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# The Vermont Farmer.

AN AGRICULTURAL AND FAMILY NEWSPAPER FOR THE RURALISTS OF THE GREEN MOUNTAIN STATE.

VOL. VII.--NO. 23. ST. JOHNSBURY, FRIDAY, MAY 11, 1877. WHOL NO. 335.

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**JAS. M. WARNER.**

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## Improvement of Our Common Schools in the Interest of Agriculture.

**An Address delivered before the State Board of Agriculture, at North Troy, by T. H. Hoskins, M. D.**

One of the members of this board, in a recent address, informed his hearers that though in the popular branch of our last legislature there were 138 farmers, while no other profession had over 18 representatives, yet this large number of farmers was practically controlled by ten or a dozen men who were not farmers, but mostly lawyers. The statement was not a new one. The observation has been made many times. If a farmer should make it, in an aggrieved tone, to one of those ten or twelve legislative apostles, his answer would probably be, "Well, well what are you going to do about it?" Now, though this is but a repetition of the Hon. Wm. M. Tweed's answer, when he was publicly charged with being a thief, I take it in this case to be an eminently proper one. This answer is but the question which every dissatisfied farmer ought to ask himself, "What are you going to do about it?"

One thing is certain, notwithstanding the common assertion that in this country the majority rules. It is an ineffacable fact that mere numerical superiority does not confer political or social power. The majority *may* decide *who* shall rule. That is the extent of the majority's power. In truth it is brains that rule, good and well trained brains. This country is governed by the shrewd long heads who make politics a business; and these shrewd long heads are mostly upon the shoulders of our lawyers.

We often hear the same complaint made in regard to congress; that it is mostly made up of lawyers, and that the farmer is hardly represented there at all. But what would be the use of sending even a large majority of farmers to congress? If ten or a dozen of our county court lawyers can drive whither they will a herd of 138 farmers, would not the same number of supreme court lawyers drive or lead at their will any flock of our bell-wethers we might select to occupy the congressional arm-chairs at Washington?

That the great agricultural interests of this country find no real representative, either in our state or national governments, is a great evil. Laws are continually being enacted that must of necessity greatly affect the the farming interests for good or bad. Think you, is it possible, in law-making bodies where the farmer has no capable advocate, that laws will not be continually framed which give to other interests and other industries an unfair advantage over the farmer? Do you think that that fundamental principle of free government—equal rights to all, exclusive privileges to none—will be long maintained by a governing power where the greatest, and collectively the richest interest, is practically unrepresented; while all the speculative interests, which draw their life from the labor of that great industry, are fully represented by their attorneys upon the floor, and by their agents in the lobbies of every legislative body in the nation?

Fellow farmers, without a more generally good common school education for the mass of our children, and the opportunity for the *best* education to those among us who have the taste and the means for it, we shall always be but as hewers of wood and drawers of water to the professional and business classes. We never shall have true leaders and representatives, able and successful defenders of our rights, until we raise them.

And, fellow farmers, let me tell you as a gospel truth, that no other class is going to do this work for us. We have got to do it ourselves. Can we reasonably expect that the classes which profit by our ignorance are going to spend their money to give us instruction, to their own future loss? There is philanthophy in the world. Thank God for that! Here and there is a poorly educated man who has raised himself to wealth, and who, not forgetting his early struggles, has devoted that wealth to providing the means of education for other poor boys. Thank God again, I say, for such men!

But are American farmers so lost to manhood that they will wait until the charity of the rich provides that education for their children which will enable, and which is absolutely necessary to enable them to protect their rights as citizens, and save their property from being despoiled by the lawyers, lobbyists and speculators that swarm around the state houses of every state, and around our national capital? Truly said the poet, "Who would be free, *themselves* must strike the blow."

The common schools are the farmers' colleges. We may talk as we will about agricultural colleges. I believe in them myself—when we can get them. I believe in every farmer boy having the free chance to get all the knowledge he wants. I believe in every boy and girl in the nation having that free chance. But circumstances are such, and will long if not forever remain such, that that most of the children of our farms must depend upon the common schools for such schooling as they can have.

