriating "melts" from the vault, and then accounting for his shortage by stamping upon a melt that was sent to him subsequently figures to make up the amount of gold he had taken. Heney took his gold from the separating room. When the silver had been so far separated from the gold as to allow the gold "spung" or powder to be free from the silver, he would simply pick up a handful of the powder now and then and put it in his pocket.

In Vanderbilt's Pig Traps.

"Young Mr. Vanderbilt is very much averse to having his big estate near Asheville invaded by the swine of his country neighbors," said J. B. Powell, of North Carolina, at the Hotel Page. "Until recently, however, he was at a loss to hit upon a plan to keep the 'razor-backs' from intruding on his premises. He didn't want to kill them outright for fear of incurring lawsuits and maybe the vendetta, which, in the long run, is more troublesome than trial by jury."

"But there are plenty of wildcats and catamounts on the Vanderbilt tract, 90,000 acres of which is almost in a virgin state of forest and mountain, and there was no reason why traps should not be set to catch these wild members of the feline tribe. That the traps were made big enough and strong enough to imprison a wandering hog that was out of his proper territory, was no ground for complaint. When the traps were first put in operation they caught a few wildcats, but a great many more porkers. Then it dawned upon the owners that it would be better to pen up their swine than to imperil their existence, and so they no longer roam at will over the Vanderbilt demense."

Paste That Will Keep a Year.

Dissolve a teaspoonful of alum in a quart of warm water. When cold, stir in flour enough to give the consistency of thick cream, being careful to beat up all the lumps. Throw in half a dozen cloves and stir in as much powdered resin as will stand on a penny. Pour the flour mixture into a tea-cupful of boiling water, stirring well all the time. Let it remain on the stove a few minutes, and it will be of the consistency of mush. Pour it into an earthen or china vessel; let it cool, cover it, and put in a cool place. When needed for use, soften a portion with warm water. It will last a year, and is better than gum, as it does not gloss the paper and can be written upon.

Siberia's Great Railway.

There are to be about 200 railway stations distributed over the new Siberian railway. The rolling stock will comprise 2,000 locomotives, 3,000 passenger cars and 36,000 goods wagons. The passenger traffic will be almost exclusively confined to third and fourth classes, and the tariff will be very low. The works in connection with this great undertaking are being pushed on with much energy, and the work is expected to be completed in about six years. The opening of this line will shorten the journey around the world by about twenty days.—Railway Age.

RICHEST HEIRESS ON EARTH.

She is Only Fourteen Years Old and Lives Very Humbly.

One hundred and thirty million dollars is the colossal fortune which Lucienne Premelie Hirsch, granddaughter of the late Baron Maurice de Hirsch de Gereuth, will eventually inherit. It will make her the greatest heiress in the world.

The most curious fact about this prospective young multi-million heiress is that the legitimacy of her birth is doubtful. The young woman's mother was a governess in Baron Hirsch's family, and her father was the Baron's only son. By some, it is claimed that no marriage ever took place, while friends of the Baron assert that a secret church service was performed. But, even if this were so, it does not constitute a legal marriage, according to French law.

Though the Baroness de Hirsch is named in her late husband's testament as his sole legatee, it is stated upon unquestionably authority that, acting under private instructions, which the Baron gave her not many months before his death, she will hold this vast wealth in trust until Lucienne comes of age, when she will turn it over to her without reserve.

The private lives and family affairs of most men whose wealth and high position have brought them much into public notice are generally well-known. But this was not the case with Baron de Hirsch. Before his death, few people except those most closely connected with him knew of the existence of this child, who, though her father was a Hebrew, is now being reared a strict Catholic.

This is the first authentic account of the personality and history of the young girl. These facts have been gathered by the New York Journal—few in number—who knew the late Baron de Hirsch intimately, and therefore have more or less knowledge of his family life.

Lucienne Premelie Hirsch is fourteen years old. She lives in Brussels, where she is being educated. The possessor of great beauty, she gives promise when she reaches maturity of being as pre-eminent in good looks as in fortune.

Of medium height and rather slender, she carries herself so gracefully and with such dignity as to appear at the first glance to be taller than she really is. In her features she resembles her mother, who was a Frenchwoman, not of the Hebrew race. In her expression and the general contour of her face the likeness to her father, the late Baron de Hirsch's only son, who died some years ago, is striking. This is especially noticeable about her eyes and mouth. Her eyes are large and dark and rather deeply set. They have all the soft blackness, the patience and gentleness which are the characteristics of the Jewish race. Her mouth is neither small nor large, and the lips but moderately full. Far from being swarthy, her cheeks seem even pale, their clear delicacy of tint being accentuated by her dark hair.

In religion, as said, she is being reared a strict Catholic. In the great mansion where she lives a little private chapel has been fitted up where she receives spiritual instruction each day from a specially appointed priest. No more carefully could she be brought up, in fact, in this respect if she were a Princess of the blood royal.

Mrs. Hirsch's guardian and governess is Mme. Hatine Montefiore Levy, nee Bischoffsheim, sister of the Baroness de Hirsch. Mme. Levy is one of the wealthiest women in Europe in her own right, and the owner of half the castles in Belgium. She is a strict and orthodox Hebrew in her religious faith, moreover, and how it has come about that Lucienne should be brought up in a religion diametrically opposed to that of Judaism is one of the many interesting things connected with this girl's parentage and history.

Baron de Hirsch, as every one knows, was a man of the utmost liberality and toleration in religious matters. So long as a person was honest it mattered little to him whether he were Jew or Christian. Though he did so much for his co-religionists, he rarely entered a synagogue for worship. As was said by one of his eulogists, "he carried his temple within him." When the question of what Lucienne's religious belief and training came up, it was, therefore, but natural that he should readily accede to the request of her mother, an ardent Catholic, and allow the daughter to continue in that faith. Indeed, as a matter of fact, before the child could have entered the Jewish Church, she must necessarily have abandoned all other religions. And so it is that in deference to her late brother-in-law's wishes, Mme. Levy, though a staunch upholder of Judaism, allows her ward to become a follower of another faith.

According to the provisions of Baron de Hirsch's will \$200,000 has been set apart for the maintenance of Lucienne until she reaches her majority. Half of the income of this will go to her guardian or "gouvernante," who will not be called upon to render any account of the same.

Curious Example of Thrift.

Judge Fair, of Atlanta, Ga., who died recently, was a curious example of thrift carried to the verge of monomania. In his desk after his death were found all the ink bottles he had ever used—hundreds of them—and several thousand worn-out pens, and large bundles of envelopes which had been sent through the mails and were wholly useless.

The average man consumes 20 pounds of sugar every year.

The pearl fishery discovered off the south coast of India is very rich.