



Rocky Mountain Husbandman

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The ROCKY MOUNTAIN HUSBANDMAN is designed to be, as the name indicates, a husbandman in every sense of the term, embracing in its columns every department of Agriculture, Stock-raising, Horticulture, Social and Domestic Economy.

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Agricultural.

SHARPEN up the sythe and grind the sickle.

ALL hail the happy farmer as he marches to the hay field.

THE table of every thrifty farmer is now supplied with the choicest vegetables the country can produce.

It is very important now to know just when to cease to irrigate in order that the crop may not be stunted and yet give ample time for the grain to ripen before frost.

It is now unnecessary to admonish our people to put up all the hay possible as most of them have learned by experience that while it is not absolutely necessary to have hay one year in four it affords an excellent security every winter.

THE most satisfactory remedy for the cabbage worm tried at the New York experiment station, last year, consisted of a mixture of half a pound each of hard soap and kerosene oil in three gallons of water. The dose should be frequently repeated.

It is claimed by some that no grain should be watered oftener than it shows it head. What is the experience of our farmers on this point? Their experience would be valuable just now. We do not think it will do at all as a rule and would be glad to hear what some of our friends have to say.

THERE is not much rain in Montana as a rule, yet it is quite important that hay be properly stacked. This commodity will keep for several years when put up with care, and as many stock men are not liable to need the hay put up this season the coming winter it should be stacked so that it will keep perfectly good until it is needed.

THE best farmer in Berklmer county, N. Y., raises large crops of fine potatoes in soil almost pure sand. He does it by using plenty of barn yard manure, and planting from six to eight inches deep. A clay loam, deeply and well worked, with plenty of stable manure to enrich it and loosen it up, meets to some extent the same conditions, the soil being light at the surface, and gradually becoming more packed below.

It is a noticeable fact that the productions of our Montana meadows is rapidly increasing. Meadows that ten years ago only yielded about thirty tons of hay now, in many instances, yield from sixty to seventy tons. The increased yield is not cut from the same area; the yield per acre has in many cases improved, but the greatest increase has been in the extending of the area.

Most meadows are inside of large enclosures and every year the farmer will cut over a little more land. Thus the Montana hay yield has increased very steadily every year since the first meadow was fenced.

If those farmers who have plenty of land for raising poultry would only turn their feathered stock over to their young sons and daughters, they would profit by the operation, as well as interest their children in the affairs of the farm.

An English florist gives great credit to soot, which he uses constantly, by placing a bag of it in water, and applying the liquid. Besides its excellent fertilizing effect, it greatly assists, he thinks, in warding off the attacks of insects, and the London Gardeners' Chronicle says his plants are vigorous, clean, and wonderfully healthy. Other flower cultivators spread the same generally wasted substance directly on the surface soil of pots, especially after chrysanthemums are fairly started, and the goodness is gradually carried down to the roots.

THE question has often been asked, "Can sorghum be grown in Montana?" and the HUSBANDMAN has suggested that our farmers give it a trial, believing that it would prove a successful crop. We now have the pleasure of informing our many readers that the trial has been made. J. G. Pickering, of the Missouri valley, planted last year a small spot with sorghum cane seed; it grew rapidly, very tall, and ripened before the frosts came. From his experiment he is positive that sorghum can be grown with ease in the most favored locations, the bench land farms, and he thinks there is no reason why this should not be one of our most important crops.

RENEWING STRAWBERRY BEDS.

Many amateur gardeners have as great an aversion to turning under an old strawberry bed as to the cutting down of a bearing fruit tree, and yet it requires often more time and labor to clean and keep in order an old bed than to plant a new one. As a general rule, nothing is gained by keeping a strawberry bed more than two years, and to secure best results some young plants should be set out every year. Yet there is a way of renewing strawberry beds, which, without grating harshly against one's conservative feelings, produces a new plantation every year.

A row of strawberry plants set out a year or two ago will now, as frequently managed—that is, left to themselves—present a solid mass of plants and weeds, six feet or more in width. To weed out and civilize such a wilderness is a task not rashly to be undertaken. If, however, the bed has to be maintained on the same spot, then stretch a line a foot or two from the original row or where there is the best stand of young plants, and parallel with it, toward the outside, stretch another. Mow down on both sides all that stand outside of this narrow strip, spread a good coat of manure, plow or spade it under, and pulverize and mellow the soil as much as possible. Pull all weeds from the strip left and rake the new ground whenever weeds make their appearance. Runners will soon push forth and young, thrifty plants will take possession of the ground previously occupied by old and worthless ones. If more than one row of plants is desired, such a border may be left on each side of the old one, allowing about four feet of space between the two.—American Gardener.

A PERENNIAL ONION BED.

While visiting the market garden of Mr. Henry Pickering, recently described in these columns, we found an onion bed of some dozen or more square rods, which to us appeared somewhat of a novelty. The bed had a southern exposure, and was partially protected, from severe northerly winds by slightly higher ground in the rear. The onions were of the "top" onion family, but had been obtained from an acquaintance, without any distinguishing name. The tops, or leaves, were bright and green, and as large as ordinary onions grown for seed usually are in midsummer. Under ground, were from three to a half a dozen or more bulbs, which were offsets from the original

top onion that had been set nearly two years previous.

