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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 CENTRE 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.

Mulching Trees. Fruit trees are benefited by mulching. Various substances may be used for the purpose. Straw, brakes, weeds, small bushes, sawdust, muck or the like, afford suitable material for mulching. Young trees recently transplanted especially need mulching. The principal object of mulching is to preserve the ground from drying and keep the soil moist. Mulching accomplishes the object by preventing the growth of plants which would draw from the soil its moisture and exhale it into the air; and also by retaining the moisture in the soil by keeping it covered so that evaporation does not readily occur. Roots of trees like a warm, mellow, moist soil, and such a soil is best obtained by preventing evaporation. Access of air is also necessary, so that the oxygen of the air can unite with the elements of the soil and furnish plant food to the roots. Mulching when judiciously performed does not exclude the air from the soil, but facilitates its access by keeping the soil light and porous. Clean sand may be used as a mulch. It is porous and freely admits the air, which is one of the best non-conducting substances, a porous substance with the interstices filled with air affecting previous evaporation. If no material for mulching offers itself, then a mulch can be made by keeping the surface soil well stirred so as that it will not cake the sand mulch. By keeping the soil light, enough air will be retained in it to prevent rapid evaporation, and the soil a few inches below the surface will be found to remain moist.—New England Farmer.

The Government Seed Bureau. The seed business began small, but last year \$75,000 was voted for its support and this year \$100,000 is set aside for that purpose. Formerly the business was done in the basement of the Agricultural Department, but two years ago a spacious building was erected for that purpose. During the year just past the chief of this Bureau has mailed 3,622,738 packages, all going free. Of these 2,912,730 are given to the Congressmen, although by law they are only entitled two-thirds. Then the Agricultural Department has a crop correspondent in every county and a general one in each State. The former got 395,905 packages, the latter 72,450, while miscellaneous applicants received 279,653. And so perfect is the system that great books are kept wherein each recipient and what he receives are set down. The seeds are of all sorts, from field corn and potatoes to the rarest flowers. Peas, beans, corn and potatoes are put up in quart sacks, and the flower seeds in tiny envelopes. The list includes over fifty kinds, while of vegetables there are 128 varieties and of flowers 131. These two are more than two-thirds of the whole. Last year 2,351,835 lots of vegetables and 563,638 flower seeds were distributed, turnips, ranking next, with 425,858, wheat 69,290, tobacco 414,671, potatoes 12,219, sorghum 34,359, while of the sunflower 565 packages were given away.—Boston Advertiser.

The Dark Brahmas. The dark Brahmas are not as numerous as the light, but it is not because they are inferior in any respect. The dark Brahmas are usually a little more compact in shape, and are generally winter layers. The cocks of this breed are of magnificent plumage. In fact there is no more beautiful breed known than this. The hens are splendidly penciled, and when in full feathers are as fine in appearance as can be witnessed. The cocks and hens are entirely unlike to a peacock not accustomed to seeing them. The black breast, black and

silver white of the brck, and the contrast of the plumage of all parts of the body bring out all the beauty that can be given to a fowl. The young chicks, when first hatched, are perfect little beauties, but after a few weeks they pass into the "leggy" stage so peculiar to young Brahmas, and for a while they may be said to be ugly; but as they mature and thicken up, the long legs seem to disappear, and they become heavy, close shaped and elegant in all parts. For laying purposes the dark Brahmas, if hatched early in the season, give as large a proportion of eggs as any of the heavy breeds, while their yellow legs and skin give the chicks and fowls an attractive market appearance. They are harder to breed true to all the requisite points than the light Brahmas, but is, therefore, more a matter of pride when the breeder succeeds in procuring a perfect specimen. Single birds are to be found in many flocks that may be considered first class, but to obtain a pair or trio that are well mated for breeding purposes is a different matter. As the breeders of this variety are not so numerous as formerly, the difficulty of obtaining "fresh blood" from strange yards is one frequently encountered, and especially as but few of the breeders know how to mate the fowls with the best results. As a farmer's fowl they are hardy and profitable. Crossed with ordinary hens the chicks partake largely of the points of the pure breed, and when properly kept and attended to they produce large carcasses in proportion to the amount of food consumed.—Field and Fireside.

