Mark Twain Victor, as Usual.

"You can't beat Mark Twain," said an editor. "At a banquet or supper nothing is more foolish than to cross blades with our great humorist.

"Mark Twain, you'll remember, tells in 'Innocents Abroad' about the street in Damascus that is called Straight. He says that the street called Straight may not be as crooked as a corkscrew, but it is certainly less straight than a rainbow.

"Well, Haskett Smith, the Palestine lecturer, took Mark Twain to task about the street called Straight at a dinner.

"'When I was in Damascus,' he said, 'I took a photograph of this street and the photograph shows the street to be really as straight as possible.'

"There was a laugh at the humorist's expense.

"He rose and drawled

"'May I ask what my friend Haskett Smith had to drink that day in Damascus?'

"'Oh, water, water only,' Hasket Smith replied.

"'Ah, well,' Twain drawled, 'you see, that makes all the difference.'"

ORCHARD and GARDEN

SHEEP IN THE ORCHARD.

In response to an inquiry in the Rural New York a correspondent of that paper gives his experience with sheep in the orchard and says:

Make a thin whitewash and stir in it some fresh cow manure. I do not think the sheep will trouble the trees again; if you will give their trunks a good swabbing with the mixture, or you can stir in some fresh blood, which will be distasteful to the sheep. Perhaps a better way would be to wrap the trees around with chicken wire that has a small mesh. If this is done, place some slats between the tree and the wire, so the latter will not get too tight about the tree. The wash would have to be renewed; the wire will last for years. While the eating of the limbs of the fallen trees was perhaps the immediate cause of their gnawing the bark, the main source of trouble lies back of that. I have had sheep in orchards for nearly 30 years, and while there have been many broken limbs and trees that they have eaten—for they are natural scavengers—I never had one touch the trunk of a tree of any size. The difficulty is that the sheep lack mineral matter in their food. This is more likely to occur where the sheep are pastured in the orchard, for this grass growing in the shade is particularly lacking in nutrients. Some years ago I had a similar trouble with a lot of cattle. I thought it a bad habit, and took them out. The next winter, about February, the same trouble occurred. I then began to study conditions, and realized that I had little bone material in my feed. I was feeding large quantities of silage and wet brewers' grains; little or no bran or clover hay. I gave them some ground bone for immediate relief, and since have never failed to have plenty of ash in the feed, and though the same cows were turned in the orchard the next winter I never have had any further trouble, neither have I protected the trees in any way. I would suggest a liberal feed to the sheep of oats or wheat bran, not so much to protect the trees as for the good of the sheep.

NOTES FOR DUCK-RAISERS.

There is profit in ducks if properly managed. Ducks require more fresh air and will stand more cold than chicks. Do not pick during winter, nor during the laying season. Always give ducks plenty of water to drink, and it should be near the feed trough, for ducks wash their food down with water and are liable to choke if they do not have it.

The Pekin duck is the largest of all known breeds of ducks. For early maturity, laying quality and as table fowls, they have no superior in this country. Their feathers being pure white always command a good price.

Do not let the ducks out of the house in the morning until they have laid, as they are liable to drop the eggs anywhere. They usually lay early in the morning, though occasionally a duck will not lay until eight or nine o'clock. With proper care a duck will lay from a hundred to a hundred and twenty-five eggs in a season, but to do this they must have a good shelter and plenty of egg-producing food. No one can successfully raise ducks unless they can be kept apart from the other feathered fowls of the farm, especially the chickens and turkeys. They foul the drinking water and gobble up nearly all, if not all, of the food within sight.

A wire netting fence two feet high will do to enclose a duck-yard. It is not necessary to have a stream or pond for them, but if either is near, and can be inclosed wholly or partly in the yard, do so. The ducks must have a house or shed as well as the chickens, and some place to stay at night and for protection from driving rains and storms. The floors should be well-covered with a litter of straw or leaves and this should be changed often.—M. D. H., in the Indiana Farmer.

FARM NOTES.

Old horses that have begun to decline in vigor require more food than the youth or the matured.

With all classes of stock the value of the feed is the same, whether it is supplied to the scrawniest of scrubs or the best of full bloods.

Nothing is so well adapted to the permanent improvement of the fertility of the farm as well managed barnyard manure.

