

Stock Raising.

FATTENING CATTLE.

The age at which cattle can be profitably fattened, will depend much upon their breeding, and the manner in which they have been reared. Steers or heifers, having from half to three-fourths Shorthorn or Hereford blood in them, and that have been kept in a thrifty growing condition from calf hood, are usually sufficiently advanced to be put to fatten when from thirty to thirty-six months old. Pure bred animals of Shorthorn or Hereford blood may be profitably fattened at an earlier age. A cross of one-half to three-quarters Devon blood on common stock, makes an animal that can go into the stalls at two years old, if it has been kept in good growing condition. Common native cattle can rarely be profitably fed for the butcher until they are four years old. If cattle are put up to fatten before their growth has sufficiently advanced, so as to bring them near their full capacity of laying up substance, much of the food given them, instead of going to make them fat, will be wasted in adding bone and muscle, which could have been obtained more cheaply by giving them time to complete their development on ordinary keep. Besides, the effort to fatten an animal when in an immature state, can but result in producing meat of a very inferior quality, and commanding a much less price than if the same animal had been kept on longer until its frame had become solid and well knit together, its muscles developed to their full capacity, and its stomach capable of digesting and assimilating a larger amount of food than is actually required to sustain the ordinary growth and wear and tear of life, without derangement of its vitality.

There are every year, great numbers of young cattle sold to the butcher, or slaughtered by farmers, and their carcasses brought to market at the close of the grass season, when they are in a state of development that renders their flesh of an intermediate quality between veal and beef, without the tenderness of the one or the rich juiciness of the other, but as flavorless and worthless as any flesh can well be. It is sheer folly to sacrifice such animals for the sake of the paltry saving of a few month's food, when by keeping them over one winter more they would bring nearly double their present value, and be fit to make into beef that is full of rich, savory juices.

Stall feeding cattle, judiciously conducted, presents to the grain grower the most efficient, cheap, desirable method of keeping up the fertility of his farm, and the most profitable means of disposing of his surplus hay, roots and coarse grains. The manure made from such cattle, were it all the profit derived from the process, would be amply sufficient to repay the farmer for his trouble; while the hay and grain so consumed would sell in the shape of beef for a higher price than if it had been taken to market.—*Canada Farmer.*

CURE FOR HOOF ROT.

A veteran stock raiser gives in the *Rome (N. Y.) Sentinel* the following as a certain cure for hoof rot in cattle, horses or sheep: "One teacupful of sharp cider vinegar, one and a-half tablespoonfuls of copperas, one and a-half tablespoonfuls of salt. Dissolve gradually on the hot stove, but do not let it boil. When cool, apply it on the affected limb and hoof, and also swab out the mouth of the animal with the mixture. Two or three applications usually effect a cure. The remedy has been used with perfect success since 1818.

BALKY HORSES.

It is rarely well to whip or kick or scold a balky horse, as is the common practice. One of the best modes is to feed him where he stands with any accessible food, such as oats, ears of corn, or even grass by the wayside, or hay from the wagon, which can be provided for the emergency. Forgetting his whim, he will generally start without trouble. Another good way is to do something not harmful, but new; as filling his mouth with loose dirt, which a desire to get rid of will divert his thoughts, and before he knows it he will be jogging along. Sometimes, if one can spare the day, it is best to wait till, from weariness and hunger, the animal submits to your will, and the triumph in this instance is generally complete.—*Hearth and Home.*

TO CURE WARTS ON HORSES.

I had a fine colt that had about twenty large warts on his breast, and under his belly and in his ears. I was recommended to burn them out with caustic or a hot iron, which I tried, and found that both were slow and barbarous. One day I picked up a small piece of newspaper and found the following recipe:—To cure warts on horses: Equal parts of spirits of turpentine and olive oil. Rub well every two or three days. This I tried, and it acted like a charm.

CURE FOR SCRATCHES ON HORSES.

