

RURAL TOPICS

ADVANTAGES OF SILAGE.

It is usually estimated that it costs 70 cents to \$1 per ton to put corn into the silo, but I know that my neighbors and myself put it in for 50 cents to 60 cents per ton. I find that on my farm I can cut one acre of corn yielding thirteen to fourteen tons and put it in the silo for \$7, or about 50 cents per ton. The same acre of corn would have 150 bushels of ears that would cost me \$8 for husking alone, which with the cost of cutting, shocking, shedding and grinding, costs me double what it does to put the crop into the silo.

My silos last year were filled very full holding 22 acres, close to or quite 300 tons, and the total expense figuring men at \$1.75 per day would be \$150, exclusive of the board for the men. In what other way can one handle a crop of corn so cheaply and have it ready to feed right where it is wanted?

Not only is silage the most economical of rough feeds, which I think is the greatest claim that can be made in its favor, but it is also greatly relished by almost all kinds of live stock, and is absolutely necessary for the production of maximum yields of milk in the winter time.

It is a very easy matter to tell by the condition of a cow's coat in the winter time whether she is getting silage, as its succulence has the same effect on the system of a cow that pasture grass has and it keeps her thrifty and in the best of condition for her every day work.

Silage is also more digestible and nutritious than the same amount of dry feed. Another point in its favor is its convenience.

With silage ready for feeding every day in the year much less help is required to care for the live stock than will be needed where it is necessary to cut or shred fodder in the winter time. Ten to twenty minutes per day will be all the time required to get out the silage and feed the herd.

Practically all the talk about silage for feeding is concerning its use for winter feeding, but I insist that it is almost as necessary in the summer as in the winter.

If we could be sure we would have plenty of rain and resulting good pastures all summer, silage would not be so necessary, but almost every summer brings a dry period, when the pastures get poor and the cows shrink so in their milk unless we feed them that it is hard even if later we do have good pastures, to get the cows back to their normal milk flow.

Nearly all of the best dairymen like to supply some feed to their cows even when on the best of pasture both for its food value to the cows and for its manurial value to the pastures, and nothing is more convenient for this purpose than good silage.—W. Hanson, in the Indiana Farmer.

FARM NOTES.

When disposing of some of the old stock, pick out the poor layers. They are just as good for roasting purposes, and you cannot afford to part with the money-makers.

When you are fastening nests, roosts and feed boxes, be careful to use as few cleats as possible, as they furnish a hiding place for mites and lice.

The cheese taste of butter is due to lack of thoroughness in washing and removing the buttermilk. Butter will not keep well if any buttermilk remains in it.

Those farmers who mate their dairy cows with a strictly beef type sire, expecting that the heifer calves will be of the dairy type, and the steer calves of the beef type, find that their experiment has resulted in a good line of scrubs.

More cows must be raised and raised on the farm. It isn't the amount of fruit—it is to grow good fruit.

The persistent kicker while milking may be stopped by placing a strap around the body just in front of the udder, drawing it moderately tight.

The most profitable use for our skim milk is to feed it back to cows which are giving milk. Used with grain it increases the milk flow greatly, and is worth at least half a cent per quart for this use.

When putting plows and bay tools away for the season coat them with a mixture two parts benzine and one part paraffine oil. The benzine dries off and leaves enough paraffine to make the metal rust proof.

SHEEP BENEFIT ORCHARDS.

The greatest value of sheep in an orchard is found, probably, in their being used as a means of fertilizing orchards.

If put in somewhat early in the spring and fed a suitable supplementary food with the grass which the orchard may furnish, it will be found that the sheep will thus convey fertility to the land, and they will do so in a marked degree if fed on rich kinds of food.

Such foods may consist very largely of wheat bran, which is in itself a valuable fertilizer.

It may be wise to encourage the sheep to eat freely, to add a little

grain in the form of oats. A little oil-cake will also improve the food.

The droppings thus left in the orchard will tend very much to its enrichment.

