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The Centre Democrat. BELLEFONTE, PA.

AGRICULTURAL. NEWS, FACTS AND SUGGESTIONS.

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.

Farm Notes. No farmer can do without a grindstone, and no methodical farmer ever does without one, if he wishes to save the price of one every year. And he should have a good one, inasmuch as there is a great difference in the quality and price. There are those also arranged that one person can do the whole work of grinding almost any tool or implement. But it should be borne in mind that a grindstone should always be kept under shelter, and only allow it to come in contact with water when it is used. It is a machine that can supply labor in rainy days or in wintry weather, when outdoor work is out of the question; and at these times everything that is to be used in cutting about a house or farm can be put in good order ready for use at all times. There is such a thing also as keeping a grindstone in good order. This is done by rasping off all spots on it that may become hard, flinty, or uneven, and one of the preventives against its getting out of order is to be careful to remove the grease from all tools that are to be sharpened upon it. Should there be any inequality in the stone after being long in service, it should be rasped enough to bring it again into a perfect circle. When it is considered how many things there are about premises to be ground and sharpened, and how much, without possessing a grindstone of our own, we should have to depend upon a neighbor for the use of his, it must strike every one how important it is for every farmer to own one, to be used at all times when there is occasion for it, and he will soon find how very often this occasion arises.—Germantown Telegraph.

Quince Culture. The quince is a gross feeder, as is indicated by the multitude of its fibrous roots interlacing and grasping every portion of the soil in its vicinity. It delights in hollows that have received the wash of fertilizing matters from higher grounds, nature's pockets, that have been storing up fertility for ages; and from this fact came the mistaken idea that the quince should be set in low, wet places, and it is often planted where water stands the greater part of the year. In such situations no fruit tree will continue to thrive. I have had as good success with quinces, set in upland that is quite dry, but in good condition of tillage and fertility, as with those set in moist, heavy soil, each receiving the same treatment. This fact has caused remark from many visitors. The injury done the quince by over fertilizing is greater than is liable to occur to almost any other fruit tree, as in very rich soil, or when abundantly supplied with stimulating manures, its growth is excessive, to the exclusion of fruit-spurs, and the rank succulent growth continuing until the approach of winter must receive injury from freezing, producing blight the ensuing season.

In rich soils cultivation should cease after July, and any shoots of excessive growth should be pinched. A moderate quantity of fertilizer, annually supplied to soil of fair condition, is all that is required. Leaf mould, muck, sods, mud from ponds form a safe and lasting dressing for the quince. It need not necessarily be incorporated with the soil, for when placed about the stems, new roots will be sent out to forage throughout the mass. An orchard so treated will long continue in health and productiveness. When propagated by cuttings, strong shoots of the current year's growth are cut in the fall to one foot in length, having a bud close to the base, and the whole space between buds left on above the top bud. Bury in bundles below frost, and in early spring plant in trenches in rich, moist soil, sticking the cuttings at a slant of from 15° to 60°, so that the top bud will be even with the surface of the soil; stamp firm at the base and cover with one inch of sawdust or other light material as a mulch.

Hatching Time. Soon the time of hatching will be in order, and then the most interesting and recreative part of the routine of poultry raising will claim our attention and care. Although this month is rather early in our climate to set hens, many no doubt will venture a setting or two, but in most cases they are from Asiatic breeds. Before the time of hatching it is advisable to save the eggs from your best laying hens, if they are up to the standard requirements, in preference to those laid by pullets. Each egg should be marked with the date it was laid and put away in a safe place where it will not get chilled, and turned every day or two if kept some time before setting. It is not always safe to trust a valuable setting of eggs to a broody hen until you have proved her staying qualities. The precaution for proving her sincerity is very important. Broody hens are sometimes fickle and not entirely to be depended on, and most especially if we have choice eggs of our own or high-priced ones from others that we do not feel disposed to risk by giving them to a hen on her first sign of broodiness. When a hen manifests a disposition to sit by remaining on the nest over night, by clucking or ruffling her feathers when touched or approached, it is time that some action be taken to find out if she means business. Select a comfortable place in your hatching room, if you have one; make a clean nest,

and mold and fashion it like the laying one; remove the hen at night and place her gently on the new nest, with a few porcelain eggs under her, and put a cloth or board in front to keep her quiet. If she shows a determination to attend to business in the nest twenty-four or thirty hours contentedly the valuable eggs may be entrusted to her keeping.

