

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'a., that other farmers may have the benefit of it. Let communications be timely, and be sure that they are brief and well pointed.

The importance of good, fresh, pure seed for all our farm and garden crops is generally admitted, and farmers, as a rule, take pains to secure the best. The business of growing and selling seeds, mainly for the garden and "truck-patch," has, of late years, assumed great proportions; and as the profits are large, unscrupulous persons have been attracted to the trade, who, by their more than doubtful practices, render the purchasing of seeds from them a somewhat risky venture. We are glad to believe, however, that this does not apply to the trade in general, and we know that there are among the seedsmen many of entire reliability. Prominent among these stands the old house of B. K. Bliss & Sons, 34 Barclay-st., New York. For ten years past we have regularly purchased our supply of seeds of them, and in the many dozens of packages which we have in that time received from them we have not had a solitary disappointment. Their seeds have always, with us, proven true to name, pure and fresh, and, with careful planting, never fail to germinate. We know of no seeds which we can recommend with more confidence than those sold by B. K. Bliss & Sons. In addition to their annual catalogue, which is issued without charge to all customers, or to any one who will apply by postal card, they publish and sell for thirty-five cents, an annual called the Amateur's Guide, of over 200 pages, which contains as much information as any one dollar book on gardening we ever saw.

How to Make a Nest Properly.

Nothing is more provoking than to go to the trouble and expense of sending a distance for a sitting of eggs of some improved and desirable breed of fowls, and after patient waiting for three weeks have a large portion of them fail to "hatch." No doubt carelessly and improperly-made nests are often the cause of poor results. We are indebted for the following good advice on the subject to the handsome circular of Mr. Geo. O. Brown, proprietor of the Montvue poultry yards, Brooklandville, Md.:

Is essential to success in setting eggs, and improperly made nests are often the cause of poor results. A box sufficiently large enough to allow the hen to turn around without crowding against the sides, with the nest made in the centre, as follows: First put in the box three or four inches of fresh earth, rounding out to proper shape, then oat or other short, broken straw, which after fixed in, sprinkle a handful of sifted ashes, and the nest is ready for the eggs. If in the early part of the season, from nine to eleven eggs are plenty, for if there are more the outer ones become chilled, and as the hen turns them often, in time the eggs in the centre also get chilled. Should an egg get broken, they should all be carefully washed in warm or tepid water, and clean straw replace the other. Feed and water at a certain hour each day, and keep your setting hens where other fowls cannot molest them. Always have a dust bath for them.

Horse Racing at Fairs.

A correspondent of the Elmira Farmer's Club handles this subject without gloves, and we pass his opinions along for the judgment of our Centre county farmers. However much we may agree or disagree with him we must admit that he puts his side of the case pretty strongly:

"Can county agricultural fairs be run successfully without the horse race?" is the question of one of the correspondents of the Club. I answer—they must be, or fail. Our fairs, as usually conducted, are a stretch in the nostrils of a large class of farmers; and this class is just the one we most need, and the one we must have or fail. Good, stable, square-dealing, matter-of-fact farmers will not take their massive short-horns, their aristocratic Herefords, their golden fleeced Merinos, or epicurean Devons, their pair of majestic cart and plow horses, or their sleek brood mares, their wealth-bestowing Jersey, or their best stock cows to the fair, and play second fiddle to some nobody with a long whip and jockey cap who usurps all the best places, and receives all the best prizes, and whose only claim is that he represents an ani-

mal of no practical value, but which in some way succeeded in getting a "record," and the proprietor walks proudly up and down the track in front of the judges' stand followed by the groom leading the old rip by the bit, with two or three blankets upon his arm, and in one hand a sponge, ostensibly to wipe the old horse's nose, but really to signify that the whole thing from beginning to end is a "sponge."

But here we are met by the trustees with the old excuse, that we must have the race to draw the crowd to pay the bills. That, brother Secretary, is one of the many commonly received errors that are accepted without examination. It is false. We are not obliged to run a jockey club nor countenance a gambling enterprise in order to hold a successful fair. If we were, then I would say let the fairs die. The debasing and demoralizing influences of a horse race, patronized by our boys and girls, is too great a price to pay for even a "successful" fair. Brother farmers, the excuse for the race is not valid. Let the little county society be relieved of the expense of extra police, judges' stand, seats, and the two or three hundred dollars paid in purses, and we will have more money for other purposes than we have now, for the old farmers and their families will be there, and the fine stock will be there, and there will be somebody to look after it, and at it, and all the drunkenness and rowdiness, and nine-tenths of the profanity will be eliminated from the crowd; and a spirit of emulation will be aroused, and the fair will grow in influence, in numbers and in usefulness each year; and instead of being the tail of a jockey's kite, it will be in every deed a farmer's festival.

Fruit Drying by Wholesale.

A SUGGESTION.

We find in the last number of the Husbandman a letter from an intelligent and experienced correspondent of the "Elmira Farmer's Club," on the subject of fruit drying, which we reproduce below. At first it may seem untimely to discuss the subject of drying fruit, before the blossoms for the season have yet appeared, but we deem the "cheese factory plan" suggested by Mr. Hinckley, the key to success, and publish it now that time may be had for consummating arrangements before the fruit ripens.

