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# The Centre Democrat.

BELLEFONTE, PA.

AGRICULTURAL.

NEWS, FACTS AND SUGGESTIONS.

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.*


### How Shall We Plow?

The depth of plowing is a subject that gives rise to more discussion and difference of opinion than almost any other in farming. Many do not consider the very important fact that deep or shallow plowing depends upon the *nature of the soil.* The truth is, there are many soils in which if one plow deep he may find great profit in so doing; but on the other hand, there are thousands and thousands of acres of land where it is sheer madness to plow deep. On flat clay land, where water cannot drain rapidly away, and where the lack of drainage is the bane of the cultivator, it is found by experience that a shallow but rich surface soil is much better than a deeply stirred or plowed one. And the reason is obvious. If water be an injury and it cannot get into the soil by reason of the hardness of the subsoil, the rain will pass over the surface to the ditches, which always have to be made in a flat country. If we loosen the soil deeply we only gather more of the enemy, and this counterbalances what otherwise might be of great value in a deep soil. Besides there are other considerations; if the surface soil be poor, and we turn this down into a still poorer subsoil, we bury what little good there might have been in the surface soil far below the reach of the roots. There is no department of industry wherein circumstances alter cases more than in this. While deep plowing is an excellent thing when circumstances agree, there are innumerable cases where wisdom would direct us to take the other course.

### New Varieties.

The time of the year has arrived to have presented to us the coming season's new varieties of grapes, strawberries, raspberries, etc. They are usually accompanied with a "cut" showing, so far as a cut can show, the size and form of the fruit. So far we have not seen a grape that looked as if equal to, certainly not above, the sorts we already have, and assuredly not to compare to a number of the newer ones which have originated within the past three or four years. There is one strawberry, of New York origin, called the "Prince of Berries," which, like all other new berries, is claimed as something superior to all others; but, while the engraved bunch has a really fine appearance, the adjectives used in describing it must be taken for granted, and money to any considerable extent will be invested by no one, when a small sum will be equally effective in discovering its merit. It should be so in all new things which are brought forth with a hue and cry for the purpose of forcing it upon purchasers at whatever outlandish price may be demanded for it.—Germantown *Telegraph.*

SPROUTING POTATOES FOR PLANTING.—First class potato growers say that cutting the potato intended for planting, allowing two eyes to each piece, some two or three weeks before planting, and spreading out upon a dark barn floor or any similar floor, where they will have a chance to sprout from one to two inches, will add to their earliness in maturing some two weeks. They should be moistened two or three times a week moderately, with rather warm water. In planting out they should be covered with not over two inches of soil. If a moderate quality of very early potatoes is desired, the potatoes can be cut as suggested and planted in hot beds with a very slight covering of soil, and planted out as recommended.

GIVE each milk cow a tablespoonfull of fine ground bone every week.

### Young and Untried Bulls.

It would be curious to learn, if it were possible to ascertain, what proportion of heavy investments in young and untried bulls of any breed prove profitable. If the purpose of purchase is exhibition, the risk is considerably less than if stock breeding is the buyer's sole object. A shrewd judge can see in the calf, especially if he sees also its parents, and still more surely if he knew its further progenitors, the character of the animal in most, if not all, stages of its life. Excellent potency as a sire is far less surely heritable than family characteristics, already visible, are capable of development to the same degree of excellence as in the parents. A practiced breeder can guess pretty well what he can make personally of an animal purchased as a calf; but he has much less confidence, usually, in guessing what the stock of the young bull or the offspring of the heifer must be. Besides, we must write off a certain percentage for sluggards and barren or only occasionally fruitful animals. For some portion of the stock, perhaps young bulls only may be serviceable, and this fact must be taken into account to their advantage.—Chicago *Live Stock Journal.*

### Foul Stables.

Foul stables are not only often heated to excess by being overcrowded, but they are foul and vitiated from gases or vapors of a positively noxious quality, engendered from the decomposition of the litter, fæces, and urine, together with the exhalations from the lungs and skin. The deleterious operation of effluvia arising under these circumstances may be short of a directly poisonous effect, yet it gradually undermines the health, and can only be counteracted by a more efficient means of ventilation and cleanliness. A distinction should be drawn between a hot stable and a foul one, as the former is capable of producing one series of effects and a foul one another. In the foul stable there is heat and impurity arising from the same source, and operating in combination, and producing not only a tendency to inflammatory diseases, but others of a more serious character. It commonly happens that a variety of agents and circumstances may be required to act in combination to produce some diseases; thus, horses that are badly fed and overworked by day, are very likely to be exposed to heated, unventilated stables at night, and these are the common victims of diseases of the lungs, farcy, glanders, and specific ophthalmia.