The outcome will be that where this system persevered in during considerable portions of the season, the orchard will thus be provided with a liberal application of fertility.

This statement, of course is based on the supposition that there is some relation between the number of sheep grazed and the area of the orchard.—Indiana Farmer.

FEEDING ALFALFA TO HORSES.

In a recent issue of the Breeder's Gazette of Chicago, Joseph E. Wing says of feeding alfalfa to horses:

When alfalfa hay is first fed to horses or mules not accustomed to it, and fed in large amounts, it sometimes not always, makes them urinate more freely than is their wont. This is nearly always a very temporary effect and in a short time they eat alfalfa hay with no other noticeable effect than that they are in better flesh than when eating other forage, work better and feel better.

Alfalfa hay for horses or mules should be allowed to get fairly mature before being cut, should be well cured and have no mold on it. The last cutting of alfalfa is usually too late to make the best horse feed, the coarser crops growing earlier in the season serving better. Neither horses nor mules should be fed all the alfalfa hay they will consume; it is too rich a feed and they do not need so much of it, though it is ordinarily fed in limitless amounts with no perceptible injury.

GROOMING OF ANIMALS.

If the best results to be attained are desired, grooming is essential for dairy cows and horses. An every day grooming with a good stiff brush for the horse is well worth all the time and trouble it takes. In cows it is a matter of necessity, if cleanliness is to be observed. The hind quarters around the udders of the dairy cow should be kept free from long hairs. Horses with long hair and thick coats should by all means be clipped, as they sweat easily, the long hairs will hold the moisture, so that the animal is more than likely to take cold if compelled to stand still after exertion. Clipping twice a year will keep an ordinary horse in good condition, clipping once in the fall and once in the spring. However, horses that cannot be protected from the cold by warm stables during the late fall and winter should not be clipped in the fall, except on the legs.—W. H. Underwood, in the Indiana Farmer.

POTATO SCAB CONTROL.

The potato scab disease has been pretty thoroughly studied by potato specialists. This well-known malady is the result of a fungus infestation which also causes scab on beets. Its germs occur in great numbers on scabby potatoes, and may cling to the surface of smooth tubers. Much of the loss from scab is directly due to the use of infected seed. When the fungus is not present in the soil a clean crop is assured if clean seed is used. It is cheaper to abandon potato growing upon badly infected soil for a time than otherwise to combat the pest. Chemical disinfection of soil is not effective enough to warrant the cost. Seed potatoes can be effectively disinfected either by soaking one and a half hours in a solution made by dissolving 1 ounce of corrosive sublimate in 7 gallons of water, or by soaking two hours in a solution made by diluting one-half pint of formalin with 15 gallons of water.—Indiana Farmer.

THE PAYING COW HERD.

No dairyman should be satisfied or stop improving his herd of cows until he has brought them up to producing 240 to 250 pounds of butter annually. It requires a product of nearly 200 pounds of butter a year to keep and attend to a cow. There is no use of keeping boarders at a loss; at least no one should stop improving his herd of cows till they are brought up to a profitable basis. Careful selection, with a pure bred bull of a milk and butter strain at the head and good management otherwise, are the factors underlying the making of a cow herd that will average 240 to 250 pounds of butter a year.—Indiana Farmer.

EFFECT OF COLD ON COWS.

The Department of Agriculture has received a report of experiments made in Germany with milk cows. During a period of ten days in November in which they were turned out of doors for three hours each day a herd of 80 cows produced on the average per day 1,461 pounds of milk and 58.8 pounds of butter, whereas during the preceding 10 days, in which they were kept the entire day in the stall, the same cows produced on the average but 1,349 pounds of milk per day and 50.6 pounds of butter. The general health and appetite of the cows were improved by the period out of doors each day.

A man breathes about 20 times a minute, or 1,200 times an hour.