How to Drive Boys from the Farm. We often hear farmers wondering why boys are discontented and leave the farm for other employments. It has never surprised us very much. Some boys derive by inheritance so strong a bias toward other pursuits that they ought to leave the farm. There is no use in trying to spoil a boy who has an absorbing passion for mechanics or music or painting or medicine or law, by trying to make him a farmer, and as soon as he has a constitution developed and right habits of life formed should be allowed to develop himself in the direction of his natural bent. Farmers' boys can't all be farmers—the chips will not all take the shape of the old block. But a good many boys who would naturally be farmers are driven from the farm by bad management. They are thoughtlessly and persistently discouraged. They are kept at hard tasks, about the most disagreeable on the farm, until they look upon farming as the worst kind of drudgery. In fact, by their sneers at book farming and new methods and devices, parents give their boys to understand that farming is hard, backbreaking work with no opportunity for intellectual development or investigation. The boy comes to town; sees boys of his age wearing finer clothes than he, playing base ball or loafing on the streets, and when he goes home to supper he hears about the drudgery and bondage of farmers and the easy lives of merchants and professional men and the extortions of banks and the boy concludes that the only way to live easy is to get away from the farm. Or perhaps the boy is sick at heart because last spring his father had told him if he would take care of the runt in the litter of pigs he might have it.

And the boy had built a nice pen for it after he had done the chores, and fed it buttermilk and washed it and brought it out to be a big fat fellow and had just hauled it off with a kind of sorrowful feeling with the rest and sold it for \$15 and he expected it was his in fact, but the old gentleman took the \$15 to pay his own debts and gave the boy five cent to buy gingerbread for his dinner. Or the boy had read the Homestead while the old gentleman was taking his afternoon nap and got up quite a little enthusiasm on farm topics, but when he tried to discuss the matter was very rudely told that he would never amount to anything if he listened to the nonsense of book farmers. And then he wisely concludes that if he can't use brains in farming he will do something in which he can use them, and quits.

Or he sweats and tugs in the hot weather to get the hay in the barn,

whilst in the next field he sees Jones' boy unloading with a horse fork. He has to work with an old worn-out corn plow, while Jones' boy has a tongueless cultivator, and is scolded for doing poor work when good work is impossible, and so he quits. He can't get up any enthusiasm working with old tools and poor horses and feeding scrub stock while his father is whittling store boxes in town and giving street lectures on fence and bloated bond holders and aristocrats and so he concludes that he will never be a farmer.—Iowa Homestead.

Keeping Milk. Mr. Roberts, a dealer, gives an explanation of the taint of milk which is often noticed after being taken from the ice. "Most people put the milk on top of the ice. The cold current descends and comes up on the other side, after being more or less heated. On the second trip, the air loaded with the scents of the different articles goes directly into the milk and stays there; because the impurities will be attracted by moisture. Now place the milk under the ice, and you will see that the odors of the different foods will be left on the ice, and the milk will be as pure from bad smell or taste as when put there. I have placed a glass of water on ice in one side of the refrigerator and a box of strawberries in the other. In three hours the water was colored from the impurities of the berries. This is clearly a good illustration of my point on milk. Milk is one of the greatest absorbing liquids; it should never be left in the sick-room or wherever there are unhealthy scents. You will notice a greasy scum on water left in your sleeping-room over night; that comes from the impurities of everything in the room being attracted by moisture. I always place a glass of water in my room before retiring."

Milk Fever in Cows. The animal is usually attacked with milk fever within thirty-six hours after dropping her calf, and unless relieved will probably be dead in forty-eight hours more. The deepest milkers and cows in high condition are more subject to it than those in poor flesh. The cause is the pressure of blood on the brain consequent on the increased amount in the circulation, forced to seek new channels by the expulsion of the calf. The symptoms are a sudden and entire ceasing of the flow of milk, the eyes become bloodshot, she loses all interest in her calf and all care for it, lies down and can be aroused with difficulty, loses all power of motion, and death ensues. Sometimes these symptoms are varied by violent mania, the cow being crazy, running against walls or other obstacles with entire carelessness. Prevention is the first thing to be looked after. This can usually be secured by keeping the animal in a low condition. The bowels should be kept open by the use of roots, bran, and if necessary, mild cathartics. For several weeks before calving the meal should be taken away if the cow is in full flesh, and rich foods avoided. Where the danger is considered great, bleeding may be resorted to soon after the calf is dropped. After the attacked, the only remedy which has been found tolerably sure is bleeding. I have never lost a case where bleeding could be done, but in advanced stages the blood is thick and dark and will not flow. In bleeding, cord the neck of the animal tightly well down toward the shoulder, when the vein will fill above the cord and show distinctly. Over this the fleam should be held and given a sharp blow with a stick to make the opening into the vein. The bleeding should be copious, and the blood be caught in some vessel so to be sure how much is taken, as a little blood makes a great show if left to flow on the ground. Two-thirds of a common pailful, six or eight, should be taken; if bled till they stagger, it will do no harm. The head should be showered with cold water or bags of ice applied to it. Move the bowels by physic—a drachm of calomel or a dose of epsom salts.—N. E. Homestead.

A writer in Vick's Magazine says that in raising strawberries for market, the rows should be at least twenty-five rods long, so that horse-power may be used in destroying every weed as soon as it sprouts, and the surface of the soil kept constantly clean and mellow. No ridges or furrows are to be formed between the rows.