

THE TEST OF THE NATIONAL WELFARE IS THE INTELLIGENCE AND PROSPERITY OF THE FARMER.

Every farmer in his annual experience discovers something of value. Write it and send it to the "Agricultural Editor of the Democrat, Bellefonte, Penn.," that other farmers may have the benefit of it. Let communications be timely, and be sure that they are brief and well pointed.

Road supervisors should hunt up road machines about now. Roads can be mended at one-half of the present cost in many places by the use of a road scraper.

The current number of the Scientific American makes note of four new inventions relating entirely to agriculture, and none of them are churns, either. The inevitable bee hive is among them though.

PHILADELPHIA is trying to get the next State Fair, and ought to have it. Machinery Hall is proposed as the building, and there is none other so good in the State. If the effort should succeed we prophesy that the meeting will be the finest the Society has ever held.

If you cannot make your arrangements this year for a "house-garden," such as we spoke of last week, you can at least dedicate the nearest corner of the corn-field to a truck-patch, and after manuring and working it thoroughly, plant it with lima beans, peas, sweet corn, and so on, making two or three successive plantings of each, and secure a full supply for the table, at less cost than you imagine.

A CORRESPONDENT of the Tribune encourages mechanics and others of small means to enter agriculture, by taking a column and a half to tell the "Agricultural lessons" of the "brief, but remarkable course" of a printer who stuck to his case, making as high as twenty-five dollars per week. He had accumulated a capital of four hundred dollars and a "racking asthmatic cough." Then he went to Kansas, started market gardening, recovered his health, cleared a little over twenty-five hundred dollars in nearly four years, and "one fatal May morning, while it was yet dark, his team ran away going to market; he was found lying by the roadside—dead." That's encouraging, isn't it?

Mr. E. H. GENNETT, Superintendent of the Maine Beet-Sugar company, and who is probably the best authority on the subject in this country, finds immense advantages in the United States which no sugar-producing country in Europe possesses. On the other hand, he says there are a number of difficulties to be overcome which the sugar manufacturer in Europe does not have to contend with, such as supreme indifference to and ignorance of the subject among the highest agricultural authorities, impassable roads through the country in winter, irrational cultivation of the soil by most farmers and consequent exhaustion of their lands, and want of knowledge in cultivating a root crop to advantage.

WHILE most farmers know the value of forage crops to help out short pasture in July, August and September, they yet neglect to raise such crops, and consequently suffer loss by such neglect. One of the best fodder crops, if not the very best, either as an adjunct to pasture, or a full feed under the soiling system, is sweet corn. Large crops of it can be raised on small areas. We hope every reader of this who has a cow and only a little room will plant a patch of sweet corn and test the value of this recommendation. A sufficient quantity of seed may be difficult to get at the first start, but every farmer should raise enough for his own use. The best table varieties are the best for milk cows.

THE cattle lung plague has undoubtedly made its appearance at several points in our State, and seems to have "come to stay." Dr. Michener, the Veterinary Surgeon of the State Board of Agriculture, entertains the fear that it may spread over the entire State. We urge upon our farmers the necessity for an active campaign against it. The best

veterinary authorities agree that the disease is highly contagious, and that "the infecting principle is present in the air expired, in the excretions, the secretions, the excretions are in the blood. It is present in all stages of the disease, but is worse during the fever."

A thorough cleansing and white-washing of the cow-yards and stables, with a free use of crude carbolic acid in the whitewash, and a strong solution of carbolic acid frequently sprinkled over the stable floors, will go far toward disinfecting them.

BEARING in mind the good old Scotch saying, "Monie mickles make a muckle," we intend to devote an increased share of our space and time to what are often considered the minor matters of the farm—the garden, poultry, butter-making, &c. We believe that greater attention to these things on the part of the farmer will result in a marked increase in the gross products of the farm and add materially to the annual revenue. In any event, it cannot fail to result in better and more liberal living, and this is the main object in farming after all. From time to time we shall present such hints, facts and suggestions, as to improved methods, implements, seeds, stock, and so on, as we may be able to gather from our own every day work and experience; and just here is a good place to call the attention of our readers to the standing notice in italics at the head of this department, and to say that we shall receive with great pleasure, short, pithy communications on all practical subjects, relating to either the "minor" or "major" matters of the farm.