Now I claim that every common school ought to be able to give every scholar of ordinary capacity such a start in education, and such a love for it, that the progress of the scholar in learning will not stop when the schooling stops. I claim that every common school should lay in the mind of every pupil, those foundations of learning upon which, in future life, he may himself erect a structure of knowledge that will fit him for every duty of his calling, and for his still higher duties as the citizen of a free and self-governing republic.

Do our common schools do this? And if they do not, why do they not? And how can they be made to do it? These are the three questions I came here to ask, and to offer, therewith, some hints, imperfect as they may be, toward an answer.

To the first question—Do our common schools give that efficient primary education which so grounds the pupil in the elements of learning that he may afterwards effectively avail himself of the various means of increasing his knowledge by reading and private study; and above all, do they stimulate such a *taste* for knowledge as to make that pupil a student both of nature and of books through all his after life? To this question there can be but one answer—an answer in the negative. It is because they have not done this that our agriculture is in the backward condition we all know it to be. It is because they have not done it that 138 farmers in our legislature can be brought, session after session, by a few lobbyists and cunning politicians, to white-wash and endorse the management of a so-called agricultural college which, without a single teacher of any branch of agriculture, and without an agricultural pupil in the whole ten years of its corporate existence, has yet in that time drawn nearly ninety thousand dollars of the public money, and is still drawing it at the rate of over $8000 a year. I say that if our common schools had been what they ought to be, and what we can make them if we desire to do so, none of the wrongs of which this is a sample could be perpetrated upon the farmer.

The next question is—Why do our common schools thus fail in their work? My answer is, only and solely from the want of good teachers, intelligent methods, suitable buildings and the proper apparatus for instruction. The great majority of our district schools to-day are as far from being means of genuine, effective instruction, as our dairies turning out two and three tubs per cow of second and third rate-butter are proper representatives of first class dairy husbandry. As it is impossible to turn out a large make of gilt edged butter from a dairy of scrub cows, poorly fed, poorly sheltered, roughly handled, filthily milked, the milk and cream kept in a room to which tobacco smoke and the odors of the kitchen have free access, and the whole process of manufacturing in the hands of a careless, dirty and incompetent person. So it is impossible to turn out good scholars from school houses lacking in every element of comfort, convenience and health, or from schools taught by young men and women who have never been properly taught themselves, who have no real interest in anything but their pay, and who are changed every few months for others no better.

The third and last question is, How can can our schools be made efficient educators of the children of our farms, so that the next generation of farmers shall have all the knowledge requisite to make them masters of their business and masters of their public servants? In the first place we must have good school houses. I do not mean, necessarily, that we must have costly school houses. I do mean that we must have school houses that are comfortably cool in summer and comfortably warm in the winter; with whole and tight windows, and with doors so situated and protected that they will not throw a draft of icy air across the persons of a number of children perhaps delicate or thinly clad. A large proportion of our school houses seem to have been planned by King Herod, for the slaughter of the innocents; and that parents will send their offsprings into these slaughter pens is a sad commentary upon our civilization and our christianity. Often have I visited schools in winter, where the chorus of coughing almost prevented the possibility of proceeding with the exercises of the classes. Here the seeds of disease and early death, rather than the seeds of knowledge and future usefulness, are sown. Cold feet and burning heads utterly unfit even grown persons for any sort of intellectual labor. Yet that is the condition of more than half the scholars in the schools of Vermont this very day. How can they learn, even if they were well taught by the best of teachers? But you cannot hire any man or women who knows enough to teach, or even to protect their own lives, to teach in such buildings.