Satan and Flowers

Diabolical Action of Certain Plants in Mythology

The traditional association of the personified Power of Evil and a garden is, of course, familiar to all, and the kindred or evolved traditions form one of the most fascinating studies of comparative mythology. But it can scarcely be contended that it is in any way due to this association that we find his Satanic Majesty figuring so frequently in the folk nomenclature of flowers and shrubs. But such cases are by no means common; by far the greater number of diabolical appellations refer to some physical peculiarity in the plant which is either attributed to Monsieur le Diable, or suggests its employment by or effect on that potentate. And when we come to consider the names in question we realize that it is by no means the Miltonic devil that is referred to but rather the malevolent and sometimes rather contemptible buffoon of the old miracle plays. And what is still more remarkable in some cases we find plants the subjects, so to speak, of a joint or disputed ownership, one claimant to which is the devil, while the other is often a canonized saint named in the Christian calendar. It is not easy for us of the present age to conceive the mental phase which names, for example, a hand shaped flower after a saint or devil indifferently, as is the case with one of the orchid family, which by some is styled "Mary's Hand" and by others "Satan's Hand." There does not seem the same violence of absurdity in the custom of associating flowers or plants with elves or fairies as their originators or employers.

It would be impossible within reasonable limits to give all the instances of the devil among the flowers, but enough may be cited to show that, as has been said, it is the grotesque, mediaeval devil rather than the awesome fiend of theology or poetry. The familiar scabious, owing to the shape of its root, suggestive of a mouthful having been taken out of it, is called the devil's bite. Explanations are by no means wanting. The "bite" was taken in jealous rage, because the root in question was thought to be of great medicinal value, and the arch-enemy naturally begrudged mankind every fraction of it. One of its therapeutic uses is as a sudorific, and the atmosphere of his abode rendering such an agent quite unnecessary the devil bit off a piece in a dog in the manger spirit. Another tradition has it that with this root the Evil One was wont to perform all sorts of marvels till Our Lady deprived it of the power, whereupon in impotent rage he bit it. Some of the devil titles doubtless date from the time when, as Shakespeare tells us, to many plants with a decorous appellation "liberal shepherds give a grosser name," and these can be found in plenty in old fashioned herbals.

Some plants owe their diabolical prefix to the same moral idea that has been noticed in the case of the "devil's apples" of the mandrake. The berries of the briony, for instance, are the devil's cherries, and those of the deadly nightshade devil's berries par excellence. But it is not quite easy to understand why the pretty campion should be the devil's flower, nor the ox-eyed daisy his daisy; still more puzzling is it to account for the garlic being his "posy," when we call to mind the universal attribute to the garlic of hostility to the powers of evil—especially when manifested in the vampire form. But this apparent contradiction is noticeable also in the case of the mystic vervain, which, according to some, is eminently antivenere, but which old Gerarde tells us "the devil did reveal as a secret and divine medicine." This association of the vervain with diabolical action reminds us that there are numerous plants with which "though it be not written down" in their names, the devil is connected. The devil is said to exercise the strictest guardianship over the magical fennel seed (which gives the power of being invisible), and the only time it can be obtained from his custody is on St. John's Eve. Another legend has for its subject the favorite sweetbrier, or eglantine, always associated with the well known references to it of Shakespeare and Milton and Tennyson. The thorns point downward, and the reason given is that after his fall the devil essayed to clamber up to Heaven by means of it, the eglantine then being a stately tree. But when its proportions were reduced to a bush, "out of spite he placed its thorns in their present eccentric position." Still stranger is the countryside legend that associates "our gentleman in black" with the blackberry. After Michaelmas Day—and the folklore records include both Old and New Styles—it is wrong, or at least imprudent, to pick blackberries, for on that day the devil—according to local sayings—spits on them, treads on them, casts his cloak over them or throws his club at them—the last injury being one of the very few occasions on which the foul fiend is assigned a weapon other, perhaps, than the "pitchfork" of some old pictures.—London Globe.

NEGRO OWNERS OF LARGE FARMS.

Some of the Most Successful—Their Great Tracts of Cotton Lands.