The mode of cultivation is as follows:—Set out in August the little bulbs which form on the seed stalk of the parent plant during the earlier part of the summer. Cultivate them to keep down weeds, but otherwise let them alone, giving no protection during the winter. The following spring they will be found to have "tilled" out, increasing by offsets from one to three or more to each bulb set. Cultivate again in the spring, to keep down weeds. During the summer seed stalks will be thrown up, upon which the new top onions will be formed. Gather these and set a-in the previous August, letting the old plants remain where they are. The following spring these old plants will be fit to begin to pull by the first of May, and will continue fit for market about a month.—New England Farmer.

FARMING IN MONTANA.

The western emigrant who starts for Montana with a view of farming should not suppose that the country is like Dakota and offers large areas of land of even fertility ready for cultivation. Montana, with the exception of the high, rolling, grassy plains in the eastern portion of the Territory, is essentially a mountain region. It is the backbone of the continent, and its surface is upheaved into countless ridges and ranges and into so many gigantic peaks that nobody has found time to give them all names. People who get their idea of mountains from a map and imagine that a range consists of a single line of ridge and summits will be surprised to find that what is called the Main Divide of the Rockies is about fifty miles wide, and that spurs and lateral ranges fill a belt of country more than two hundred miles in breadth. Then there are detached groups and ranges that lie out on either side of the main body like the flankers of an army. The mountains are by no means valueless to the settler, for their slopes are covered with grass to an elevation of seven or eight thousand feet above the sea-level, and timber grows in the ravines on their sides. Agriculture, however, is necessarily confined to the valleys which wind around among the lofty ranges in long, narrow belts of fertile bottom-land. The farmer only seeks to own a strip of valley land, knowing that the slopes of the adjacent mountains will afford a free range for his flocks and herds.

Not only is Montana farming limited to the narrow valleys, but to such portions of the valleys as can be irrigated. Crops are raised in many localities without irrigation, but this is in low land close to streams. Generally speaking, on Montana farms the scanty rainfall must be supplemented once or twice during the growing season by an artificial watering of the fields. Thus far the irrigating methods adopted have been simple and cheap, each farmer providing a ditch for his own use. Usually the large rivers are not drawn upon at all, but the little streams that come down from the mountain gorges are preferred. With the exception of the Billings ditch, which is thirty miles long, no attempt has yet been made to utilize a large river to supply a large number of farms. It is evident that any considerable extension of the present agricultural industry of Montana must depend upon the construction of main ditches watering long stretches of valley. These, as in Colorado, must be constructed by stock companies, receiving their profits from water rentals. In Montana, farming is a question not of land, but of water. Only a small percentage of the water available for irrigating purposes is now used. Before there can be any great increase of the farming population, capital and engineering skill must largely expand the present limited and primitive system of local irrigation.

Is farming by irrigation in Montana pleasant and profitable? the reader may ask. Yes; profitable because there is a home market for all farm products at very remunerative prices, and because large crops are certain year after year; pleasant because the climate is invigorating, the scenery magnificent, the swift, cold streams abound in fish, and the mountains will always shelter game to reward the hunter's search. Life is not

as prosaic as in the level prairie countries. At every turn of the roads a new scene greets the eye. There is an inexhaustible variety of picturesque landscapes. To be a Montana farmer is not merely, in the words of the old song, "to plow, to sow, to reap, to mow." It involves hunting adventures, long rides in search of stock, the trapping of wolves and bears in distant mountain gorges, trout fishing expeditions, and perhaps a little washing of "pay dust" for gold, as well as the tilling of the fields and the care of domestic animals.—New York North-west.

The Poultry Yard.

MIX charcoal with the food when fattening turkeys. It corrects acidity of the stomach and prevents indigestion.

THREE factories in the United States alone consume two million eggs yearly in the manufacture of albumen paper for the use of photographers.

A DUST bath in the henry where space is limited is absolutely necessary and affords both the means of keeping the fowls free from lice and parasites.

It will not do to keep fowls in a state of semi-starvation, for then the hens will lay but few eggs, and those intended for killing are so attenuated in flesh that a considerable outlay is necessary to get them in a presentable condition for the table.

CHICKENS may live and grow to maturity, it is true, without anyone giving them food, but, as a general thing, they have but one commendation, and that is hardness. But after all that is really forced on them in following out the natural law of the survival of the fittest.

SETTING hens should be fed daily, by the same person, at a regular hour, on whole grain with a little soft food. Provide an ample supply of water, with a dust bath near at hand. The hen should not be allowed to spend over twenty minutes from the nest.

Plow or spade up the poultry yard once a month through the summer. It gives the fowls fresh earth in which to dust themselves, to say nothing of the worms and gravel so necessary to them.