We have a Superintendent of Education in this state. I know him, and he is an able man. I say to him that the very first work for him to do, and the essential preliminary to any other improvements in our system of education, is to teach our people how to build school houses. Let him have drawn and printed a series of plans for school houses of all grades, from the little district schools for ten to twenty scholars, up to the large graded schools of our village districts. Let there be embodied in these plans the latest improvements in heating, lighting and ventilation. Let us begin by having a decent and healthy school house first. I say *decent* with a very particular meaning, for, aside from the provisions for destroying the health of our teachers and children, we often seem to design the fittings of our school houses purposely to deaden the sense of shame, and undermine the perceptions of morality and decency.

Having secured the bodily comfort and health and physical morality of our children by a properly constructed school building, the next thing is to have it suitably equipped with the implements of teaching. We buy improved mowers, rakes and tedders, patent milk pans and churns, but we rarely think of fitting up our district schools with the improved implements of education. A blackboard is about as far as we generally go, and there are a good many public school rooms in Vermont without even that. What would one of our old fogies with five hundred dollars worth of patent farm machines around his buildings, say to raising a district tax of $200 to purchase globes, maps, models of the mechanical powers, a magnifying glass or a cheap microscope, and a cabinet of minerals, as means of instruction? I know what he would say, for I have talked with him. Perhaps I shall start him up here to-night.

Having provided proper buildings and the necessary implements of tuition, we are then in a position to ask an intelligent, well-trained and capable man or woman to assume the responsible task of instructing the children God has given us, and the heavy debt we owe to our children these things of which they are themselves ignorant?

We want our mother tongue thoroughly taught in our common schools. Then we want common arithmetic. In this there is responsibility of whose future life, here and hereafter, rests on us. There are such men and women among us, men and women worthy ten thousand-fold the honor and esteem we accord to them. Naturally I esteem the profession of farmer as the first and noblest of the secular occupations of man, but if I were disposed to yield that position to any other, I should assuredly yield it to the teacher of youth. I say we have them among us,—able, sincere, zealous, progressive, energetic men and women whose hearts are in the work to which they have chosen to devote their lives. But they are all too few. Yet perhaps they are as numerous as we deserve, considering how we entertain them.

In the beginning, having provided good school houses and properly equipped them, we must take the best teachers we can find; and we shall find even an ordinary teacher will be able to do the children much more good in a good room and with proper teaching tools. Yet it remains a fact that while we have some good teachers, the large majority of them are badly prepared for the responsible task they undertake. The fault is not with them so much as in the want of well endowed, well equipped and well taught high schools, academies and normal schools, wherein young men and women may be prepared—may prepare themselves, rather—for their profession.

Every county ought to have at least one free high school, the highest grade of which should be a normal school. Every town should have five or six scholarships in this high school, and should send to it from its district and grammar schools those scholars that have a desire and show aptitude for teaching. What do I mean by scholarships in a free school? Well, I mean just this, that the town shall pay the board of these scholars while being instructed as teachers, with the agreement on the part of the scholar that he or she shall hold him or herself ready, for a specified number of years after graduation, to teach in that town at a certain salary, if required to do so. I know old fogies will hold up their hands in holy horror at such an "expensive" notion as this. But if good teaching is worth any more than poor teaching, then there is economy, not only in building good school houses and properly equipping them, but also in securing competent teachers; and I know no better way than this of stimulating the poor but ambitious scholars of our common schools to improve their opportunities. Of course there will be selfish rich men and women in every town who will be opposed giving their poor neighbors' children such a chance; but the poor men are in the majority, and need not beg for a favor like this, if they know how to put their votes where they will do the most good. And a sensible rich man ought to see far enough beyond the end of his nose to understand that the more the children of poverty are encouraged to train themselves for honorable and useful work, the fewer of them he will have to be taxed to maintain in the poor houses and the prisons. We farmers suffer enough from the aristocracy of the towns and cities, without encouraging such bob-tailed aristocracy as this among ourselves.

But now we come to the top of the question. Where shall we find teachers for our county high schools? Well, fellow farmers, I think about the poorest place we can go for such teachers—if we regard the interests of agriculture—is to our classical colleges. They don't teach much in those colleges which we want our children to know, and they do teach one thing there which is the last thing that the children of working men ought to be taught—contempt for manual labor and the manual laborer.

