AGRICULTURAL.

USE OF BUCKWHEAT.—The name buckwheat is derived from the German "Buchweitzen" (Beech-wheat), from the resemblance of the seeds to beechmast. It belongs to the family of knot weeds, of which there are numerous species in the United States. There are three cultivated plants, viz., common buckwheat, Polygonum fagopyrum; Tartarian buckwheat, P. Tataricum, and notch-seeded buckwheat, P. emarginatum. The first is cultivated chiefly in America, the second in Italy, the third in China.

There is a close resemblance in the composition of buckwheat and rye. In the grain of buckwheat there is twenty-seven per cent. of husk. The seventy-three per cent of flour closely resembles that of rye in color and properties, and the amount and composition of the ash of both plants are nearly identical when when they are grown in similar soil. The dry grain of rye contains 2.4 per cent of ash, that of buckwheat 2.1 per cent of ash.

Buckwheat is extensively used as food for man and live stock, and is decidedly nutritions. In the States of New York and Pennsylvania it is considered the best fattening food for sheep. The unground grain and fresh straw produce a singular effect upon swine, causing cutaneous eruptions of the skin, and dizziness which sometimes ends in death. In some places buckwheat is plowed in as green manure for the wheat crop.

Although buckwheat flour is seldom used in the United States except for making hot cakes in winter, it is employed in a variety of ways in Europe. In Italy and Holland crumpets are made of it which are eaten with butter or sugar. It is also used in these countries with water or milk for making hasty pudding. In almost any part of Germany it is used with the flour of rye or wheat for making bread. In Saxony and Silesia, buckwheat cakes or puddings form a great part of the three daily meals of the peasantry. Various preparations of buckwheat flour appear prominently on the tables of the rich in Holland, Germany and Russia, and by all classes in these countries it is considered wholesome and nutritious.

THE CULTIVATION of the Angora goat is attracting some attention in Australia, where it appears to thrive well. The hair is said to make a good "mohair" fabric, but its quality depends very much upon the nature of the locality in which the animal is reared. Undulating prairies with a good supply of pure water are best adapted to the habits of the goat. In sandy, hilly districts it thrives admirably, but the hair is inferior and falls off very quickly. The flesh is excellent, and is preferred in some parts of Australia to the best mutton. The milk is of good quality and yields a good supply of butter and cheese. The hair is worth about four shillings a pound, and one ram will yield about four pounds at each shearing. The best plan is to shear twice a year, as this prevents the hair from falling off and splitting; at each shearing it is about six inches long. Compared with the merino sheep, the Angora goat seems to have the advantage in the fact that the former produces only three and a half pounds of wool, worth two shillings and sixpence a pound, and that six merinos will eat as much as seven Angoras. These facts are important in view of the acclimatization of the Angora goat in other parts of the world.

TO SWEETEN BUTTER FIRKINS.—Our readers who are engaged in the manufacture of butter often experience considerable difficulty in keeping the firkins sweet. A failure to accomplish this very frequently entails upon the manufactures a severe loss, and to them we present the following information concerning this matter which will be found of considerable benefit; Before packing butter in new firkins, put them out of doors in the vicinity of the well, fill them with water, and throw in a few handsfuls of salt. Let them stand three or four days, and change the water once during that time. Butter firkins should be made of white oak, and this process effectually takes out the acid contained in that wood, and makes the firkin sweet. If the butter is well made and rightly packed, it will keep good all Summer, even if the firkin be kept in store above ground. To cleanse old firkins in which butter has been packed and left exposed some time to the air, fill with sour milk, and leave standing twenty-four hours, then wash clean, and scald, with brine. This makes them as good as new.

CULTIVATION OF BARLEY.—It is better to make a barley spring crop. If fall wheat happens to be a failure, the ground may be replowed and sown to barley very conveniently and profitably. There is no better crop than this with which to seed down to clover or timothy. Barley is imported from Europe to supply our markets, and this fact would imply that its culture ought to be profitable. As feed, a good crop of barley is more profitable than oats, and there is no grain better for horses, pigs and poultry. It thrives better under heat than oats, but must have a good soil and clean tillage. If you have these, we know of no reason why you may not grow this crop with profit. If you can raise 20 bushels of wheat per acre, you ought to procure 40 bushels of barley.

THE FOLLOWING receipt may merit a trial in the West. It is recommended as a preventive against the potato-disease: "Dissolve two pounds of lime in five quarts of water, adding two pounds of flour of sulphur. When the dissolution is complete stir the whole, and pour it over about forty pounds of seed-potatoes, taking care that the potatoes are thoroughly saturated. This mixture is regarded as an infallible preventive against potato-disease, and has, for the last six years, been extensively used throughout France.

