

# RURAL TOPICS

## LIVE STOCK IMPROVEMENTS

It is a noticeable fact that all the great stock yards of the country that the quality offered in the market is steadily improving. In the past dozen or more years this fact has been very noticeable by all the stock yard buyers. The greatest improvement has appeared in the beef cattle and mutton sheep from the western and southern ranches. The great number of pure bred sires sent to these sections in the past 20 years has had a most marked influence in this betterment of quality now coming to the stock yards and packers. The grading up is also going on in the central agricultural states. It has come to be well known that good grade animals sell in the markets at an average of two dollars on the hundred higher than the common, and all observation has taught live stock feeders that the same amount of feed only is required to finish both, while the common ones fell fall much below in weight as well as quality that of the high grades. The International, State and county fairs and live stock shows have had a marked influence for good in the direction of the use of better blood in breeding. The agricultural colleges and experiment stations have also had an excellent influence in this direction, and last but not least, the agricultural press has carried the gospel of better breeding to every section of the country, by the publication of the station reports and the numerous examples of noted breeders and feeders as well as the facts from the markets, and the crucial tests at the butchers blocks giving the per cent of the high priced meat per carcass. These things all tell, and no odds how dull some people may be, they wear their way into conscious apprehension of the facts and they go to improving their herds and flocks. "Iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend," and so that is the way the world gets on to better things.—Indiana Farmer.

## LOCUSTS AND CATALPAS.

Experience has taught me that trees will do better when cultivated than when not cultivated. They do not do well in sod, and they ought not to be crowded so closely that each tree cannot have a fair chance, but as to exactly how much space each tree should have there is quite a difference in opinion, however. I have had best success with trees that had about 75 square feet of space, as this gives them enough room to develop into fair-sized posts and by the time they begin to be crowded they can be thinned out and they will be ready for use. This harvest of posts should be begun when they are from seven to ten years old, as the trees will be practically the same size. It has been the practice quite general among farmers who were growing posts to plant the trees about equal distance apart each way, 6 or 7 1/2 feet, as a matter of convenience, and in order to keep up cultivation as long as possible, I would advise planting them at least 8 1/2 feet; then the cultivation can be kept up for several years, which, I have learned, will greatly assist them in making a quick growth. The best growth depends upon the soil, however, and other matters also. The locust grows much faster the first year in poor soil than the catalpa does, but the catalpa will soon overtake it. The locust would be very profitable for growing posts if it were not affected by the borers, but they must be watched or they will ruin them. The catalpa needs comparatively rich soil, and yet I have had them do very well in soils that were not quite so rich; but in general, I would advise planting of catalpa in fairly rich soil, and the locust on the poorer soils, as my experience has been that locust will grow and thrive better on thin land than the catalpa.—R. B. Rushing, in the Indiana Farmer.

## DODDER IN ALFALFA, CLOVER, ETC.

The Bureau of Plant Industry, of the Department of Agriculture, has just issued a free circular dealing with dodder. This is a parasitic plant, or weed, which is particularly dangerous in alfalfa and clover fields, and less so with flax. It feeds upon its host plant, and reproduces itself by its seed and by pieces of stems. There are several kinds of dodder, some of which are affected by climatic conditions, as the small-seeded alfalfa dodder, which is so common in the West, but not known in the Eastern States. Dodder seeds are a very common impurity of clover, alfalfa and flax seed in the trade, and this can readily be detected with the aid of a magnifying glass. Certain kinds are more commonly found in domestic than in foreign seed, while the contrary is true of other kinds. Low grade seed imported from Europe generally contains dodder. With regard to preventive measures, dodder plants should not be allowed to seed, they should be removed early, and preferably destroyed by burning. Hand methods may be used if the plants are not too abundant; otherwise ploughing under before they go to seed, or burn-

ing the stand if seeds have already ripened, will be necessary. The most generally effective means of preventing the introduction of dodder is to use seed free from dodder seeds. The purchasing farmer can easily make a reasonably satisfactory dodder seed.

