

RURAL TOPICS

LIVE STOCK IMPROVEMENTS

It is a noticeable fact at all the great stock yards of the country that the quality offered in the market is steadily improving. In the past dozen or more years this fact has been very noticeable by all the stock yard buyers. The greatest improvement has appeared in the beef cattle and mutton sheep from the western and southern ranches. The great number of pure bred sires sent to these sections in the past 20 years has had a most marked influence in this betterment of quality now coming to the stock yards and packers. The grading up is also going on in the central agricultural states. It has come to be well known that good grade animals sell in the markets at an average of two dollars on the hundred higher than the common, and all observation has taught live stock feeders that the same amount of feed only is required to finish both, while the common ones fed fall much below in weight as well as quality that of the high grades. The International, State and county fairs and live stock shows have had a marked influence for good in the direction of the use of better blood in breeding. The agricultural colleges and experiment stations have also had an excellent influence in this direction, and last but not least, the agricultural press has carried the gospel of better breeding to every section of the country, by the publication of the station reports and the numerous examples of noted breeders and feeders as well as the facts from the markets, and the crucial tests at the butchers blocks giving the per cent of the high priced meat per carcass. These things all tell, and no odds how dull some people may be, they wear their way into conscious apprehension of the facts and they go to improving their herds and flocks. "Iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend," and so that is the way the world gets on to better things.—Indiana Farmer.

LOCUSTS AND CATALPAS.

Experience has taught me that trees will do better when cultivated than when not cultivated. They do not do well in sod, and they ought not to be crowded so closely that each tree cannot have a fair chance, but as to exactly how much space each tree should have there is quite a difference in opinion, however. I have had best success with trees that had about 75 square feet of space, as this gives them enough room to develop into fair-sized posts and by the time they begin to be crowded they can be thinned out and they will be ready for use. This harvest of posts should be begun when they are from seven to ten years old, as the trees will be practically the same size. It has been the practice quite general among farmers who were growing posts to plant the trees about equal distance apart each way, 6x6 or 7x7 feet, as a matter of convenience, and in order to keep up cultivation as long as possible, I would advise planting them at least 8x8 feet; then the cultivation can be kept up for several years, which, I have learned, will greatly assist them in making a quick growth. The best growth depends upon the soil, however, and other matters also. The locust grows much faster the first year in poor soil than the catalpa does, but the catalpa will soon overtake it. The locust would be very profitable for growing posts if it were not affected by the borers, but they must be watched or they will ruin them. The catalpa needs comparatively rich soil, and yet I have had them do very well in soils that were not quite so rich; but in general, I would advise planting of catalpa in fairly rich soil, and the locust on the poorer soils, as my experience has been that locust will grow and thrive better on thin land than the catalpa.—R. B. Rushing in the Indiana Farmer.

DODDER IN ALFALFA, CLOVER, ETC.

The Bureau of Plant Industry, of the Department of Agriculture, has just issued a free circular dealing with dodder. This is a parasitic plant, or weed, which is particularly dangerous in alfalfa and clover fields, and less so with flax. It feeds upon its host plant, and reproduces itself by its seed and by pieces of stems. There are several kinds of dodder, some of which are affected by climate, conditions, as the small-seeded alfalfa dodder, which is so common in the West, but not known in the Eastern States. Dodder seeds are a very common impurity of clover, alfalfa and flax seed in the trade, and this can readily be detected with the aid of a magnifying glass. Certain kinds are more commonly found in domestic than in foreign seed, while the contrary is true of other kinds. Low grade seed imported from Europe generally contains dodder. With regard to preventive measures, dodder plants should not be allowed to seed, they should be removed early, and preferable destroyed by burning. Hand methods may be used if the plants are not too abundant; otherwise ploughing under before they go to seed, or burn-

ing the stand if seeds have already ripened, will be necessary. The most generally effective means of preventing the introduction of dodder is to use seed free from dodder seeds. The purchasing farmer can easily make a reasonably satisfactory test for dodder seed.

FARM NOTES.

If a hen lays an egg a week the year through, it will just pay for her feed and every extra egg will yield a profit.