The biggest negro farm in south Carolina is in Marion County. It used to be Tracy Alford, but Tracy has invested in town property and cut his farm down. Marion yet holds the belt, regardless of the claims of Sumter and Orangeburg Counties, and even of William Murry, of Wedgefield, who has 150 acres in cotton and will make far over a hundred bales, and even our friend Bob Babb of Cross Hill, who makes 100 bales a year.

Butler General, a quiet, unassuming looking negro, who lives about five miles from Marion court house, is truly the biggest negro farmer in South Carolina. General has 200 acres in cotton in one level field without a flow or a washout, and 100 acres in another lot, 300 acres in cotton as fine as any man's, from which General says he will gather at least 250 bales and he expects more. This is his own land, for which he would not take \$75 an acre.

It is one unbroken field of as fine farm land, level and all stumped, as Aycock or any white farmer owns, and it's paid for, costing him years ago \$25 and \$50 an acre. He has 200 acres of valuable timber land and several hundred acres on his other places, about 1,000 acres in all. He runs eighteen ploughs on his plantation and used 140 tons of guano, costing him about \$2,000. His farm supplies cost \$3,000, making his outlay \$5,000. General is an open hearted, progressive negro. He has a church and a school house on his place and gets all the labor he wants to work his farm. Anderson General, a brother, works one of the plantations, keeping it up to the acre mark. Both the Generals are good, Christian hearted men, lovers of the acre and loyal citizens.—Columbia Sun.

Arithmetic Made Easy.

The class in business arithmetic in one of the evening schools is made up wholly of men who wield the pick ax and push the shovel during the day. These men are ambitious to improve their minds, and the fact that they give up their evenings to study shows that they appreciate the value of a trained mind. But they are pathetically stupid in some things.

"On the first evening," said the teacher, "I asked the class, 'How much is six times two?' There was no apparent desire to shrink the question, but no amount of hand scratching or knitting of brows could bring forth an answer.

"I'll put the question in another way," said I. "Suppose your boss is paying you at the rate of \$2 a day, how much do you get at the end of a week's work?"

"Every man had his hand up. 'Twelve dollars,' said one in the first row.

"These men can think in dollars and cents quickly enough," said the teacher, "but figures are Greek to them."—New York Press.

Out of Character.

Richard Harding Davis, one of Westchester County's new deputy sheriffs, came into White Plains with his kennel master the other day. While awaiting his kennel master outside a dog biscuit shop, Mr. Harding Davis discussed sport.

"Sport is as good here as it is abroad," he said, "but abroad they are more punctilious. Your Englishman must always be correct. He has a wardrobe of smooth, sleek, dark clothes for town; a wardrobe of knickerbockers and thick woollens for Alpine winter sports; a wardrobe of flannels for the seashore, and so on, with wardrobes for deer stalking, for fox hunting, for driving, even for smoking and drinking.

"I remember once, in my early youth, I was shooting over a Duke's covers. A very grave and elegant young Marquis was stationed near me. Suddenly the Duke shouted to the Marquis:

"There goes a hare! Let him have it! But the Marquis shook his head. 'I can't, Duke,' he said. 'I'm in my pheasant costume.'"—Washington Star.

"The Smiths."

John Smith—plain John Smith—is not very high-sounding; it does not suggest aristocrat; it is not the name of any hero in die-away novels; and yet it is good, strong, and honest. Transferred to other languages it seems to climb the ladder of respectability. Thus, in Latin it is Johannes Smithus; the Italian smooths it off into Giovanni Smithi; the Spaniards render it Juan Smithus; the Dutchman adopts it as Hans Schmidt; the French flatten it out into Jean Smeett; and the Russian sneezes and barks Jonloff Smittowski. When John Smith gets into the tea trade in Canton he becomes Jovan Shimmitt; if he clambers about Mount Hecla, the Icelanders say he is Jahnne Smithson; if he trades among the Tuscarras he becomes Ton Qa Smittus; in Poland he is known as Ivan Schmitti weisk; should he wander among the Welsh mountains, they talk of Jihon Schmidd; when he goes to Mexico he is booked as Jontli F'Smitti; if, of classic turn, he lingers among Greek ruins, he turns to Ion Smikton; and in Turkey he is utterly disguised as Yoe Seef.—Modern Society.