STUMPS AND STUMP FENCES.—In clearing land of timber, the next thing to get 'rid of is the stumps of trees. There are various ways to effect this, but the best we know of is a lever power used in the northern part of this state, and described some years ago by our veteran correspondent, Mr. J. E. Vaughan, of Bradford county, as the "simplest, cheapest, most efficient and durable," which he had ever encountered. It was originated in that county and was not patented. "It is merely a lever power with a sweep of some twenty feet in length, take up chains, etc., The rods for pulling are made of the best one inch iron, though some much larger. Four men and a span of horses will pull from thirty to forty stumps per day." The stumps, when the ground has become frozen, are one by one placed on a low sled, and carried to a dividing line for a efild, and being placed in a row, with the roots on top, allowed to remain and the side ones generally removed, a stump fence is formed which will last for many years with scarcely any repairing, and as efficient for all practical purposes as a fence of any other kind. Many of these fences are now to be seen in numerous parts of northern and north-western Pennsylvania, and they are so closely and firmly stationed that it is difficult for even a man to cross them.

EFFECT OF BUCKWHEAT.—So far as my experience and observations go, buckwheat is of great damage to succeeding crops, the effect extending to some years at least. It is an excellent crop to mellow the soil and subdue weeds and usually a profitable crop to grow, but in some way it injures the land, and where grown extensively soon renders it good for nothing.

### Farm Teams.

Whether they can afford it or not, more than one-half of the farmers in this country do not work their teams, on an average, more than one half of the time. How many farmers, with all their ability for saving expenses, have ever carefully considered this large waste of team capacity for work? Should they carefully count the cost of keeping their horses supposed to be devoted to farm work, they would find that for every full day's labor performed the cost had been fully $1 per day. If a miller, a lumberman, a provider of material of any kind requiring the service of teams, can not afford to keep idle horses in the stable, how can the farmer afford it? The farmer often complains, and rightfully, that his margin of profit is very small, that other branches of industry make larger profits; and admitting this conclusion, would it not be well for farmers to study the methods of economy in time adopted in other branches of business? A team horse will soon eat his head off if kept unemployed, and he will do so whether kept by the farmer or manufacturer.

THE CAUSE OF PEARS CRACKING.—We have never seen a reasonable cause given for the cracking of pears, which in some kinds in certain localities crack so badly as to be valueless. The old English Butter, or White Doyenne, it is next to impossible to raise except in cities, but why there no one can tell. If it be true that a dressing of *salt* under the tree, to the extent of the branches, is a remedy, as a West Philadelphia correspondent some years ago asserted was the case with him, we *have* a remedy; but from no one else has this been confirmed. We have known trees of this variety to bear full crops from fifteen to twenty years without producing a half dozen perfect specimens. It is the same with the Louis Morceau, but not the same cause, as occasionally we have had perfect crops. But here the blight comes in and is sure in the course of six to eight years to destroy the tree. The Beurre Giffard and Tyson are also occasionally subject to cracking in some localities, but in others there are no more perfect varieties. We would commend the use of salt which has done so well for the correspondent referred to above. It can do no harm, if not applied too profusely, and is attended with little cost or labor.

TIRES ON WHEELS.—A correspondent of a Virginia paper states that tire may be kept on wheels by the following process: "I ironed a wagon some years ago for my own use, and before putting on the tires I filled the felloes with linseed oil and the tires have worn out and were never loose. I also ironed a buggy for my own use seven years ago, and the tires are as tight as when put on. My method of filling the felloes is as follows: I use a long cast iron heater made for the purpose. The oil is brought to a boiling heat, and the wheel is placed on a stick so as to hang in the oil. An hour is sufficient for a common sized felloe, of which the timber should be dry, as green wood will not take oil. Care should be taken that the oil does not get hotter than the boiling heat, else the wood might be set on fire and burned. Timber filled with oil is not susceptible of water and much more durable.

THE RED ASTRACHAN APPLE.—Although this is a popular variety of the apple, and of rather large size, with the color a deep crimson, with thick bloom, and is to be found in places nearly all over the republic, yet it is strange that there are so many orchards in which it is not to be found. It is not, it is true, a first class eating apple, and is perhaps rather acid, but there is scarcely another equal to it for culinary purposes; and no matter what the supply may be in the market, it is quickly bought up. It is as soft and entirely free from pulp when cooked as frozen cream. It is also an early bearer, coming next after the Early Harvest, and though it is not an abundant bearer, it has a yearly crop and thus retains its productive capacity year after year, and is naturally long lived. We do not hesitate to say that no orchard should be without it, and so far as we know we believe it to be obtained at almost every respectable nursery.