A PARTIAL trial of the South Bend Chilled Plows, alluded to a week or two since, goes far to convince us that they are all that their friends claim for them, and this is perfection. We have not, as yet, been able to find any fault, or detect any flaw in them, and we have no hesitancy in saying to those in want of a plow, you cannot do better than buy a "South Bend." We shall shortly give them further tests, and report. As an evidence that our good opinion is shared by farmers generally, we learn that Mr. Hicks, the Bellefonte agent, has already sold half a hundred of them this spring.

Cheap and Perpetual Asparagus. Col. Curtis, in the N. Y. Tribune.

Unnecessarily elaborate directions for making things after an expensive fashion often deter busy people from having them. This is especially true in the matter of asparagus. The fuss of the fanciful amateur discourages farmers, and therefore very many of them go without this delicious "early green." Our bed at Kirby Homestead is a dozen years old and cost for the roots \$1, and each year it helps to make Spring more welcome by its abundant yield. The plants are set a foot apart in a spot of ground out of the way and dry and warm. It was made rich with manure, and every Fall a load of horse manure is spread on the bed, and when a weed makes its appearance it is pulled out. The manure in the Fall protects the crowns of the plants from the cold and makes a mulch for the plants to come up through, and at the same time is an annual fertilizer. Fifty cents each year will cover all of the expense our asparagus bed is to us, and it is good for a cutting every other day for a month or longer. The variety is Conover's Colossal, hardy and excellent, but it should not be set closely; two feet apart is near enough for big specimens, and sixteen inches is better than a foot. The bed should not be cut the first year after setting. A bed can be raised from the seed which will be ready to cut the third year. The seed should be planted in hills sixteen inches apart, and the young plants kept clear from weeds and the ground kept mellow. We raised a bed once from the seed, but had to dig it up, owing to changing the grounds; and this reminds me that a spot for an asparagus bed should always be selected which will not be likely to be disturbed, and the bed, with the care we give ours, will last through a great many generations. It is a nice legacy for one's children and grandchildren. I have known of beds in flourishing condition a hundred years old—surely a pleasant reminder of the thoughtfulness of ancestors.

FINANCIAL prosperity originates with the farmer, the first link in the great chain of circulation whose basis is the plough. THERE never has been, and never will be, any real profit in poor farming.

THE secret of having hens lay in winter, when eggs are in their highest price, is to get your pullet chicks out early in the year (February, March or April, at the latest), and feed them straight on till October and November. Give them warm, cheerful quarters in winter, with sound nourishing food, and they will begin to lay early—and cannot stop—under decent care and fair treatment.

One of the Drawbacks.

When urging upon a majority of farmers a more general incorporation of wool and mutton into their list of crops, one of the first replies is, "I would keep a few sheep if it was not for the dogs," backing this position up with recitals of their own experience, or that of some neighbor, with those details of death and mutilation already too familiar to the flock owners of the country. Why is this so? Why do the Legislatures of every State promptly pass laws for the imprisonment and punishment of men for stealing or injuring the property of their neighbors, and yet so persistently refuse (or neglect, which amounts to the same thing) anything like adequate legal protection for that same property from the incursions of canine rogues? Why does the scent of the kennel so confuse the ideas of the average law-maker as to seemingly incapacitate him for discriminating between right and wrong? Why is it that he will readily vote for the confinement of bulls, rams, stallions and even cows, hogs, and sheep, but give dogs the free run through the sheep folds and pastures of the same territories? Most of the great stock-growing States have laws authorizing the payment of bounties for the capture and destruction of wolves, enacted in seeming ignorance of the fact that the damage by unrestrained dogs in such States is vastly greater than is that from the depredations of all animals. If the flocks of the country are to have legal protection from but one of their enemies, it were better that the bounties were paid on dog heads than for scalps of wolves, or brushes of foxes.