In the darkest night fishes pursue their usual movements the same as by daylight.



NO RUSSIAN CLUBS.

"Tell you about Russian women?" repeated the Countess Lydie Rostoptchine, the Russian woman who has come over to this country to deliver a series of lectures. "Ah, that is a complex subject, very complex." She waved her hands around a great many times, to express the intricacies of the topic.

"You want to know if the Russian women have clubs. No, no. The women of the higher classes meet together, but it is only to play cards." The countess shuffled an imaginary pack of cards. "No, no. There is nothing corresponding to the clubs your women have. Our middle class women would like to have their organizations, but they are revolutionary in their sympathies and the government will not allow them to organize. You can form an idea of the life of Russian women from the life of women in America; it is another world. Your women are advancing fast; ours are not, but it will come—yes, it will come, when Russia has tranquillity."

The countess pronounced it "trou-quel-litoe." "I speak English not well," she explained. "I write English," and she used an imaginary pen with great rapidity, "but I speak not well."

Her English is good while she sticks to it, but her sentences have a tantalizing way of trailing off into Russian, French or German. She is a large woman, with an astonishing amount of energy and vivacity for the seventy years to which she confesses.

The Empress of all the Russias is the Countess Rostoptchine says, "a most unhappy woman. It is the terrible fear in which she lives—fear for her husband and her son. For a time she was mad, quite mad." The countess tapped her own forehead expressively.

"Four years ago," she added, "the Czarina was a beautiful woman—most beautiful. Now her face is worn, it is aged; she trembles, and seems bent. A most unhappy woman."—New York Tribune.

FEVER OF ENERGY.

"The ability to do nothing occasionally," says a woman of the fashionable world, "I believe to be absolutely essential to the enjoyment of life, but in these days any one who suggests idling away a few hours is looked upon with suspicion. Nobody ever thinks now of sitting over the fire in the twilight, watching the flames curling round the logs or seeing pictures in the red-hot coals. It would be considered an evidence of mental and moral depravity—with the motor waiting at the door to whirl you hither and thither and yonder. Only the other night at dinner the man I went in with told me Sicily was a most disappointing place. 'You see,' he explained, 'there's absolutely nothing to do there.' In reply to my murmured suggestion that there might be something to look at, he replied, 'Yes; but you can't look at a view all day.' 'Why not?' I inquired. 'Well, because you can't,' was the reply; 'one must do things.' Personally I couldn't see the necessity, and I told him that to my mind the ideal holiday consisted in doing nothing. 'Oh, of course, if you feel like that,' he said in crushing tones, 'Sicily's just the place for you!'

"And the majority of people are like my companion at dinner. Work to them is a disease which, once it fastens on its victim, becomes practically incurable. From the business man unable to refrain from fresh efforts in spite of his accumulated millions to the woman who knows no peace unless her entertainments surpass in splendor and originality those of all her rivals, everybody is toiling and slaving, as if life meant nothing more than the expenditure of so much vital energy an hour. There are few who know anything of the supreme joy of waking in the morning to the knowledge that there are at least a dozen things waiting for them to do—and then not doing them."—New York Tribune.

DAUGHTER OF COTTON MAGNATE.

Mrs. Lionel Walronde is the daughter of the English cotton magnate, and, according to The Sketch, she has inherited her mother's genius for entertaining, as well as her love for and understanding of music. Few of the younger matrons in English society, even among future peeresses, have a more splendid jewel casket than Mrs. Walronde.

Her own father's wedding gift was a diamond tiara, containing unique specimen stones, and she is often seen wearing the huge diamond heart which was one of her husband's many presents on the occasion of her marriage.