EGGS FOR SETTING.—An English agricultural paper says that eggs intended for setting should be stored with the large end down, because the air-bubble does not spread so much as when the small end is down—this speaking of the air-bubble being known to affect the freshness and vitality of the egg. Eggs stored with the large end down will keep perfectly good for hatching more than a month, while the others cannot be depended on after two weeks.

HERE ARE a few reasons why horses are whipped: For stumbling owing to careless and reckless driving; for slipping down, owing to smooth shoes; for shying, when frightened; for any vigorous effort to be relieved of torturing flies; for the breaking down of the vehicle; and sixthly, because the wind blows off the driver's hat.

DRYING PUMPKINS.—Peel and cut as for stewing; then slice very thin (it can be done with a cabbage slicer); then spread on tins or other dryers and put in the stove oven with a moderate heat. It will retain its natural flavor better than any other way. In preparing it for pies, soak it in water a few hours, and stew in the same water.

"TO RESTORE the burnt steel point of a pick, drill, or any similar tool, do not touch it with a hammer; but while it is still emitting sparks, plunge it into cold water and let it remain until cold. Then reheat to the proper degree, and work it; you will find it as good as before it was burnt."

When a person well-replenishes a fire, how does it feel?—Grateful.

DOMESTIC.

CULTURE AND MANAGEMENT OF HYACINTHS.—The hyacinth needs a long season of rest, and does not become anxious to grow until about the 1st of December, and this desire increases as the time advances. A hyacinth planted the first of November will go along moderately, and will take nearly three months in blooming. The same bulb, if kept out of the ground, in a cool and moist place, so that vitality would not be weakened, and planted in January, would flower in thirty or forty days. As a general rule, however, the slower growth produces the more robust plants and the most perfect flowers. When in flower, the tall hyacinth needs some support for the flower stem. The hyacinth is one of the most beautiful and fragrant of the bulbous flowers, and particularly desirable for house culture. Even half a dozen grown in pots and flowering during the winter, will afford more pleasure to the "loved ones at home" than the same amount of money spent in any other way. With how much pleasurable anxiety they watch the shooting forth of the bright leaves, the rising of the stately column; while the opening of the first bud makes a joyful thanksgiving of the most dreary winter's day. A very small pot will answer for the hyacinth. Some prefer to plant three or four in a large pot, and this will make a very pretty ornament. Cover only the lower half of the bulbs with soil, press them down until they are nearly covered, then water until the soil is moistened thoroughly, and set the pots in a cool, dark cellar. The roots will there form, with but little growth of top. Here they may remain for several weeks, and a pot or two at a time can be taken into a warm, light room, for flowering, a week or ten days apart, and a succession of flowers obtained during most of the winter. When hyacinths are planted in the garden, and well covered, the roots get a good start in the fall and winter; and it is very important in flowering then in the house that a growth of roots should be first encouraged in the way recommended. When placed in glasses of water for flowering, the base of the bulb should not quite touch the water. Fill the glasses with well water, and as soon as the flower buds appear sprinkle the plant frequently with rain water. Set them away for about two weeks in a cool, dark room, until roots are formed; then remove to a light, moderately warm room, and give plenty of light and air. Keep hyacinths in the coolest room you have—anything above freezing will answer—and near the light. Flowers of the hyacinth are often ruined by growing them in a very hot, dry, unventilated room.

SILENT INFLUENCE.—It is the bubbling spring which flows gently, the little rivulet which glides through the meadows, and which runs along day and night by the farmhouse that is useful, rather than the swollen flood or the warring cataract. Niagara excites our wonder, and we stand amazed at the power and greatness of God there, as He "pours it from the hollow of His hand." But one Niagara is enough for the continent or world, while the same world requires thousands and tens of thousands of silver fountains and gently flowing rivulets that water every farm and meadow, and every garden, and that shall flow on every day and every night with their gentle, quiet beauty. So with the acts of our lives. It is not by great deeds like those of the martyrs that good is to be done; it is by the daily quiet virtues of life—the Christian temper, the meek forbearance, the spirit of forgiveness in the husband, the wife, the father, the brother the sister, the friend, the neighbor—that good is to be done.—*Rev. Albert Barnes.*