The sentimentality that grants a license to the dog which is withheld from other and less destructive animals, results in a heavier tax than any law-maker should be willing to inflict upon his constituency. It is unfair, because of the inequality of its distribution. The owner of sheep is forced to bear an unjust proportion of the losses to the productive wealth of the country. The habits and instincts of the sheep—its gregariousness and gentleness, as well as its timidity and passiveness under torture—mark it as the favorite victim of canine rapacity and cowardice, and throw upon the flock-owners a burden which, if to be borne at all, should be shared with the holders of all other property.

Insisting upon legislation for restraint of dogs is not, and should not be construed as a warfare for the extermination of those often useful and sometimes indispensable animals. Reasonable men readily admit that the dog has his place in the world's great economy, and because they are thus reasonable they insist that that same dog shall be kept in its place; and to this end demand a rigid enforcement of all laws now on the statute books, and will ceaselessly labor for an advanced public sentiment that will not only make such enforcement possible, but will surround the sheep walks of the whole country with such legal protection as may be possible under a proper respect for the rights and property of all citizens.

Agricultural Growls.

Commissioner Le Duc, of the Agricultural Bureau, is acquiring an unpopularity in the Twentieth Congressional district of this State, which is actually lamentable. The Twentieth district is composed of agricultural counties whose people have heretofore been abundantly supplied with seeds from the department at Washington, but since the commissioner declined to allow Congressmen the slight privilege of distributing the seeds they have been entirely cut off. Unless something is done it is likely to create a scarcity of about everything but profanity. The farmers up that way don't want any tea plants or bamboo shoots or bon-bon sprouts; they may not even care for any straw hat or Japanese fan seed, and would doubtless be contented with any reasonable consideration accorded them. The difficulty in this country just now is to prove that there are any farmers outside the national conservatory.

THERE'S ONE THING to be said about this Jersey of ours over the river—when she tackles a thing she tackles it. It is pleasant to observe that instead of tearing her hair and weeping over the cattle disease she has sent her head cattle men to the front with orders to stop it or break a trace. The head cattle men are establishing quarantines here and there and locating offices all around so that every case may be reported, and they bid fair to hold the plague in check. Meanwhile, though Bucks is said to be in danger from the disease, several cases having been chronicled, Pennsylvania is sound asleep.

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Sundry Matters to be Attended to at Once.

From the American Agriculturist. Poultry should be kept free from vermin; dig up the ground in the runs and clean the houses and so escape gaps. Provide good coops for young chicks, and let them run in the garden or orchard. Clean up everything about the house and barns and burn the rubbish; numerous eggs and chrysalids of insects will be burned with it. Put all the tools and implements in order, and white wash pig-pens, poultry-houses and sheep-pens. Look well to fences before cattle find the weak places; if these are once found, they are always dangerous. Pile up all loose manure; it may thus be made into good condition for corn or roots next month. As the weather becomes warm, use plaster freely to deodorize yards, stables, and pens; it does a double duty when thus used. Clear the outlets of drains, and repair washed roads.

A Promising Experience.

From the Scientific American. Remarkable experiments in wheat cultivation have been tried in Michigan. Under the supervision of a committee appointed for the purpose 68 lbs. of seed to the acre were sown in drills 16 inches apart, and the grain was cultivated with a horse hoe once in the fall and twice in the spring. For comparison, another plot of ground was sown with wheat drilled in, in the usual way, 90 lbs. to the acre. The committee reports that the average yield was 69 1/2 per cent. greater in the sixteen-inch drills than in the eight-inch, and while the former did not lodge or crinkle, the latter did so badly.

Good Stock Requires Good Care.

From the Farm Journal. One of the great causes for dissatisfaction with pure-bred stock arises from the fact that the purchaser does not feed liberally enough, expecting the stock which has been for years accustomed to plenty of food and the best of care and attention, to thrive on that which is doled out to the common stock which never had better.

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