OCTAVE THANET ON AMERICANS

Americans are human; they are not always saints; but it is not often that an American gentleman will clutter up his conscience with the mess of memories of women who are the worse for having known him, in which a Frenchman shows such open and artless pride. However, one must admit that this prevalent interest in women and discussion of her, to say nothing of the memories, do give the Latin wooer an advantage. He has picked up a good deal of assorted information about the sex, although not so much as he imagines. He has woman's little prejudices, her little

vanities, her pretty weaknesses as plain before him as a road map; no fear of his so much as jarring anything; while our honest American is as like as not to drive full at them! Yet his heart is full of a tender reverence which he could not express properly to save his life; while the other says all that he feels with the most charming grace in the world.—Octave in Harper's Bazar.

EDUCATED WOMEN NEEDED.

More educated women should be employed in Poor Law administration. Women are admirably qualified to act as relieving officers in a very large proportion of the cases which come before the Poor Law authorities. It is true that they could not deal single handed with cases of drunken or mad papers who resist removal to the workhouse. But neither, I venture to believe, can a man enter adequately into the difficulties of a young widow left with a large family to support. Women, it is generally admitted, make admirable sanitary inspectors. They are commonly employed as administrators of private charity. Why then, should it be the very rare exception which it is at present to find them occupied in the public relief of the poor? Educated women might find a satisfactory career in other divisions of the Poor Law work. The matrons of workhouses or of Poor Law schools are at present competent in a rough and ready way, but they are by no means trained or sympathetic administrators. An educated woman who is fond of organization might be extremely successful in this sphere and might introduce into it new and valuable methods.—London Daily News.

A DECALOGUE FOR WOMEN.

The real question is whether the waiving of exemption from the prohibitions prescribed for men by the religious law can be counterbalanced by purely mundane gain such as would be derived from universal suffrage. Clearly that is a point which should be determined by women themselves. If they should see fit to waive their obvious prerogative for the common good, the decision would redound greatly to their credit, but it is one which, frankly, we, if in their place, should make only after most careful consideration. But we feel satisfied that men now possessing authority will make no further marked concessions in respect to the governing power unless and until women voluntarily place themselves under equal moral limitations. Whether, in the event of their deciding to do so, an attempt should be made to revise the Commandments to conform to modern conditions, or to compose a special Decalogue for Women, is a question for the theologians, and one which at the moment we do not feel called upon to discuss.—George Harvey in the North American Review.

ARE OUR BARRIES MORAL?

We do not expect paternal feelings in a child of five. Why, then, should we expect any other of those race-regarding impulses which we term "morality"? Even to appeal to the "better feelings" of a child of eight or ten is often almost as irrational as the celebrated apostrophe of the emotional Irish barrister who, in the fine frenzy of his peroration, whirled upon the judge with the thrilling appeal, "Sir, was you iver a mother?" To appeal to a child's better nature, while excellent in moderation, often does little more than make a hypocrite out of him before his time, writes Dr. Woods Hutchinson in Woman's Home Companion.

He has got your hair, and his mother's eyes and voice, and some of your little tricks of manner—and temper—now, and he is just as safe to develop your superb self-control and civic devotion and consideration for others if you will only give him time—and set him a good example. Meanwhile preaching to him that he should possess these qualities will expedite matters precious little, and unless backed up by example, not at all. Remember that life and growth of all sorts are but a response to environment, and new responses can only occur as opportunity is afforded for them.

AT HOME SEWING.

George Elliot tells us that a woman is never so much at home with herself as when she is sewing, and a famous nerve specialist declares that the act of sewing has two distinct effects, one advantageous, the other detrimental. To sit down quietly with the body well relaxed, and ply the needle is a recreation, but to sew under strain—there is nothing that so quickly frazzles the nerves. Perhaps it is a good thing to have left behind the time when every spare moment was spent in crocheting lace that one could purchase at a shop for ten cents a yard, and tides and other fripperies unless except as dust collectors, but it appears we have gone to the other extreme. If you keep on hand a bit of ruffling to be hemmed or some mending, it is surprising how much may be accomplished without losing anything of the interest of a friend's visit. There is satisfaction in the completion of any article done in such odd moments.—New York Evening Post.