COOK VEGETABLES IN SALT WATER.—If one portion of vegetables be boiled in pure water, and another in water to which a little salt has been added, a decided difference is perceptible in the taste and odor, and especially in the tenderness of the two portions. Vegetables boiled in water without salt are vastly inferior in flavor. This inferiority may go so far in case of onions that they are almost entirely destitute of odor or taste, though when cooked in salted water they possess, besides the pleasant salt taste, a peculiar sweetness and strong aroma. They also contain more soluble matter than when cooked in pure water. Evidently the salt, by adding density to the water, hinders the solution and evaporation of the soluble and flavoring principles of the vegetables. This explains the advantages of an addition of salt to the boiling water. And it is impossible to correct by after additions of salt to the vegetables, the want of flavor in such as have been boiled without it.

KEEPING WINTER APPLES.—A member of the Michigan Pomological Society stated at the late Adrian meeting, that he was very successful in keeping winter apples, and had sound, fresh fruit in May, by the following treatment: He picks the fruit in October, and places it in heaps in the orchard, covering them with hay. These heaps remain untouched till December, the slight moisture of the earth and the few inches of hay preventing any injury to the apples, even during sharp freezes. They are then assorted and packed in barrels, which, after heading up, are placed in a cold cellar, which is kept at a temperature of about 32°, and if it should happen to be a few degrees lower for a short time, the protection of the barrels will prevent injury.

VARIETY OF LIGHT.—Sick people often crave for change; they often sigh to have a new view. If you can manage for the patient to look out of the window, do. Place in his sight a new picture, a plant in bloom, or a few cut flowers. These will give some considerable pleasure. Always endeavor to make the surroundings of the sick chamber pleasant. Unless told by the doctor to keep the patient in the dark, never do so. Light is essential to health, and therefore the patient should be so placed that he may be able to see the sun and the sky; and, if a choice can be made, choose the window at which the sun comes in the morning. Sick people, as a rule, like to lie on that side which faces the light.

BLANCHED CREAM.—Take a pint of the thickest cream that can be got, sweeten it with fine sugar and orange-flower water; boil it, and beat the whites of ten eggs with a little cold cream; strain it, and when the cream is upon the boil, pour in the eggs, stirring it well till it comes to a thick curd; then take it up, and strain it again through a hair sieve, beat it well with a spoon till it is cold, then put into a dish.

SWISS CAKES.—Mix four ounces of fine flour, two ounces of sifted sugar, the grated peel of a lemon, and half a pound of butter, to a paste, with the white of an egg and a sufficient quantity of milk. Roll it thin, cut into biscuits, and brush them over with the yolk of an egg, over which sift fine sugar. Bake them on tins.

TO KEEP a sick room free from unhealthy effluvia, sprinkle it with vinegar, boiled with myrrh or camphor, or by putting some chloride of lime in a flat dish, dampening it a little, and placing it in the apartment.

FREQUENT brushing of the hair and washing the scalp once a week, will beautify the hair, by adding to its healthfulness.

HUMOROUS.

"NOW YOU BEGIN TO TALK."—On a certain occasion the counsel took some exception to the ruling of the court on some point, and a dispute arose.

"If the court please," said the counsel, and at the same time picking up a volume.

"There is no referring to any book," exclaimed the court, angrily. "I have decided the p'int."

"But, your honor"—persisted the attorney.

"Now, I don't want to hear anything on the subject," yelled the court. "I tell you again that I have decided the p'int."

"I know that," was the rejoinder, "I am satisfied of that; but this is a volume of Blackstone. I am certain he differs with your honor, and I only want to show you what a fool Blackstone was."

"Ah, indeed," exclaimed the court, "now you begin to talk."

A LAWYER was in a country town on a flying trip. He was accosted in the hotel by a "drummer," who thought him one of the fraternity, and inquired: "For what house are you traveling?" "For my own." "You are! May I ask your name?" "You may." Pause—enjoyable to the lawyer, embarrassing to the other. "Well (desperately), what is your name?" "Jones." "What line are you in?" "I don't understand you sir." "What are you selling?" (impatiently.) "Brains" (coolly). The mercantile traveler saw his opportunity, and, looking at the other from head to foot, he said slowly, "Well, you appear to carry a small lot of samples."

THAT WAS a smart little fellow—that Hal was—who came home from school the other day, and told his mother that the teacher had given him two words to put into sentences; one was "Embellish" and the other "Acclivity." So Hal at once consulted Webster, and ascertained the definitions of both, and after a little thought, he wrote:

A man embellished his house, but Acclivity bothered him awhile; but he happened to think of their neighbor Simpson, who was about six feet, four inches high, and he soon fixed that, in this way; "Mr. Simpson is a very Acclivity man." That boy will make something—you bet!