How can Apple Orchards be Revived. To this question P. M. Augur replies in the Connecticut Farmer: "If the trees are good the answer is easy, oftentimes, however, there are many trees in the orchard which are worthless. A tree that looses at the roots; a tree that is one-sided, root and branch, or one badly leaning, had better come out. Such specimens show the importance of having even-balanced trees at the beginning. But, suppose that we have a reasonably good orchard, that has ceased to be vigorous by continuous crops of grass a period of years.

1st. Prune moderately, taking out all dead wood and all branches that cross or chafe others, of course removing all water sprouts, or extraneous branches, also clean the trunks of moss and rough bark, also examine the base of the tree and kill out borers if any are found.

2d. Apply a wash to the trunks and main branches of one and one-half pounds of sal soda dissolved in a pail of water, or three pints of soft soap, or one-half of both mixed, or one-half that amount of soap in a lime wash.

3d. Resort to careful and shallow culture for at least three or four years, dressing with well-rotted stable manure, finely ground bone, ash and lime at intervals.

Or apply a full ration of Mapes' or some other tree fertilizer. After which, sow red clover and plow under repeatedly, always being careful to inflict the least possible injury to the roots.

Few people are aware of the injury orchards receive from continuous crops of grass; one-half the amount of orcharding in culture may return more fruit of vastly better quality. However, if culture for any reason is impracticable, the next best plan is to manure freely and mulch with some coarse material, so as to smother down the grass.

FERTILIZERS FOR POTATOES.—At a late meeting of the Middlesex County, N. J., Farmers' Club Mr. D. C. Lewis stated that it had been his practice to plant potatoes on corn stubble, applying a fair coat of manure, and from 75 to 100 bushels of manure per acre. But potatoes are a quick crop, and barnyard manure and manure have been found too slow in giving up their food to secure a maximum crop. His experience last year with chemical manures was such that he proposes hereafter to employ them altogether for his crop. The season was too dry for a good yield, but, from three acres of Burbank and Early Rose, he gathered 479 bushels, worth \$215.59, with an expense for fertilizer and seed of \$75. He plants in drills, three and one-half feet apart, and sixteen inches apart in the drill. Mapes' potato manure was used at the rate of 800 pounds per acre, and drilled in, and the field was left in excellent condition for wheat and grass. Any other special fertilizer equally rich in available plant food would answer, the main point being in having a full supply ready and present for immediate use by the rapidly growing crop.

USE THE ROLLER.—It is wise and timely advice given by the Germantown Telegraph to use the roller upon the growing wheat, rye and grass crops, as soon in the Spring as the land will admit of its being entered upon. Every farmer with any extent of experience knows that the crops enumerated are liable, by the freezing and thawing generally going on in February and early March, to be raised from their natural bed, and then, while the water returns from the roots these remain and are, from time to time, by the operations of the frost, forced out of the land still farther, and finally when the soil becomes dry the roots have only half the support from it that they naturally would have, and must hence very seriously suffer in the yield which they would otherwise have afforded. By passing the roller over these crops it will force the roots back to their original position and put them in the way of their growth almost as if they had not been disturbed at all. This is a brief, but practical view of the subject, which each one can readily see for himself, and will, we trust, act upon the suggestion as soon as the opportunity presents itself.

More Animal Food for Young Chickens. We do not think that we can be mistaken in the belief that we should be far more successful in the raising of young chickens by giving them a great deal more animal food than we are in the practice of doing. The feeding of corn meal mush, boiled potatoes, and similar substances generally compose, as we all know, the principal food for young chickens; but we can see no reason why these young birds should be exceptions to the ordinary rule of young birds in general, which feed very largely, indeed chiefly, on animal food; even those which, when they are mature, live mostly on fruits and seeds, are fed when in their nests on worms, grubs and insects. We notice the old birds all day long busily engaged in supplying their young with food, but always with animal food. In fact, it is very rare that we have seen anything else. Why, then, should chicks be an exception? The recommendation, almost without exception, in our poultry publications, is to give more animal food to our grown fowls if we expect them to give us more eggs, especially in winter, when they can help themselves to none. That is a great inducement to make them lay more generously, we have too many proofs to admit of any doubt. Besides, it is claimed that animal food has other advantages in the way of good health, etc. Why, then, let us ask again, should the young chickens not be benefitted with at least a moderate supply of animal food? All chicken raisers know the great losses always suffered in the growth of them, and may it not be owing to a large extent to withholding entirely of this strengthening food, which is of so much benefit to the mature bird? We, therefore, suggest to our farmers to change their method of feeding their young chickens by giving them a due proportion of animal food, chopped up in very small pieces, and thus find out, each one for himself, whether it is not a very decided benefit in raising to maturity an additional number of the chicks into strong, healthy fowls.

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