## FARM NOTES.

If a hen lays an egg a week the year through, it will just pay for her feed and every extra egg will yield a profit.

If you want to get a good catch of clover next season, give the fields which are to be sown, a good coating of manure.

If you sin against your stock, be sure your sin will find you out in reduced profits.

No sensible man would take chances on breeding poor, starved animals, nor should he think of using immature and shrunken grain for seed.

The hog pasture should be gotten in better shape by sowing grass over badly rooted places, and the fence should be mended so that the young pigs do not break out.

A pumpkin cut in halves and placed before the fowls will soon be nibbled but rind. A good way is to stick them on nails in the walls of the house, as the fowls will get desirable exercise in jumping a few inches to reach them.

Mite traps are being used successfully by some. They are so arranged that when the mites seek seclusion after their nightly feast they are trapped.

The team should be fed the heaviest meal in the evening, for they have more time then to enjoy it.

There is enough back-breaking work to do without using the scoop shovel to unload grain. Put in a portable dump elevator. The team will do the rest, and it will take a few minutes to crib a big load of corn.

## TO RID POULTRY-HOUSES OF LICE.

Turn out the fowls some days and close all the cracks in the house except the door. Take a kettle of live coals, and pace on the ground in the centre of the house, but if there is a wood floor, lay a flat stone under the kettle. Throw a half pound or a pound of sulphur on the coals, and shut the door. If the house is left closed for a few hours it is safe to conclude that no lice or mites will be found therein after the operation. The sulphur cure is the best method of riding poultry houses of pests, but if the house is not tight the house as well as can be done, mix whitewash with fresh lime, mix in a liberal supply of sulphur, after which throw sulphur into all the cracks. Apply kerosene oil to all the roosts, and burn off the outer surface. Air the house thoroughly.—Weekly Witness.

## THE SHEEP AS A CIVILIZER.

A speaker at a farmers' meeting eulogized the little animal with the golden hoof in the following interesting strain:

"Sheep are always the advance guard to attack new and undeveloped territory. The first sheep and the first Negro slaves that placed foot on what is now the United States of America, were landed from the same fleet at St. Augustine, September 5, 1565, 320 years ago. From that day to this the sheep has been the most universal live agent of the settlers in subduing the country and maintaining its productiveness; and whenever they have neglected them, sterility exists as a monument to their folly."—Weekly Witness.

## ONE ADVANTAGE OF FALL CALVES.

One advantage of having calves come in the Fall is that during this season of the year there is usually more time on the farm to attend to the cattle, calves are more economically raised, since by the time the Spring grass shoots up they are ready for it, and are in good condition the next winter to begin the duties of maternity.—Weekly Witness.

## SEPARATE THE EWES.

Never allow a ewe to run with the flock. When this is permitted and twins are born, the first born wanders away and becomes mixed with the flock before the mother has a chance to own it, and the chances are that later she will refuse to have anything to do with it.—Farmers Home Journal.

## DEFY THE COMBINE.

The man who has two or three good cows and a bunch of Plymouth Rocks can defy the meat combine or any other combine. The cow and the hen have paid for more luxuries for farm homes than the corn crops, and at the same time taken care of the grocery bills.—Indiana Farmer.

## RUSHING THE SCRAP HERO.



—From the Indianapolis News.

## CONSUMPTION COSTS US A BILLION A YEAR.

Startling Statistics Brought Out at the Tuberculosis Congress by Professor Fisher, of Yale.

Washington, D. C.—Professor Irving Fisher, of Yale University, read a paper before the International Congress on Tuberculosis which created a decided sensation. Professor Fisher's paper was on "The Cost of Tuberculosis," and he made the startling announcement that the great white plague costs in hard cash over one billion dollars a year.