Early in the spring a shovelful of ashes should be scattered around each currant hill and a handful thrown on the crown. They serve two purposes —fertilizing and preventing insects and diseases.

Diseased wood on a tree can never be made new again. Cut it off and allow another shoot to grow. Every day that such wood remains on a tree adds to the liability of losing it.

The state fairs are the best educators we have for the rank and file of hog growers. They set higher ideals for men to work toward.

The high grade hogs now found on the average farm trace through the best and purest ancestry known to the hog breeding world.

Don't worry about feeding the sow till the litter is a day or two old, at least, and then go slow. Feed something light and cooling.

Disinfect the poultry house and runs with a 5 per cent. solution of carbolic acid, and repeat this disinfection at least once a week in case of roup.

Keep the poultry houses clean, have ample ventilation, but freedom from drafts of air, and arrange the house so that the sun will shine into it a portion of the day.

If some birds have been to a show, or if new birds have been purchased for the flock, quarantine them at a distance from the home flock for thirty days before they are allowed to go together.

Roup undoubtedly is diphtheritic or diphtheria, not unlike that which affects human beings, and although caused by different bacteria, is believed to have at times been communicated from fowls to children.

COST OF PRODUCING MILK.

The New Jersey Experiment Station summarizes its record of the cost of producing milk from the college herd as follows: "The daily cost of total food per cow varied from 11.60 cents in 1896 to 12.88 cents in 1901. The daily cost for fine feed varied from 4.99 cents in 1896 to 7.62 cents in 1901; the cost of roughage varied from 5.23 cents in 1902 to 6.61 cents in 1896.

The cost of production per quart varied from 2.26 cents in 1902 to 2.49 cents in 1896, and the average annual yield per cow was 6528 pounds. The study of the records of individual cows also showed that but little profit can be derived from a cow that does not produce five thousand pounds of milk per year, particularly if the product is sold at the low price of one cent per pound; no stronger argument is needed in favor of the necessity of testing the animals, and thus learning their exact value, than is afforded by these records. Furthermore, the facts brought out by the records indicate that there is but little profit from a cow that does not produce two hundred pounds of butter per year, and point to the necessity of a careful selection of cows for the butter dairy."—American Cultivator.

A FORESTRY SUGGESTION.

In cutting trees for wood it is often done in a very detrimental way to the wood lot, both in reducing the wood supply and destroying forest conditions. Do not cut the best trees, but select those trees that show that they have matured and commenced to decline. Do not forget the question of reproduction and destroy the small saplings. Do your cutting as carefully as possible, allowing the young trees to grow up. Do not do all your cutting in one place. It opens up the forest, letting in the hot winds and often times causes early decline of the trees around the clearing. Do not be careless about burning the brush and the refuse. Do it in a time and in a way that you will not destroy the young growth or the standing timber. Have some system. Go through your wood lot and mark the trees that ought to come out. In this way the wood lot can be made a good investment to the farm and be made useful a great many years.

TO SOW TINY SEEDS.

These are often wasted by sowing them with an extravagant hand; another waste is deep planting. Mix the fine seeds with ten or twenty times their bulk of sand, and sprinkle them over the seed bed from a paperbox. A light covering of fine white sand makes an ideal blanket for the bed of tiny seeds. This will not "crust" or "bake" in the wind and sun like a clay loam, which often will not yield to the upward pressure of the plantlets. Secure a supply of fine, white sand for this purpose and use it when needed.—Indiana Farmer.

GIVE THE STOCK SALT.

Prof. Mayo, who is good authority, adds his advice to that of many others in the following:

Common salt is essential to nearly all domestic animals, and it should be given to them frequently. If animals are allowed free access to salt they eat only what nature requires, but to animals not accustomed to salt is must be supplied very gradually or they will eat too much at first and are likely to be overtaken with indigestion or even death. Sheep are sometimes poisoned by eating too much salt when they are accustomed to it.

A Bret Harte Joke.

Sam Davis of Nevada, once made a wager that he could successfully imitate the style of any living or dead poet, and do it so thoroughly that the difference was not discernible; and that the public, the press, and the critics would not detect the fraud. As a result he wrote "Binley and 46," to which he signed F. Bret Harte's name. The fake was put out in a publication known as "The Open Letter." It described an engineer who took his train through a snowstorm in the Sierras, dying at his post.