Wash clean with soap-suds, and give a complete coating of white lead to the diseased parts. The horse should be kept out of a mire, filthy stall, as a cure is not probable when the cause is continually applied.

CARE OF COLTS.

A correspondent of the *Country Gentleman* has this sensible advice respecting the care of colts:—"When colts are weaned they should never be put with older animals of their own species: a few together, with abundance of room, will do best, and the attention should be from one person who has sense enough to discover any little matter going amiss before it is serious—or, in other words, he should have the gumption to prevent every ailment horseflesh is liable to, instead of waiting to cure it. For instance, there may be a colt among several which is so shy and nervous that he is afraid to stand up and eat with the others, till his share is nearly consumed. Their may be another naturally very slow in masticating, which would lose much of his share; and thus these animals would pine away, for if enough was given so that there would be more than the boldest would eat, it would still be wrong, as there would be a cloying of the fast eaters. This matter could easily be remedied by separation, and other preventions adopted in time to meet every contingency, but in no successful undertaking of horse-raising would there be a constant use of drugs or a resort to quackery.

"Colts are less subject to disease than other young stock, and can be raised without any coddling; and when it must be known by horsemen in America at what an early age the thoroughbreds are brought on the turf, it is extremely surprising that they should be content to raise their colts in such a fashion as to have the American two year-olds no forwarder than the English yearlings. I appeal to Englishmen in America or to Americans who have visited the agricultural districts of England and attended the horsefairs there, to say whether the two year-old farm colts are not forwarder than three year-old ones here."

Horticulture.

ARE PLANTS IN ROOMS INJURIOUS TO HEALTH?

We cut the following from a recent number of the *Rural New Yorker*:—

"PLANTS IN ROOMS.—Allow me to say a word in reference to plants as being healthful in sleeping rooms. I learned while studying botany that under the influence of direct solar light, plants absorb carbonic acid and give off oxygen, and in the absence of the same they absorb oxygen, and it is decomposed and carbonic acid is given off. One strong proof of this is that plants grown in a cellar, or any dark place, where they receive little or no light, are very light in color. The cause of this is that they continue to absorb oxygen and expel carbon, and having no light, absorb very little carbon, and this being the coloring to the leaf, it is easily seen why the plant is so pale. An example of this can be seen by a potato that has sprouted in the cellar. These things being correct, and proving that all plants give off carbonic acid in the night time, I should infer plants would not be healthful in sleeping rooms.—*NELLIE, Poultney, Vt., 1870.*

Ideas such as are contained in the above extract are constantly floating about in the newspapers, and occasionally find their way into the columns of the agricultural press. We do not believe that the able conductors of the *Rural New Yorker* are ignorant of the error into which their correspondent has been led by the obsolete teachings of her botanical instructors. But, probably through haste or inadvertence, they failed to correct her mistake, and leave it thus with a quasi-indorsement.

The truth is that plants, except in rare cases and under unusual circumstances, do not give off any appreciable quantity of carbonic acid gas, either by day or by night. As "*NELLIE*" refers to botany for her authority, we will give the statement on this point of Prof. Asa Gray of Cambridge, acknowledged as one of the first botanists of the world. In his "*BOTANICAL TEXT BOOK*," (4th ed. page 204.) he says:—"The evolution of carbonic acid by plants, which has so long been taken for granted, and misinterpreted, has no existence as a general phenomenon." He explains, further, that most of the exceptional instances, where carbonic acid is really thrown off by plants, are the results of want of health, as in the case of the potato growing in the dark, instanced by "*NELLIE*." Even under these circumstances the quantity exhaled is but small, while vigorous or healthy plants absorb carbonic acid and throw off only oxygen, thus exercising a purifying influence upon the air.