If you want to get a good catch of clover next season, give the fields which are to be sown, a good coating of manure.

If you sin against your stock, be sure your sin will find you out in reduced profits.

No sensible man would take chances on breeding poor, starved animals, nor should he think of using immature and shrunken grain for seed.

The hog pasture should be gotten in better shape by sowing grass over badly rooted places, and the fence should be mended so that the young pigs do not break out.

A pumpkin cut in halves and placed before the fowls will soon be nothing but rind. A good way is to stick them on nails in the walls of the house, as the fowls will get desirable exercise in jumping a few inches to reach them.

Mite traps are being used successfully by some. They are so arranged that when the mites seek seclusion after their nightly feast they are trapped.

The team should be fed the heaviest meal in the evening, for they have more time then to enjoy it.

There is enough back-breaking work to do without using the scoop shovel to unload grain. Put in a portable dump elevator. The team will do the rest, and it will take a few minutes to crib a big load of corn.

TO RID FOWLRY-HOUSES OF LICE.

Turn out the fowls some days and close all the cracks in the house except the door. Take a kettle of live coals, and pace on the ground in the centre of the house, but if there is a wood floor, lay a flat stone under the kettle. Throw a half pound or a pound of sulphur on the coals, and shut the door. If the house is left closed for a few hours it is safe to conclude that no lice or mites will be found therein after the operation. The sulphur cure is the best method of riding poultry houses of pests, but if the house is not tight it will not prove satisfactory. Clean the house as well as can be done, mix whitewash with fresh lime, mix in a liberal supply of sulphur, after which throw sulphur into all the cracks. Apply kerosene oil to all the roosts, and burn off the outer surface. Air the house thoroughly.—Weekly Witness.

THE SHEEP AS A CIVILIZER.

A speaker at a farmers' meeting eulogized the little animal with the golden hoof in the following interesting strain:

"Sheep are always the advance guard to attack new and undeveloped territory. The first sheep and the first Negro slaves that placed foot on what is now the United States of America, were landed from the same fleet at St. Augustine, September 5, 1565, 330 years ago. From that day to this the sheep has been the most universal live agent of the settlers in subduing the country and maintaining its productiveness; and whenever they have neglected them, sterility exists as a monument to their folly."—Weekly Witness.

ONE ADVANTAGE OF FALL CALVES.

One advantage of having calves come in the Fall is that during this season of the year there is usually more time on the farm to attend to the cattle, calves are more economically raised, since by the time the Spring grass shoots up they are ready for it, and are in good condition the next winter to begin the duties of maternity.—Weekly Witness.

SEPARATE THE BUN.

Never allow a ewe to run with the flock. When this is permitted and twins are born, the first born wanders away and becomes mixed with the flock before the mother has a chance to own it, and the chances are that later she will refuse to have anything to do with it.—Farmers Home Journal.

DEFY THE COMBINE.

The man who has two or three good cows and a bunch of Plymouth Rocks can defy the meat combine or any other combine. The cow and the hen have paid for more luxuries for farm homes than the corn crops, and at the same time taken care of the grocery bills.—Indiana Farmer.

According to the Engineering Record a concrete tank at the San Antonio gas works has been in service for three years, holding heavy Texas oil without showing any leakage whatever.

Fashions

New York City.—Jaunty, hip length coats are always becoming to young girls and are among the prettiest ones that are shown for the coming season. This model has novel pockets that make a feature and is adapted both to the suiting materials and to the cloths that are used for separate jackets. Also it will be



found very satisfactory for immediate wear, as well as for the between seasons time and the early autumn. It can be made either with long or three-quarter sleeves and will be found charming for the light weight broadcloths, that make such satisfactory wraps for cool summer evenings.

Pointed Back Coats.

The coat with pointed back and front has a successor in the coat with pointed sides.

Elastics in Corsets.

Since style demands the flat hip and allows the larger waist, the ordinary corset is not a comfortable affair. There is a new one made which has two bands of silk elastic let in straight up the front to allow relaxation and deep breathing.