From the Atlantic to the Pacific the poem was copied. "Binley and 46" was given a full page in "Leslie's Weekly," with a portrait of Bret Harte, and described as "the best short poem of the decade."

It was many years before Mr. Harte denied its authorship. The poem has since been incorporated in several books of popular recitations, notwithstanding Binley freezes to death beside a roaring locomotive furnace, with one hundred and fifty pounds of steam up and two cords of wood within reach.—Success Magazine.

A good cook wastes nothing.

FOR YOUNG FOLKS

THE LOVELIEST THING ON EARTH.

Once to a large and busy town
A lot of wise men came,
So wise that to the simplest thing
They'd give a Latin name.

Students and scholars, great and grave,
Of mighty fame and worth;
They met there to decide what is
The loveliest thing on earth.

For days and nights they did debate,
Propounding theories deep;
(And by their speeches long and dull
Sent everyone to sleep!)

With spectacles and microscopes,
And telescopes so high,
They tried to prove a thousand things.
Who understood? Not I.

Then, when a year had come and gone,
And still with learned care,
They argued hotly every day,
A little child came there.

One old professor, who was kind
(In spite of too much Greek),
Caressed the child, and said, "My dear,
Perhaps you've what we seek!"

"The loveliest thing on earth!" and all
The others cried, "Who knows?"
The child said, "Why, I've got it here!"
And showed—a new-blown rose.
—Dorothy M. S. Browne, in Lady's Pictorial.

THE STORY OF A HERO.

Would you like to hear the story of a hero?

It was just 632 years ago that the bravest of brave Scottish Kings was born. You have all heard his name. It was Robert Bruce.

He was descended from Robert de Bruis, a Norman Knight who went with William the Conqueror to England in 1066, and who founded the illustrious family of Bruce, famous in Scottish history.

They were all fighters; of course Robert Bruce was trained as a soldier and spent his life battling, for his country. None of his family and few heroes equaled him in bravery.

When Bruce was only 22 years old he was head of a large army,, and joined the Scottish leaders in arms against England for the independence of their country. He became one of the four regents of the Scottish Kingdom and was crowned King of Scotland at Scone on March 27, 1305.

Then began the fierce struggle of the Scotch against the English. Bruce was at first overcome and his estates confiscated, and he was forced to retire to the mountain wilderness for refuge. But two years later, he had rescued the whole of Scotland from the English, and taken possession of the Isle of Man. Though the English tried hard they could not oust the Scotsmen and the independence of Bruce and his Kingdom were recognized at the treaty of March 4, 1328.

The greatest battle fought by Bruce was that of Barmockburn, near Stirling Castle, when the English army of 100,000 men were totally routed by the Scotch numbering 30,000 and 15,000 camp-followers. The loss of the Scotch is said to have been only 5,000; while the English left 30,000 dead upon the field.

A beautiful monument to Robert Bruce stands today upon a high bluff overlooking the old battlefield which is now covered by well kept villages and farms, with the winding Forth flowing between. The tourist may see the "Bore stone" where Bruce planted his standard on that eventful day, June 24, 1314.

A pretty story is told of Robert Bruce who in a time of distress and weakness took refuge in a cave. Worn with fighting and fasting, he fell asleep. When he awoke, still somewhat discouraged, he noticed a spider that was busy at work spinning a web at the opening of the cave. The energy and industry of the busy little weaver impressed and touched him. He arose with fresh courage, reunited his brave scattered forces and went on to victory—Philadelphia Record.

"NAPOLEON."

We had once a prairie dog whom we named Napoleon, on account of his extraordinary energy, courage and acuteness. We had a pair of them, the other being Josephine; but there was nothing remarkable about her. Napoleon was a fat little fellow, but exceedingly strong and brave.