I say they don't teach much in the classical colleges which we want our children to know. Witness the following recent fact in proof of the assertion: At the last Harvard examination fifty-two per cent. of the students *failed in English composition*, though but 16 per cent. were lackifg in Greek grammar. I think we surely don't want the teachers of our district school teachers to come from an institution of which anything like that is true.

In truth it is difficult to find the right men for such a responsible position as the head mastership of a free county high and grammar school. If I were to go any where to look them up, it would be to the graduating classes of our best scientific schools and agricultural colleges.

And now let me glance at the question—What *do* we want taught in our common schools, in the interest of agriculture?

We want first the English language—thoroughly taught, so that boy and girl, before their school days are over, can read it, write it, spell it, compose in it, speak in it, with correctness and ease. This is the great primary failure of all our schools, and even of our colleges, at this very time. The English language is neglected for the foreign and the dead languages in the colleges and academies; and when we take their graduates for teachers of our common schools, they cannot read entertainingly or expressively, they cannot write legibly, they cannot spell, they cannot compose or speak in their mother tongue with clearness and correctness, and how *can* they teach our chilless failure, though the method of teaching is too mechanical and unintelligent, and it takes four times as long as it would do if the teachers understood principles as well as rules, and knew how to bring them out in teaching.

Thirdly, we want the powers of perception and observation developed in our children. We want them to learn to see and notice the wonders of creation around them, and to this end there is nothing better than elementary instruction in the natural sciences. Few of our teachers, even in our higher schools and academies, are at present capable of giving this instruction, and our classical colleges are but just beginning to give attention to this class of studies.

I believe that a qualified teacher, while teaching the English language, in his reading lessons, his writing lessons, and his speaking lessons, might be able to communicate all the elements of the natural sciences in a way greatly to entertain and interest his pupils. Let his reading classes take for a lesson the account of some natural object, some plant, animal, rock, or mineral. Let the teacher illustrate the lesson by word, and by sketches on the blackboard, by the exhibition of specimens, by requiring the scholars to bring in specimens of natural objects, and by explaining them. Let him do the same with different farm machines and implements, the management of crops, etc., etc. Then let him require a scholar to write down what he can remember of what he has read and heard on a particular subject, copy it upon the blackboard, and then let the whole class be examined, to see if they can correct and add to what their companion has written. In this way, while the training in language is going on, the mind is being filled also with useful, practical information in regard to things of daily life and use. A child will learn more in a week, in this way, than he will in six months of ordinary school drill, because, if the teacher understands his business, the pupil will be heartily interested in what he is being taught.

When we add to the things mentioned above a little geography, I am inclined to believe we have got about all we want in the ordinary district school. A boy or girl of seventeen, leaving such a school, having mastered what has been taught there, would have a better education for all the practical purposes of life than many of our college graduates possess. Especially in the mastery of the English tongue, and in the terms of the natural sciences, (which are such a trouble to most of us who want to understand what scientific writers have to tell us upon agriculture,) the young man or woman possesses the instrument for opening all the learning of the world. And the *taste* for learning will also have been imparted, which is the most important thing of all. With that taste implanted in the minds of the young generations, how long would it be before the vexed question of town libraries would be solved? The hunger for more knowledge makes as imperative a demand upon the intelligent mind as the hunger for food makes upon the stomach. The demand will have to be filled, books will be bought, and libraries will be begun every where.

I know I have wearied many of my hearers, but I have a few more words to add about that county high school. I think to every such school (and why not to the common school, too,) there ought to be attached a large garden or small farm under the superintendence of the teachers. Such a farm or garden would serve to exemplify much of the teaching, would serve for the trial of many instructive experiments, and would furnish also much food, which might be allotted among the poorer pupils, according to the vote of their companions, to assist in their maintenance while pursuing their studies.