ONE morning, on entering the chamber of a French marquis, whom he had attended through a very dangerous illness, the doctor was thus accosted: "Good day to you, Dr. Bouvart; I feel quite in spirits, and think my fever has left me." "I am sure it has," replied Bouvart dryly. "The very first expression you used convinced me of it." "Pray, explain yourself." "Nothing is easier. In the first day of your illness, when your life was in danger, I was your dearest friend; as you began to get better, I was your good Bouvart; and now I am Dr. Bouvart; depend upon it, you are quite recovered."

A SLIGHT MISTAKE.—At a fashionable dinner party the guests had just seated themselves at table, and were rapidly helping themselves to the oysters, plates containing a dozen of which had been placed between every two persons, when the hostess began to talk to the gentleman next to her of his sons, one of whom he had lost through accident. "You still have six left, however," she said, in a voice of condolence. "Yes," replied the gentleman," with an exquisite smile thinking that the oysters were referred to; "but four belong to my neigibor."

GUIZOT once made a joke—grave and serious, as became him. A lady requested his favor, when he was minister, in behalf of a young gentleman who wanted an embassy. "But," said the lady naively, "it must not be more than twenty-five leagues from Paris." "Madame," said the minister, "the first embassy vacant at Paris or the environs shall be given to your friend."

AT A public dinner, in Edinburgh, in responding to the toast of "His Majesty's Ministers," Lord Brougham (then Lord Chancellor) exclaimed, *extending his hands*, "My fellow-citizens of Edinburgh, after having been four years a minister, *these hands are clean.*" They happened to be remarkably dirty, which raised a titter amongst all who were near enough to see.

SERGEANT HEWITT was an English barrister, who had obtained the rank of Sergeant (in the Irish Courts) and a seat in Parliament. Charles Townshend on leaving the House while Sergeant Hewitt was pouring away on some dull legal question, was asked "whether the House was up?" "No," he replied very gravely, "but the Sergeant is."

MARK TWAIN says that since he has become a director in an accidental insurance company, the Hartford, "accidents have assumed a kindlier aspect. I look upon a cripple now with affectionate interest, as an advertisement. To me there is a charm about a railroad collision that is unspeakable."

A QUARTERMASTER of a regiment of light horse, who was both heavy and tall, jeered an Irishman on the proneness of his countrymen to make bulls. "Why, you gigantic fool," replied the Irishman, "my country never made such a bull as England did when she made you a light horseman."

THE brave talk by people not employed in banks as to what they would have done if they had been in the place of the Milford cashier, reminds a Lowell cashier of the message from a landlord in Ireland to his agent: "Tell the tenants that no threats to shoot *you* will indicate *me* in the least."

BREEDING IRRITATION.—Sarah Jane—"Going to leave, Em'ly?" Em'ly—"In course! Ackshally master's told the baker's young man not to call no more, as he's going to 'ave irritated bread!" But she meant "ierated."

QUITE ANGELIC.—At a revival in a Western town, out of one hundred converts fully two-thirds were males, which the women explain by saying their own sex are angels already.

A MICHIGAN paper recently closed an obituary notice with the misquotation "Though dead, he yet squeaketh." The printer, apparently, wasn't minding his p's and q's.

"I HAVE lighted a fire that I can't put out," was the accurate statement of a ten-year-older when he ran into the house after setting fire to a hay-stack.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN used to spell soap "s-o-p-e," and yet there isn't a day but that some one holds him up as a great philosopher and a good man.

BIRDS AND THORNS.—If a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, it is no less true that a thorn in the bush is worth two in the hand.

GRINDSTONES are considered safe property to invest in; because, if you cannot sell them for cash you can always turn them.

A MAN in danger of being hanged said that of all the games of his childhood, skipping the rope would be most agreeable.

POP'LAR lumber this winter—boards of charity.

TRANCE-MIGRATION of soles—Sleep-walking.

SWEETS for the ill-tempered—Tart sayings.

Sunset in the North.