The successful drying in the best and most attractive manner of our surplus fruit might prove one of the "small matters" of the farm alluded to last week which would help make the difference between profit and loss in the operations of many a Centre county farmer:

FREDONIA, N. Y., March 29, 1879.

W. A. Armstrong—Secretary Farmer's Club:—In the club reports of the 26th instant, information in regard to evaporators and evaporating fruit, is sought for. A season's experience in this line leads me to the conclusion that evaporators, on a small scale, or what may be called, farm evaporators, will not meet the expectations of those who invest in them. The expenses of running what are called farm evaporators are proportionately greater than those of larger size. The evaporated fruit is not so uniform in quality and the opportunities for selling small or family lots at satisfactory prices limited. The superiority of evaporated fruits consists in their being left in such condition that when the water expelled is restored, little difference can be detected between them and the fruits in their natural state. To accomplish this all the processes must be as rapid as possible without injury to the fruit, as chemical changes and decomposition set in at once after the preparation is made. To secure the best results it requires skill, experience and close attention, such as farmers as they are usually situated can not individually well give. I think the better way would be for the farmers of a neighborhood to adopt the cheese factory plan, by uniting in the purchase of an evaporator of sufficient capacity to work up the fruit of the entire neighborhood, and place the management in the hands of one of their number who can devote his entire time and thought to it while in operation; or sell their fruit and let the business pass into the hands of those who will give it their undivided attention.

This subject is one of importance to many of the farmers and fruit growers of this State. With them the question of profit or loss for the year depends largely upon a favorable disposal of surplus fruit, especially the apple crop. The last year's stock of common dried apples has brought only three cents per pound, while evaporated have brought three or four times that sum. Three cents per pound is equal to fifteen cents per bushel for apples in a green state, with all the wear and tear and labor of drying thrown away, as it takes on an average four and one-half bushels of green apples to make one of dried.

My experience has been with an evaporator called the "Automatic." It seems to combine all the desirable qualities that can be expected in an evaporator. It is comparatively cheap, simple in construction, easily managed, utilizing all the heat and turns out fruit of the best quality. Many have partaken of our apples when cooked and supposed they were eating green fruit. This evaporator consists of a furnace, a hot-air reservoir containing a governor to distribute the heat evenly upon the trays, and a series of twenty-five trays four and one-half inches deep resting upon the hot-air reservoir, and so constructed that when placed one upon the other they form an air-tight shaft, except at the top which is open for the escape of moisture. The furnace is placed in a basement, or cellar, and reaches to the floor above. Immediately over the furnace and upon the floor the hot air reservoir is placed and the trays in line above this and reaching into the story above. The fruit is put in at the bottom of the shaft, and by an ingenious application of crank or lever power, the whole

shaft is raised when the fresh tray is put in and the fruit in this manner gradually elevated until it reaches the top when it is removed. When the shaft is filled a tray of evaporated fruit comes off at the top as often as a fresh one is put in at the bottom.

The capacity of a three feet square tray evaporator of this kind is about thirty-five bushels of berries or fifty bushels apples (green fruit) in twenty-four hours. If fruit is plenty, larger trays would be preferable, as the capacity is in proportion to the size of the tray. The work is quite lively and requires nimble fingers. The apple is first taken up by the parer who, with a few turns of a machine specially adapted to this purpose, pares, cores and slices it into a continuous ring, and hands it to the trimmer who removes any remaining pieces of skin, all bruised or defective spots, and with one stroke of the knife cuts the continuous ring into single ones the size of the apple, and passes them to the tray where they are placed one layer deep over the galvanized wire that constitutes the bottom. On an average in four minutes from the time the apple is taken from the basket by the parer, it is in the evaporator, and in two hours and one-half the process is complete and the fruit ready for market in the best possible condition.

From this brief description it will be seen that this mode of preparing fruit is a great improvement upon the old one of running the green fruit upon strings, or spreading upon boards and exposing it to the air, the prey of flies and other insects, until dried. It is already revolutionizing the entire industry by causing common dried fruit, especially apples, to be sold so low that their preparation has ceased to be remunerative. The consumers at home and abroad demand a better article and appear willing to pay for it. There can be no doubt that any process on the part of farmers approximating this plan of systematic evaporation will result in the improvement of their dried fruit, but the same difficulties that now surround them will still continue. The products of different farmers or families will not be equal in quality. The lots will be comparatively small and will naturally go to the country or village merchant, and by him be sold to larger dealers and go to their final market as mixed lots at prices that will not prove profitable to the farmer; while the larger lots will be uniform in quality, sought for by the wholesale dealer and exporter, and command prices in proportion as they establish and maintain the reputation of their respective brands.

G. D. HINCKLEY.

The Long and the Short of it.

