

FARM AND HOUSEHOLD.

The Value of Stones in the Soil.

The Gardener's Chronicle, one of the best of the English journals devoted to farming and horticulture, has an interesting article on this subject...

Many beginners in gardening, and they are legion nowadays, seem to consider an absence of stones to be absolutely necessary to the good condition of the soil. By picking the stones off flower-beds year after year, the surface of the soil becomes so fine that after heavy rains it looks like a bed of cement...

The principle here commended has been noted on with great success in the case of sub-tropical plants in Botswana Park, and there seems no doubt that the stones, especially of somewhat porous nature (such as brickbats) are beneficial...

Corns in Horses' Feet.

In the American Agriculturist for July we find the following: Corns are not a disease, but result from injuries to the sole of the foot. When the sole is pared thin, a blow from a stone which strikes it injures the sensitive portion of the foot...

Tanning and Dyeing Sheep Skins.

In answer to a question, a correspondent of the Scientific American says:—Wash the pelts in warm water, and remove all fleshy matter from the inner surface, then clean the wool with soft soap, and rinse the soap thoroughly out. Secondly, apply to the flesh side, the following mixture for each pelt: Common salt and ground alum, one quarter pound of each, and half an ounce of borax...

"The Graphic" Balloon.

In answer to numerous inquiries on the subject, we give the following details as to the dimensions, material, outfit, &c. of the balloon to be used in the great Transatlantic voyage.

There will be two balloons, the largest of which will be 318 feet in circumference, 100 feet in diameter and 110 feet in height. When inflated and ready to start the extreme height of the apparatus from the crown of the balloon to the keel of the life boat, will be 160 feet. The great balloon will require 4,316 yards of cloth.

There will be 14,080 yards, or eight miles of sewing, in which 10, 137, 600 stitches will be made. The stitching is now being performed by twelve seamstresses. The thread used is silk and cotton, the top spool being silk.

The valve of the balloon will be 3 feet in diameter, and made of Spanish cedar, with a rubber coated clapper closing on a brass plate. The valve fixtures and top of the balloon are the essential parts of the apparatus, and are being constructed with special care to guard against any accident or derangement.

The network will be composed of three strands tarred rope, known as "marlin". The width of the net will be 212 meshes, and its breaking strength will be 58,300 pounds. Five hundred pounds of marlin will be used. From the netting 53 ropes, 3 inches in diameter, of Manila, will connect with the concentrating rings. These ropes will each be 90 feet in length. The concentrating rings will be three in number, to guard against breakage, and will be each 14 inches in diameter, each ring being of wood iron bound. These rings will sustain the car, life boat trailing rope, and will bear the strain when the anchor is thrown out in landing.

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Mysterious Disappearance.

Last Wednesday Mr. W. H. Patterson, a farmer living near Yellow Springs, Blair Co., left home in company with two men, (strangers) who had been harvesting for him, to come to Huntingdon for money. The three arrived here and during the day Mr. Patterson was seen paying off one of them. In the evening they all took the train west and traveled as far as Petersburg where one of the strangers got off, took the stage for Yellow Springs, rode within two miles of the latter place where he paid his fare and got off the stage.

The smaller balloon will be 40 feet in height and 34 feet in diameter, and will be made from 408 yards of "Manchester Mills." Its net-work will consume 29 pounds of 40 thread cotton cord and 2 pounds of Italian hemp. It will be attached to the concentrating wings of the large balloon, and will be used as may be required to test the upper currents or assist in feeding the large balloon.

The car will be fully provided with instruments, provisions, &c., independently of the boat. It will be so constructed that it can be taken apart piecemeal and disposed of as ballast. It will carry about 5,000 pounds of ballast, which will consist of bags of sand, carefully weighed and marked. Among the instruments to be carried in the car there will be a galvanic battery, with an alarm, two chronometers, two chronometer watches, a compound thermometer, a wet and dry bulb thermometer, a hygrometer, compass, quadrant, chart, parachutes with fire-balls attached, and so arranged as to explode when striking the water, so as to indicate the direction traversed; marine glasses, two vacuum tubes, a lime stove, &c. A number of the capacity of the great balloon will be 600,000 cubic feet of gas, but it will be inflated with but 400,000 cubic feet, which, at the height of one mile and three-quarters, will expand sufficiently to fill the balloon. The lifting power of illuminating gas is about 35 pounds to the 1,000 feet, so that the balloon will have a lifting capacity of 11,600 pounds. The pressure will be 1 1/2 pounds to the square inch.