So much for science; let us now quote an equally eminent practical authority. Peter Henderson, in his "*PRACTICAL HORTICULTURE*," page 182, devotes a brief chapter to the question, "*ARE PLANTS INJURIOUS TO HEALTH?*" which we consider worth copying in full. He says:—

If physicians are asked if plants are injurious to health, three out of six will reply that they are.

They will generally follow up the reply by a learned disquisition on horticultural chemistry; will tell you that at night plants give out carbonic acid, which is poisonous to animal life, and consequently if we sleep in a room where plants are kept, we of necessity inhale this gas, and sickness will follow. These worthies generally succeed in their specious reasoning, and the poor plants, that have bloomed gaily all summer, are often consigned to the coal cellar for their winter quarters, if given quarters at all. No theory can be more destitute of truth; that plants give out carbonic acid may be, but that it is given out in quantities sufficient to affect our health in the slightest degree is utter nonsense.

No healthier class of men can be found than green-house operators, which makes me sometimes think that plants have a health-giving effect rather than otherwise. But

doctors may tell us that our workmen are only at work in the day-time, and that it is at night that the carbonic acid is emitted. Here we meet them by the information that in most cases the gardener in charge of green-houses often has to be up the greater part of the night in winter, and the green-house, from its warmth, is universally taken as sitting-room, and sometimes as his bedroom; such was my own experience for three winters. I had charge of a large amount of glass, situated nearly a mile from my boarding-house, too far to go and come at midnight, with the thermometer below zero. Our means of heating were entirely inadequate, so that the fires had to be looked to every three or four hours. Disregarding all my kind-hearted employer's admonitions, I nightly slept on the floor of the hot-house, which was rank with tropical growth. The floor was just the place to inhale the gas, if there had been much to inhale. It did not hurt me, however, and has not yet, and that is a score of years ago. That plants are injurious to health in sleeping-rooms is one of the bugbear assertions that is willingly swallowed by the gullible portion of the community, always ready to assign effects to some tangible cause, and this, as the assertion evinces some chemical lore, is one very prevalent among those disciples of Esculapius who are always willing to be thought learned in the science so intimately connected with their profession.

On the part of the medical profession we take Mr. Henderson's vigorous assault in good part. Doctors rely on books for their knowledge in such matters, and as long as botanists taught the theory of the so-called "plant respiration," now exploded, they did wisely in banishing plants from sick rooms. Mr. Henderson admits committing many errors himself from too much reliance on authorities, but what else could he do until he had learned better by experience? Those doctors who studied botany twenty years ago, and have been prevented by constant demand upon their time, or by indolence, from keeping themselves posted on the progress of the science since, will probably continue to warn their patients against the cheerful and harmless plants that do so much to lighten the tedium of the sick room, but all do not do so, Mr. Henderson.

THE ZINNIA.

This flower has reached great perfection in the hands of the florists and it is rapidly growing in favor with cultivators, assuming a most important place in the flower garden. It is now produced, perfectly double, and in a great variety of colors. The blossoms are nearly as large and as full as dahlias and very persistent, enduring and increasing in beauty for several weeks. We do not think the Zinnia replaces the dahlia, as some claim, but it is a very desirable flower. Its stiffness of stem renders it less useful for bouquets than the dahlia, and it by no means equals that flower in delicacy or variety of color. But it is a surer and much more abundant bloomer, and being an annual gives less trouble. The finest Zinnias we have seen were grown from seed procured of Jas. Vick, Rochester, N. Y.

FALL SOWN TOMATOES.

An agricultural paper says: "Tomato seed sown in the fall will produce better plants than those started in a hot-bed in March, in this latitude, and the fruit upon them will ripen earlier. The plants will also be more prolific of fruit." All of which is erroneous, and shows that the writer does not know how to grow the tomato properly under glass. The market gardeners are pretty shrewd men, and know the importance of earliness in their produce. We should like to see any one try to convince them that it was just as well to sow their tomato seed in the open ground in the fall. If he did convince them, (and probably he would,) it would be only of his own ignorance.