The Scientific Farmer, in an interesting article on the "Wastes of the Farm," gives the following:

While we are on ploughing, let us mention another waste we frequently notice in our rides: this is the ploughing furrows of short length when it were as easy to plough longer ones. This is such a palpable waste that we would almost be ashamed to dwell upon it, did we not know that it is so prevalent. The following table was drawn up from actual experience by the Earl of Mar in England, and is well worthy of consideration. The furrow slice in each case was eight inches broad:

Table with columns: Names of Fields, South, East, West, North, and various measurements like Length of furrow, Breadth of furrow, etc.

Thus it appears that when the farmer ploughs a furrow of seventy-eight yards in length when he could as well plough a furrow two hundred and seventy-four yards in length, he is getting a waste of three hours and twenty minutes out of a day of eight hours; or, if the day's labor of men and team be reckoned at three dollars, he is losing by the short length of furrow about \$1.25 a day. That this is an extreme case does not lessen the force of the argument; for any one who honestly examines into his past experience in ploughing will see that the principle is a correct one, and has a practical application.

Some years ago having our corn in a field whose length was something more than double its width, and the corn being planted in rows both ways, we noticed that in cultivating the short way, the men consumed much more time than when going the long way. Being unable to work one day we posted ourselves in a convenient place for observation, and requesting the men to drive at a uniform and steady gait, for a certain length of time, each day, we "took notes" with watch in hand, and upon measuring the ground gone over, found a difference in favor of the long distance of nearly one-third.

Window boxes containing vegetable plants, may be set out during mild days, and when it may be done without risk of frost, be left out all night.

Is the Breed in the Feeding Trough?

From the Rural New Yorker.

Replying to this query, we are inclined to make the paradoxical answer that it is foolish to think it is and yet dangerous not to know it is. No profitable breed was ever made without liberal feeding. But feeding alone, however liberal, will not make a profitable breed. Feeding, care, and intelligent selection, are all required for the improvement of farm stock. And after a valuable breed is thus produced, its excellence can only be continued by a continuance of all these. Nothing is more wretched and worthless than a degraded thoroughbred of any kind. This is one reason why thoroughbreds are not more popular with the "old-fashioned farmers." They are creatures of high art, and in farming, high art and old fashions are strangers to each other. To take a fine Jersey cow, a choice Essex pig, an Oxford-Down sheep, and subject them to the methods that have developed the scrub cattle, the "elm-peelers" and the "fence scalers" of our pens and pastures, is not the way to show them off to a good advantage.

The old breeds are tough, for the same reason which the Dutch farmer gave for his wife's resignation to die: "Mine Gott," said he, "She hat to be!" Now the very methods taken to develop the profitable qualities of improved stock,—the liberal and varied feeding, the rich pasturage, the warm stables—all have a tendency to lessen their power of resistance to extreme hardship. It is simply a question whether it is better to have "tough" cows that will make 100 pounds of butter a year, or such as must have more care and better feed, but will return 300 pounds in the same time.

Probably nine-tenths of the farmers, even of New England, New York and Pennsylvania, have as yet little or no blood of foreign breeds in their stock. Yet they possess many beasts that are good and profitable. Our "native" animals are as easily improved by proper care, feeding and breeding, as those of any sort of the world. The judicious introduction of foreign blood will often hasten the development of desired qualities. But never, never NEVER will it do so unless, along with it, we take the methods that made it what it is. And with those methods it is simply a question of greater or less time to make as good or better thoroughbreds upon the basis of our "native" animals. This is most important to be known. It is not yet by any means so well known as it ought to be.

Self-Milking Cows.

The following method, recommended in the Tribune some time ago by E. Strang, of Kalamazoo, Mich., is one of the most simple and effective of the numerous devices employed as preventive of self-milking cows: Take a tough hickory stick three feet long and one inch thick in the middle and tapering to a point at each end. By means of a couple of small holes through the stick and a couple of leather strings (not wires, as they will cut into the horn) tie the stick at its middle across the forehead of the cow close under the horns, and there is an end of self-sucking.

Garden Truck.

Peas for seed that have been saved south of the St. Lawrence will at this season be found pretty well filled with holes, in each of which the small pea-evil will be seen. Put a tablespoonful of turpentine in two quarts of water, stir and put the peas in the mixture, stirring them occasionally; after having soaked for fifteen or twenty minutes pour off the water and spread out the peas to dry.

Captain John B. Moore, a well-known and successful market gardener of Concord, Mass., and whose asparagus usually pays from \$3000 to \$5000 per acre, dares to maintain that the salt-dressing is of no value to the plant, and that the generally accepted theory to the contrary is "a myth."

A mixture of sulphur and plaster dusted upon young cabbage plants will check the greenish black jumping beetle, that sometimes attacks them.

Dwarf celery is the kind to grow. There is much less labor in its culture, and the quality is much superior to the tall kinds. Near New York city the dwarf Sandringham is mostly grown; near Boston, the Boston dwarf.

For quality in peas, commend us to the champion of England. Lovers of good peas must grow this kind or be held the fools.

Tomatoes that have been transplanted into flats or boxes, are helped by root pruning. This is done by drawing a knife through the soil, midway between the rows of plants each way. If this is done two or three times, each plant will have its compact little ball of roots.

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