He estimated that consumption kills 128,000 persons every year in the United States. This is equal, he said, to the deaths from typhoid fever, diphtheria, appendicitis, meningitis, diabetes, smallpox and cancer all put together. Then again, he said, it generally takes three years to die, during which time the poor victim can earn little or nothing.

"Five million people now living in the United States are doomed to fill consumptives' graves unless something can be done to prevent it," declared Professor Fisher. "As each death means anxiety and grief for a whole family, I estimate that there will be over twenty million persons rendered miserable by these deaths."

The scourge, he said, picks out its victims when they are young men and young women, at the very time of life

## 3125 COAL MINERS LOST LIVES.

Records Show 1907 Was the Worst Year in History of Industry.

Washington, D. C.—Accidents in coal mines of the United States during the last calendar year resulted in the death of 3125 men, and injury to 493,742 tons of coal mined for each life lost.

Statistics do not bear out the popular idea that most mine disasters result from explosions. Of the total number reported during the last year, 947 deaths and 343 injuries resulted from gas and dust explosions, and 201 deaths and 415 injuries were caused by powder, explosions. The chief cause of death among the miners, the report explains, was due to the falling of mine roofs and coal. Such disasters caused 1122 deaths and 2141 injuries.

E. W. Parker, chief statistician of the survey, asserts that much benefit will result from the action of Congress in appropriating \$150,000 to investigate mine disasters and take steps to decrease the number of accidents each year.

## DIVER FIGHTS DEVIL FISH.

Thirty Feet Under Water in Hold of Wreck When Attacked.

San Francisco, Cal.—Wrapped in the tentacles of a giant devil fish, Martin Lund, a diver employed by the Coast Wrecking Company, fought for his life in the hold of the wrecked steamer Pomona, which lies in thirty feet of water in Fort Ross Cove off the Marin County coast.

The devil fish had evidently entered the vessel's hold during the night. Lund had been at work some time before he was attacked. A giant tentacle four inches in diameter first gripped one leg. Before Lund realized what was happening another encircled his thigh.

The diver began to chop at the rubber-like bonds and at the same time gave the hoisting signal to the barge above. Two more tentacles squirmed

## MERCURY FOUND BY SURGEON TO CURE TUBERCULOSIS

Washington, D. C.—Physicians and the laity will be greatly interested in the result of a series of experiments made by the navy surgeons recently, through which they believe they have demonstrated that mercury is a specific for tuberculosis. The Government Bureau of Medicine and Surgery has published the reports of Medical Director C. T. Hibbert and Surgeon Barton Leigh Wright.

Surgeon Wright, who is the originator of the treatment, says he discovered the efficacy of the drug by accident. He was treating a case which required mercury. The patient was tubercular as well. To the surgeon's astonishment the tubercular lesions began to heal.

The mercury is administered by injection into the muscular tissue in order to avoid digestive derangement. Dr. Wright says:

"I am convinced," he adds, "that in mercury we have a specific for tuberculosis, and that the only question remaining is how long a time will be required to effect a cure. We follow the well established rules of treatment during the administration of the drug—open air, rest, proper food in abundance, sanitation, personal hygiene and selection of climate." Surgeon-General Rixey declines to comment on the tests.

Of course it is not claimed by Dr. Wright that the new treatment will restore the lost lung tissue, but where there is enough lung tissue to support life he believes the victim can be saved.

## Rain Storm Uncovers Riches

Placer Pockets of Gold.  
San Bernardino, Cal.—Jacob L. Thomson, of San Bernardino, was prospecting among the old Mexican placers near Hesperia when he was overtaken by a furious storm, which forced him to seek shelter. After a quarter of an inch of rain had fallen in less than one hour, throwing the canyons into roaring torrents, Thomson returned to his work. When the water subsided he found scores of rich placer pockets, and within a few hours panned out \$10,000 in gold.