The weight may be summed up as follows:
Pounds.
Balloon..... 4,000
Net and ropes..... 800
Car..... 100
Boat..... 1,000
Dry rope..... 600
Anchor and grapnels..... 300
Sundries..... 300
7,100
Then 4,500 pounds will be allowed for passengers and ballast.—N. Y. Graphic.

Captain Jack's Cave.

The Boston Transcript publishes an extract from a private letter giving an account of the first visit of a white man to Captain Jack's cave:

"I directed Bogus Charley to take the lead to the famous caves which no white man had ever visited, and to see which was the object of my expedition. Bogus was in doubt whether he could find the trail, it had been so long since he was there—some two years. But I told him to make the trial, and we started off in single file, Bogus on the lead, then myself, C. J. and the enlisted men. I had a carbine, C and J, pistols, and the soldiers Springfield breech-loaders; Charley had no weapons, so if he meant treachery he would be the first victim. It was intensely hot, and after tumbling over rocks for four hours, Charley came to a halt, saying he had lost the trail. I ordered a rest of a few minutes, and then told Charley to try again.

"We were then almost to the middle of the lava beds, which were from twenty to twenty-five miles long by from seven to nine miles wide—that is to say, we were about four miles from our starting point in a straight line, though we had traveled about seven. In about half an hour Charley, as he raised a crest, discovered a juniper tree, which was the mark he had been looking out for, and informed me that the caves were within three hundred yards of that tree, which latter was distant from us about five hundred yards. We made the last quarter-stretch in a hurry, and sure enough there was a cave. Charley descended first, and then turned to me, as I began to descend, and said, 'Leave your gun.' I gave my carbine to one of the men, and descended about thirty feet. Charley and I proceeded to the mouth of a cavern and as I went in Charley said, 'You first man ever come here.'

"I entered the first cave, which I found to be 300 feet long by 45 feet wide and 30 to 35 feet high, lighted from the top by two holes in the roof extending to the surface of the ground; there were side galleries and tunnels running from the floor to the outside surface of the ground in all directions. Eagle nests adorned the ceilings, and mountain sheep tracks dotted the dust which lay several inches thick on the bottom of the cave. Stalactites hung on the sides. This was the first cave and the largest. After passing through this, we came into daylight again, into another crater, on the opposite side of which was a hole large enough for a man to conveniently enter. Charley went in first, and finding it dark, of which fifty yards will be needed. Attached to the side of the car will be a light iron windlass, from which the boat and trail rope can be raised and lowered as desired. From a pulley attached to the concentrating rings a heavy Manila rope will fall down through the car, thence to a sling, attached to which will be the life boat. This boat will be the most approved and careful construction. It will have water tight compartments, sliding keel, and will be so made that it will be self righting. The boat will be provided with a complete outfit of oars and sails, and to it will be lashed instruments, guns, lines, &c., and provisions for thirty days, all in water tight cases.

Probable Murder.

Last Wednesday Mr. W. H. Patterson, a farmer living near Yellow Springs, Blair Co., left home in company with two men, (strangers) who had been harvesting for him, to come to Huntingdon for money. The three arrived here and during the day Mr. Patterson was seen paying off one of them. In the evening they all took the train west and traveled as far as Petersburg where one of the strangers got off, took the stage for Yellow Springs, rode within two miles of the latter place where he paid his fare and got off the stage. Nothing has been heard of Mr. Patterson and the other stranger since—it is not known whether they got off the train at that place or went on, and the most diligent inquiry and search has failed to throw any light on the mysterious affair. On Saturday last J. M. Patterson, a brother of the missing man visited town in search of his brother but was compelled to return without learning anything. Yesterday morning Mr. Chamberlain, at whose house the parties stopped, received a letter from J. M. Patterson notifying him that they had heard nothing further of the missing brother.

The missing man is a very steady active, farmer who sticks very close to business and was very anxious to get home Wednesday night because, as he told Mr. Chamberlain he "had one hundred and sixteen acres of grain standing on shock which must be taken in." Rumor has it that the stranger who got off the stage near Yellow Springs was seen the next morning heading for the railroad and that he told some one that he had shot at a man but did not know whether he had hit him, at the same time exhibiting a seven shooter with two of the chambers empty. Both strangers had seven shooters with them when in Huntingdon.—The affair looks very much like a murder for money and our police are hard at work on the case. Much excitement exists in the neighborhood of Yellow Springs and several searches have been made, in vain, for the missing man.—Huntingdon Monitor

A couple of young men are playing a trick on the innocent inhabitants of Lawrence county, Pa. They offer to exchange old feathers for new, and leave a small amount of money as security for their return, after receiving the old feathers. Everybody who has trusted them is still waiting for their new feathers, which, alas, never come.

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