Major Butler, in his "Wild North Land," gives the following picture of sunset in the north land: "He who rides for months through the vast solitudes sees during the hours of his daily travel an unbroken panorama of distance. The seasons come and go; grass grows and flowers die; the fire leaps with tiger bounds along the earth; the snow lies still and quiet over hill and lake; the rivers rise and fall; but the rigid features of the wilderness rest unchanged. Lonely, silent and impassive; heedless of man, season or time, the might of the Infinite seems to brood over it, and only in the hours of day and night a moment comes when this impressive veil is drawn from its features, and the eye of the wanderer catches a glimpse of the sunken soul of the wilderness—it is the moment which follows the sunset. Then a deep stillness steals over the earth; colors of wondrous hue rise and spread along the western horizon. In a deep sea of emerald and a range of fifty shades, mingled and interwoven together, rose-colored isles float, anchored to great golden threads, while far away seemingly above and beyond all, one broad flash of crimson light, the parting sun's last gift, reddens upwards to the zenith."

When does water resemble a gymnas.? When it makes a spring.

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WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT and HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW will publish *Poems* and *Papers* of special interest.

"MARK TWAIN" will contribute *Sketches of Mississippi River Life* as he used to see it from a pilot house.

BAYARD TAYLOR will write of *Life in Weimar and Gotha*, and on topics suggested by his recent residence in Germany.

CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER will furnish, during his sojourn in the East, *Sketches of Oriental Life and Travel.*

ROBERT DALE OWEN will continue, from time to time, his *Chapters of Autobiography.*

FRANCIS PARKMAN will contribute papers on the *Wars of New England and Canada*, and picturesque episodes of the old colonial life in Quebec and Montreal.

JOHN FISKE, whose striking paper on *American and Athenian Life* attracted much notice, will furnish able papers.

In pursuance of a purpose to record important traits of the history of the War of Secession and the events leading to it, THE ATLANTIC will follow Mr. Eggleston's "Recollections of a Rebel" with *Six Papers on John Brown*, by F. B. SANBORN, whose acquaintance with the theories, plans and performances of the great abolitionist is full, exact and intimate.

The valuable articles of DAVID A. WELLS and EDWARD ATKINSON on *Currency and Finance*, during 1874, will be succeeded by papers on these interests, from the same authors, in 1875.

DR. BROWN-SEQUARD is expected to furnish some popular papers on the branches of medical science in which he is authority.

W. D. HOWELLS will contribute a story in several parts, and there will also be *A Novel by Henry James, Jr.*, and short stories from J. T. TROWBRIDGE, T. B. ALDRICH, ROSE TERRY, WILLIAM M. BAKER, and other capital story-tellers.

Poetry will be well represented by the names of LONGFELLOW, LOWELL, WHITTIER, HOLMES, ALDRICH, STEDMAN, HAYNE, Miss PHELPS, CELIA THAXTER. The best AMERICAN poetry appears in THE ATLANTIC.

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VIRGINIA F. TOWNSEND will continue the graceful sketches and beautiful Historic Portraits, which have been so greatly admired, and which have given so much pleasure and instruction to the readers of the "HOME MAGAZINE."

"THE STORY-TELLER"

We point with confidence to this department for the present year, as an earnest of what it will be in 1875. Besides three Serials, one by MRS. JULIA C. R. DORR, one by T. S. ARTHUR and one by the author of "Crooked Places," we have published a large number of Shorter Stories that are not surpassed in interest by those which have appeared in any other magazine in the country. We announce but a single serial now; but others will be given, and our subscribers may be sure that "*The Story-Teller*," will be richer than ever.

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By LICHEN. Very many of our readers who have looked out upon life through LICHEN'S window, do not wish to have it closed; and so we shall continue to give them her pure thoughts, her patient philosophy, her Christian hopes and her tender humanities. There are few of our readers who have not learned to love our "LICHEN."

"EVENINGS WITH THE POETS."

Under this head will appear, every month choice selections from the best poetry in our language. This department has always been a popular feature in our magazine.

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Here our readers and writers can meet in friendly, familiar talk, pleasant or serious as the mood may be. It contains letters, or brief papers on any and all subjects interesting to the many or the few. Our "Home Circle" has many and varied attractions.

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THE MOTHERS'

Department will be carefully edited and have suggestive articles from our best and most experienced writers. From mothers and those who love children, our readers will always be glad to hear through this Department of our Magazine.

THE HOUSEKEEPERS'

Department will be full and practical, and contain many contributions from experienced housekeepers from whom hints, suggestions, and tried recipes will always be welcome.

CHOICE AND BEAUTIFUL ILLUSTRATIONS.

Our Illustrations for the coming year will be greatly superior to anything yet given.

DEPARTMENTS.

A large amount of reading matter, not indicated in the foregoing programme, will be given under various classified heads; such as:

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