Circular Tunic Skirt.

Unquestionably the tunic skirt is a graceful one, and that it already has taken a firm hold upon fashionable fancy is evident. This one is absolutely simple yet draped in a most effective and graceful manner, and is adapted to all the soft and clinging materials that are characteristic of present styles. In the illustration a dotted foulard is trimmed with banding and the coat is an extremely trifling one, but the skirt would be pretty made from such wool materials as voile or marquisette, from crepe de Chine, messaline, Liberty satin or any material of the sort, and also of such simpler things as cashmere and albatross for home wear.

The skirt is circular, the right side being extended well over onto the left and shaped to form the drapery. There are darts that mean snug fit over the hips and the draped portion is laid in pleats that provide long and graceful lines. The fulness at the back can be laid in inverted pleats or the skirt can be cut off and finished in habit style. It can be made either in the pretty round length or cut to escape the floor, when it becomes adapted to the street.

The quantity of material required



as well as for the heavier suitings and cloaking materials. In the illustration, however, it is made of golden-brown broadcloth, with collar and cuffs of velvet.

The coat is made with fronts, side-fronts, backs and side-backs, the many seams meaning becoming lines as well as easy fit. The pockets are arranged over the side-fronts and all the edges are finished with machine stitching. The collar is oddly shaped and can be made either of contrasting material or to match the coat, as liked. Rolled over cuffs finish the long sleeves, stitched bands those of the three-quarter length.

The quantity of material required for a girl of sixteen years is four yards twenty-seven, two and five-eighths yards forty-four, or two yards fifty-two inches wide, with three-eighths yard of velvet.

Empire Waist Line.

Is it possible that the high Empire waist line has lived its day? Paris has just put out two or three wonderful new models for women of fashion which have the waist line exactly normal back and front.

Fashionable Fabric.

Crepe de chine, than which no fabric is more popular, and justly so, will be largely used in both the satin and silk finished weaves. The Parisian modistes are making it up in all sorts of dressy gowns.

Skirts Are Longer.

The fashion for extra long skirts on most of the smart gowns has caused the designers to put out a walking skirt that covers the instep.



one-half yards forty-four inches wide, with five and three-fourths yards of banding.

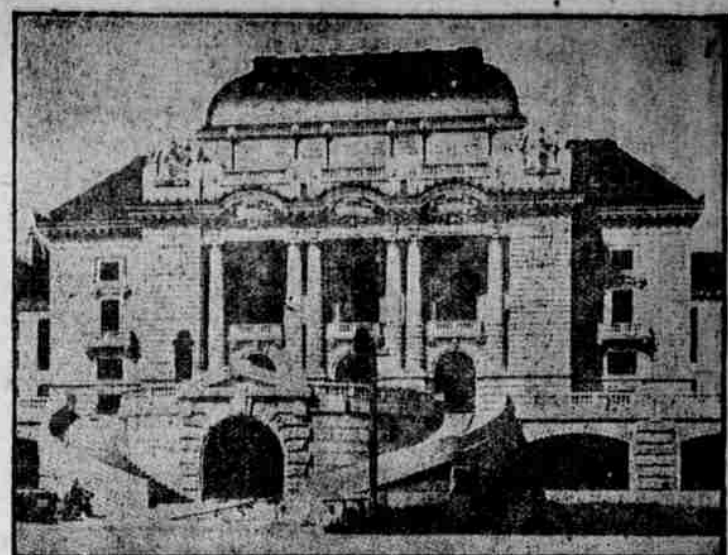
Gold Cords and Lace.

With gold flowers, gold cords, gold lace, the latest thing to put about the neck of a lingerie waist is a piece of gold braid about an inch and a half in width, depending in front, finished with tassels or loops.

Use of Gold.

Gold is very much seen in soft gowns of black—not the cheap, bright gold, but the dull, almost rusty color.

SCENE AT ANNAPOLIS NAVAL ACADEMY.



ENTRANCE—FACING CHESAPEAKE BAY—TO BANCROFT HALL, UNITED STATE NAVAL ACADEMY.

A Unique Umbrella.