We had caught a young woodchuck. It was old enough to have all the undaunted ferocity of its species; and, indeed, it was already nearly three times the size of Napoleon. The woodchuck had been left out in the sitting room where it had retreated into the unused fireplace, and sat, glaring furiously at every one who approached, and keeping its mouth wide open, except when, from time to time, it would close it with a fearful snap, loudly grinding its teeth together in a way peculiar to woodchucks. Some one brought in Napoleon, and, to my horror, set him down on the floor. I was for snatching him up, feeling sure that the woodchuck would make an end of him; but my father said: "Let them be. We can interfere in time." Napoleon, after investigating other parts of the room, trotted toward the fireplace. The woodchuck drew himself up and opened his mouth as wide as it would go, while his eyes gleamed with fury; and I held my breath in terror for my pet, who walked up to him, seemingly greatly interested. Napoleon never paused an instant, but proceeded to examine the woodchuck's wide-open mouth, thrusting his whole muzzle inside it, and then actually putting out his little pink tongue and sampling the roof of the woodchuck's mouth! Every moment I thought: "Now, now it will be all up with Napoleon. Those awful jaws will shut and that will be the end."

But nothing of the kind happened; the woodchuck seemed entirely paralyzed; he did not relax a muscle, but sat immovable, with mouth wide open, as he had done when Napoleon first approached. The latter made a long and leisurely inspection, first of the inside and then of the outside of the woodchuck's mouth, and at last trotted calmly away again, leaving the poor nonplussed animal sitting calmly in the fireplace as before.

Napoleon lived for several years more, and at last died of old age (so we believe), his mate having previously escaped — From "Nature and Science," in St. Nicholas.

SQUIRRELS' WINTER STORIES.

Here in Maine—in fact, all over New England, says the Bangor News, red squirrels do not put by great hoards of any kind for winter use. When a Maine red squirrel has filled itself with acorns and beech nuts it will hide a few here and there—under leaves, in hollow logs, in cracks of rifted trees and among stone heaps.

An average red squirrel, having the run of an oak grove in the fall of the year, may in the course of two weeks hide away from two to four quarts of acorns, though they will be in perhaps twenty different places, and in no instance which we have noted has any nut been shelled.

The squirrel which plans a hoard of nuts and makes deliberate preparations for winter is the little chipmunk, or striped squirrel, which seeks winter quarters soon after heavy frost and which remains in hiding all winter. The chipmunk often hides as many as two quarts of shelled beech nuts in one place. Their store-houses are, as a rule, under the ground in sloping and sandy soil.

There is a colony of chipmunks among the mounds of graves in the cemetery on Indian Island, Old Town, which numbers nearly 100 individuals, and it speaks well for the kindness of the Indian children to know that the little workers are permitted to live so near to human habitations, for the Indian cottages are on all sides.

It is believed that most observing woodsmen will say that the red squirrels of this vicinity seldom make large catches of provisions for winter consumption and never shell the stored nuts. In fact, the red species have no need to pay much heed to such matters, as they are abroad and active in the coldest days of winter, as much as they are in midsummer, so precautions for food are not demanded. As the red squirrels subsist for a good part of the year upon the cones of pines and spruces, which hang to the limbs, they do not care how deep or hard the snow may be, feeling secure in finding all the food they want among the treetops.

A HUMANE HUNTER.

In the northern part of Maine, fifteen miles from the nearest neighbor, is a large and comfortable farm, where the wild folk of the woods are very happy because the farmer who lives there will not allow any bird or beast to be killed on his property.

The wild deer know they are safe there, for nearly every afternoon three or four would come out and feed in a field near the house, and we could go very near without frightening them.

The farmer has many sheep and lambs, and carries salt to the pasture for them every morning, and often at nightfall he sees the deer at the same place where salt was given to the sheep.

He tells the story of a hunter, who came to his home one autumn to kill deer, and when he found that the farmer would not have them killed on his farm he was anxious to go farther on, so the farmer harnessed a horse to take him to Moose River. As they drove along they saw a deer feeding near the edge of the wood; it lifted its graceful head and came down within a few feet of the carriage, walking along and watching the men with its beautiful, trustful eyes.

"Why don't you shoot?" asked the farmer. "You want to kill a deer.

"Shoot that deer!" replied the hunter. "I wouldn't hurt it for a thousand dollars! The man who would shoot a creature like that would be a villain."

This is one of the stories the farmer likes to tell.—Our Dumb Animals.

THE HAIRY WOODPECKER.

He's a drummer.

He eats the boring worm.

He rids the trees of insects.

He dresses in very smart black and white.

He dwells from Canada down to the Carolinas.

He uses his strong bill for a hammering tool.

He much prefers to dwell in the deep woods.

He has a bright red spot on the nape of his neck.

His other half is denied the fascinating spot of red.

He predicts warm weather by pecking low on a tree.