## Kansas Mastodon Tusk

Crumbled When Found.  
Concordia, Kan.—A large ivory tusk, seven inches in diameter, was found near here in a bed of clay. The find was made by Frederick Dutton, who was canoeing in the river. The tusk crumbled into small pieces when taken out, but parts of it were brought home, and Mr. Dutton will make a further search for the skeleton of the mastodon, which is believed to be buried in the bed of silt and clay. Years ago the lower jaw of a mastodon was found in this district.

# The HOME

## PROPER DRESSING FOR SPORTS.

The girl who attempts to go in for sports without the proper dress is apt to get more harm than benefit from it.

As far as the feet go, sensible dressing is the rule. It cannot be otherwise as few persons are willing to have their tennis courts torn up by high heels.

But with the corset it is far different. Here a girl has but her common sense to guide. If that is not exercised she alone is the sufferer.

The wise girl, who goes in for tennis or rowing, will wear a ribbon girdle rather than a corset. The latter, even when moderately low and loose, restricts the muscles and renders the breathing spasmodic.

If the figure is too full for a girdle alone, a tight-fitting brassiere should be worn with it, to give support. This can take the place of a corset cover.

If the ankles are at all weak, and low shoes are used, a rubber ankle support should be worn under the stockings, for tennis and golf, or a bad sprain may result.

While the serge skirt and light wool waist is the most hygienic for violent exercise, it is doubtless asking too much of our American girls to wear anything but button blouses, at least, during the intense heat of summer.

She should never omit, however, to have a light sweater or coat with her to throw on as soon as the playing is finished. This is advisable even in the warmest weather, as waiting one's turn at the tennis court or changing from the oars to the bow, in a boat, may mean a bad cold if care is not taken to cool off gradually.

Dressing the hair for sports is an art in itself. The tousled head of hair blowing in the eyes is not only unsightly, but may mean the difference between a good stroke and a bad one in tennis or golf.

For tennis, riding, or all other violent exercise, the front hair should be parted or arranged in a natural pompadour and tied rather low on the head, turned up several times and tied with a ribbon. A fillet is also worn, for tennis.

If this method of hair dressing is so youthful, the hair can be braided from the crown, tied there with a ribbon, and pinned flat with many bone pins.

## WHERE GIRLS FIND HUSBANDS.

Twenty thousand persons, including 5,000 bachelors, attended the annual fete given by the marriageable maidens of the little village of Ecaussines-Lalain. The splinter committee met all trains, and the bachelors, who came from all parts of Belgium, and even from Germany were given a cordial welcome, being escorted through gayly decorated streets, and shown the various places of interest, special stress being laid on the importance of the town hall, where many Ecaussines maidens have been married in consequence of these annual fetes. Lunch was served in the open air, and the menu was very simple by way of emphasizing the domestic efficiency of the splinters.

On the conclusion of the luncheon Mlle. Baron, the eighteen-year-old president of the splinters' society, appeared on the balcony of a house overlooking the market place, and delivered an address on the joys of matrimony which was loudly applauded. The bachelors, some of whom had already lost their hearts, cheered wildly. "Make your choice, gentlemen," concluded Mlle. Baron. "Marriage is a lottery, but in Ecaussines all the lots are prizes." A ball took place in the evening, and by the time the festivities were concluded a number of splinters announced that they had found prospective husbands.—Penny Pictorial.

## FRENCH WOMAN A SCOUT.

An application for a license to open a tobacco bureau has brought to public notice in France a forgotten war heroine, Mme. May, who in 1870 distinguished herself by a series of daring exploits.

She was born in 1844 near Le Mans and was living at Metz at the time the war broke out. She offered her services as a scout and was accepted. At first she drove about the country in a cart and after some time adopted masculine attire, which would permit her more easily to move about among the soldiers.

Her cleverness in avoiding detection, as well as her courage, was soon recognized, and she was charged with carrying important despatches to the furthest outposts along the frontier villages, which exposed her constantly to the risk of being caught and shot as a spy.