THE man who desires to raise poultry on a large scale should grow into it by degrees so as to acquire the necessary experience. One of the essentials is a steady market for the products, and this cannot be obtained by a man starting suddenly with several thousand fowls.

CANKER-MOUTH.

At this season of the year when chicks, whether large or small, are subject to so many ills, and owners are puzzled and look for remedies, it would be well to vary the treatment, and thus perhaps fall upon something of lasting, practical service. One of the most annoying of poultry-ills, in our opinion, is canker-mouth—at least it was until an old German gardener and poultry man told us that stale light bread soaked in strong vinegar and fed to the birds afflicted was a sure cure. It has proved very effectual, and is simple in application, as it is merely a question of feeding, not doctoring.

FOOD AND DRINK FOR POULTRY.

Do not feed on clear corn or meal. It has a tendency to fatten the poultry too much, and consequently they are more subjected to disease. The best way is to vary their food as much as possible. Scraps of meat, fish, potatoes and anything else from the table are excellent for fowls. In the summer feeding once a day may be sufficient, but they require it oftener in cold weather. They should then be fed just before going to roost, and no more than they will eat up clean. Regularity is what is required to make them profitable, and without it it does not pay to keep poultry.

Doubtless, sour milk is the best drink that can be given them, and in the winter when the ground is covered with snow, and they have no access to the earth, it supplies, in a great measure, what benefit they derive

from worms and green food generally, but even then we advise giving them rotten apples, potatoes, turnips, or cabbage. When water is given we would recommend giving occasionally the water that is used in washing the dishes from the table and which often contains crumbs and other refuse which are very beneficial to poultry. Hens cared for in this will lay all winter, if they are of the right breed. The Brahmas make excellent winter layers, and if properly cared for, they doubtless will pay with large profits. Should the reader think otherwise, just try it and you will most certainly be pleased with the result.—Poultry Hornet.

The Household.

Strawberry Cream.—To make strawberry cream take three pints of mashed berries, strain the juice and add a heaping cup of sugar, and then gelatine soaked and dissolved in a teacup of boiling water. Add a pint of whipped cream and pour into molds.

Boiled Ham.—Boil it three or four hours, according to size, then skin the whole and fit it for the table; then set it in the oven for half an hour, cover thickly with rusk or bread crumbs, and set back for half an hour longer. Boiled ham is always improved by setting in an oven for nearly an hour, till much of the fat dries out, and it also makes it more tender.

Corn Bread.—New Orleans.—One and one-half pints of corn meal, one-half pint flour, one tablespoonful of sugar, one teaspoonful salt, two heaping teaspoonfuls baking powder, one teaspoonful lard, one and one-fourth pints of milk, two eggs; sift together corn meal, flour, sugar, salt, and powder; rub in the lard cold, add the eggs—beaten—and the milk; mix into a moderately stiff batter and pour from the bowl into a shallow cake pan. Bake in a rather hot oven for thirty minutes.

Cabbage Relish.—Chop fine a head of cabbage and put into a jar; take a piece of butter about the size of an egg and melt in a frying pan; have ready a cup of sour cream, same amount of not very strong vinegar, and two well-beaten eggs; beat all together and stir into the pan with melted butter, and let it just come to a boil; then pour over the cabbage and stir together. This is a good dish and will keep good for a week's use in winter.

Rhubarb Jam.—A correspondent of the N. Y. Tribune says: Cut in pieces about an inch long—use a sharp knife in cutting and leave the skin on; put a pound of sugar to every pound of fruit and leave till morning; then pour the syrup from it and boil till it thickens, and then add the rhubarb and boil gently. Put up as you do jelly in tumblers. It will keep well. I have read that rhubarb can be used with more expensive fruits in making marmalades without its presence being detected.

Lemon and Rhubarb Pies.—Peel the stalks of rhubarb and cut them into bits two inches long; turn boiling hot water over them, and let them stand on the fire ten minutes; then strain off the water. Cover some pie plates with pastry and put in the rhubarb with a quantity of sugar, and slices of raw lemon, cut thin as a water, and a few pieces of candied ginger chopped fine. Cover with pastry and bake three-quarters of an hour. Serve when quite cold.

Preserved Strawberries.—Take a pound of the best fruit, put it over the fire in a vessel large enough to hold a pound of sugar with the fruit. Cook the fruit twenty minutes rather slowly, until the berries are very tender; add granulated sugar and cook ten minutes longer, skimming when needed. This manner of preparing is the best way to retain the flavor, and will keep forever if there are not too many children about.

Southern way of serving Chicken.—Joint a chicken and boil gently in a deep saucepan, with just water enough to cover the chicken. For one chicken allow half pint of uncooked rice; boil this, and after the chicken is tender remove it from the pan and add the rice to the gravy; season with pepper and salt. Many cooks add two small slices of bacon to the water in which the chicken is boiled, to help flavor the gravy, but remove the bacon before serving. After the gravy has been thickened take the rice out, place it on a platter with the chicken on top.