Owing to the fact that the handle-rod or stick of the ordinary umbrella is centrally disposed, a single person can occupy only one-half of the space beneath the umbrella, with the result that his outer shoulder is usually exposed to the drip and rain. To remedy this defect, two inventors of Bridgewater, Va., have designed an umbrella which when raised will have the handle located to one side of the centre, leaving the central portion of the sheltered space unobstructed. This umbrella when closed has substantially the appearance of the ordinary article. The umbrella stick is provided with the usual runner, but the stretchers instead of being connected to the runner as in the or-



A Unique Umbrella.

inary umbrella, are attached to a carrier which is connected to the runner by means of a pair of links. Hence, when the umbrella is closed, the ribs fold closely against the umbrella handle, but when the umbrella is raised they are tilted with respect to the handle, as illustrated in the engraving.—Scientific American.

Don't Expect Enough.

Most people do not expect enough of themselves. They do not realize that things they see other people do, and envy them the power of doing, they could do themselves if they only tried. So much of what seems to "come natural" to other people is only the result of long continued effort. We may not be able to do as well as they have done, but some measure of success in the same direction is within our power.—Home Chat.

Sprayer For Hose Nozzles.

A simple attachment for hose nozzles has recently been invented, which will permit the operator to control the form of stream issuing from the nozzle. Thus the water may be permitted to flow either in a solid stream or it may be sprayed to any extent desired. The device consists of a pan-shaped blade, which is hinged



Sprayer For Hose Nozzle.

to the nozzle in such manner that it may be rocked toward or from the stream. The blade is formed with a handle which by means of a leaf spring bearing on the nozzle is normally pressed upward to keep the blade or deflector clear of the stream. When the operator so desires he may press on the handle, bringing the deflector into engagement with the stream, and thereby spraying the water.—Scientific American.

Cooking Cattle Whole.

One of the most popular forms of entertaining guests in the South is to hold a barbecue, as it is called. The host generally employs a skilled white or colored barbecue cook. A trench is dug in the ground and the bottom filled in with kindling and hard wood which will burn to coal. After

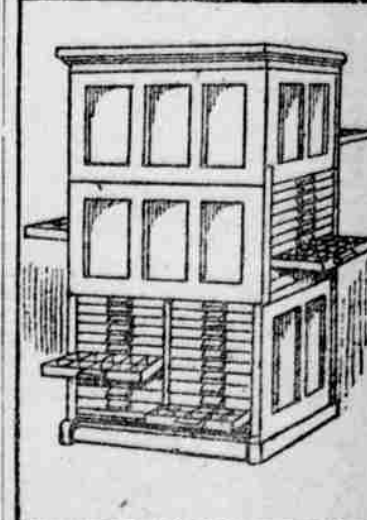


Roasting Carcasses Whole For Barbecue.

the fire has been made, carcasses of sheep, fowls, sometimes steers are fastened above the bed of coals and thus roasted to be cut up and served on long tables with vegetables and other viands. One of the features of the barbecue is the roasting of the carcasses in the presence of the guests. This picture shows one of the roasting trenches with cattle being cooked over the live coals.

Reversible Type Cabinet.

A sectional type cabinet of interest to printers has been devised and patented by a Wisconsin man. With the ordinary printers' type cabinet but one man can work at the cabinet at the same time. Three or four compositors may be waiting to use the cabinet to get at some of the forty or



fifty different cases of type. These objections are overcome in the improved cabinet shown here. Instead of all the type cases opening on one side, they are arranged to open on all four sides of the cabinet.—Washington Star.

Crusade Against Cocaine.

Baltimore, following the lead of New York State, has started a vigorous crusade against the cocaine evil, which is said to be particularly prevalent among the negroes of that city. An ordinance prohibiting the easy sale of the drug and making persons found with it in their possession subject to arrest has passed the City Council and Mayor Mahool has promised to sign it.

Not One to Deride.



Doctor—"Now let me see if you can put your tongue out." Tough Boy—"What would I put me tongue out at you fer? You ain't done nawthin' to me."—Brooklyn Life.