She was in fact captured one day as she was carrying three important messages through the enemy's lines to the commander of the besieged forces at Thionville. She was searched by the Germans, who, to their honor be it said, treated her most decently and sent her away free but with strict orders not to cross their lines again.—Paris correspondence London Telegraph.

## WHEN NERVES ARE JANGLED.

"Dressed nerves play queer pranks," said the specialist. "I had a patient who once spent five months in a hospital, taking a rest cure. He suffered from insomnia constantly. To reach his home it was necessary to spend a night on the cars, and he looked forward to this with great dread. Even when well he had always slept poorly on a train, and he looked forward to an absolutely wide-awake night. So he supplied himself with a powder in the hope that it might help a little.

"He didn't need the drug, however. He slept eight solid hours, far better than in the quiet of the hospital. Now a little coffee or smoking or any excitement in the evening will give him insomnia. Yet when he does get to sleep he is the hardest person in the house to awaken. The firecrackers on the night of July 3 and 4 he never hears. A big fire on the block, with all the noise of his engines, didn't arouse him.

"Then there was a woman who had nervous prostration so badly that she was confined to bed and had to have a trained nurse. Early one evening her family were startled by an awful commotion and shrieking in her room. They rushed up to find her in a corner killing a mouse with the back of a hairbrush, while the nurse stood in the centre of the bed, screaming."—New York Times.

## QUEEN OF ENGLAND.

Before she left for Cowes with the King the other day, Queen Alexandra caused it to be made known that the sheath gown will not be tolerated at her court this winter. The intimation, recorded at some length in those London organs of fashion and the aristocracy which circulated so widely among the middle classes, occasioned no surprise in circles in which Her Majesty's conservatism is well known. The Queen of England notes with positive horror, according to the London Throne, an impression in certain ill-informed quarters that the court of England in this reign has grown "lax." Queen Alexandra is affirmed to be especially indignant at rumors of gambling for high stakes at Sandringham, the estate on which the King leads, whenever he gets the opportunity, the life of a country gentleman. The idea that the court is "lax" is attributed to the good nature of the King in tolerating certain American social notions regarding the treatment of divorced men and women. It had been represented to the King and Queen that many estimable ladies on this side of the Atlantic regard divorce as conventional. Not to cause ill feeling among Americans of distinction, their divorced countrymen and countrywomen have been given facilities of access to the court which would not have been granted to the sovereign's

## THE YOUNG HOSTESS.

Nervousness is the bugbear of many a young and inexperienced hostess who would like to entertain friends at dinner, and is yet afraid to experiment. Why not try a simple menu and arrange that your maid shall first cook the dinner for you one night—or at any rate that she shall learn to make the dishes perfectly—before the evening of the dinner party.—Home Chat.

## FASHION NOTES.

A fine lustrous broadcloth always looks well, wears well and is dressy. For handsome afternoon costumes the lustrous broadcloth are to be used.

The bridge stocking is a fad. It has openwork designs over the instep and ankle, showing hearts, diamonds, clubs and spades. These stockings are worn in black and in tan.

No longer is plain stitching the principal decoration of the tailor made coat. Whether it be of cloth, linen or silk, it is trimmed either with braid or with straps or bands of different materials.

A novelty crepe de chine is called velour Salome, another concession to the Salome dance craze. It is a light crepe de chine, having lovely velvet borders.

The polka dots are often arranged in designs instead of being placed at equal distances apart on the fabric.

Panne velvets are to be featured, as well as the chiffon velvets, and the newest velvets are of these classes.

A new buttoned oxford has come in rather late, to be worn with the lingerie dresses, and colored stockings are fashionable with it.

There is a peculiar charm about the white hats of soft, pliable straw simply trimmed with bows of white or delicately colored ribbon.

A moulre effect showing water lines in extremely narrow stripes is a new idea in moires, and they are made in all colors.

England loses 60,000 persons every year by emigration.