In this school for the education of teachers whose duty it is to teach the children of our farmers, a knowledge of the elements of scientific agriculture is important, and we know not how more easily it could be acquired than from such an appendage to the school, especially when the principal is himself a graduate of an agricultural college.

If any of the ideas I have advanced to you this evening, fellow farmers, should appear to you of any practical value, let me appeal to you not to let them pass away in the speaking of them. You have farmers' clubs, you have granges, you have agricultural societies, you have meetings at home and abroad. Let me entreat you to make this question of improving our common schools in the interest of agriculture a subject of thought and discussion on every suitable occasion.

Immense interests depend upon it. Capital in the hands of speculators and great corporations, is crowding labor harder and harder, and unless the working men of this country fortify themselves with knowledge, and with all their getting, get understanding of the great and momentous problems upon which the future prosperity and the future liberties or our country depend, the outlook is not cheering for our children. This is the first country where the working man has ever had a chance or has ever enjoyed genuine liberty. As wealth accumulates, and luxury prevails in our great centers of populations, the rights of the workers become more and more in danger, because the possessors of that wealth will control our legislatures and make our laws, unless we withstand them. It is an entirely new danger. One hundred years ago there was not a man on this continent possessed of a million of dollars. Now we have thousands of such men, and we have wealthy corporations without number, interested in diverting the little rills of prosperity that ought to fertilize our farms into their great reservoirs. It is a new danger. It is our business to investigate and understand it. And the more we investigate the more we shall be convinced that our only safety lies in a better education for the children of the working people.

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The best fertilizer for potatoes, so says a good practical farmer, is prepared after the following formula:—Mix thoroughly, one bushel of salt, two bushels plaster paris, four bushels air slaked lime and eight bushels of good wood ashes; add to this as much in bulk of clear sand or loam, and put a large handful in each hill. This quantity is sufficient for an acre. It is cheap, and easy to procure and apply; and the quantity of the potatoes and abundant yield will satisfy any one who tries it. Besides the articles are all good, and much needed by most of our soils. Try it.

## Potato Bugs.

I see that many of our farmers, anticipating the ravages of the potato bug this season, recommend early planting, thinking by so doing to get the start of the bug. Will they succeed? The beetle is already out of the ground prospecting for potato tops, and if there is a green vine anywhere in the vicinity of his winter residence, he will be sure to find it, and the vine will grow so slow at this season of the year that it will require constant watching and care to save it. I have practiced planting my Early Rose potatoes for several years past the first of June, and have succeeded every season in getting a good crop of potatoes of the first quality and matured in ten weeks from the time of planting. I usually plant on greensward plowed in the fall and worked in the spring with the cultivator, but not deep enough to disturb the old sward. In a week's time from planting the potatoes are up and ready for the cultivator, and grow very fast under the warm and genial sun and showers of June. This June planting is for my field crop only. Plant in drills, two eyes in a hill about twenty inches apart, rows three feet apart. In order to get a good yield of Early Rose they should be planted as close as they can be worked and well hilled up. ISLANDER.

*South Hero, May 5.*

## The Root Crop.

Last spring I read everything I could find on roots and root raising, coming to the conclusion that cows in milk would do better on roots and hay than on grains of any kind and hay; so I put in a lot of mangolds which came up well.

I saw your advice to those who had neglected beets and rutabagas until too late to sow, to put in flat turnips; so I thought although I was not one of the negligent ones, that I would put in some flat turnips. The next thing was to find a place to put them. On looking round I found about three-fourths of an acre, not over, of oats ready to cut for fodder, which I cut, hayed, and got into the barn. Then I took the land, thorough ploughed and harrowed it, ploughing in a fair dressing of stable manure, after which I bushed in half of a pound of flat turnip seed, putting in the 10th of August. They grew well, and Nov. 1st I harvested six hundred bushels of turnips, some weighing four to six pounds. The beets were damaged by the dry weather, and I got four hundred bushels; however I was satisfied with the result, considering it was my first attempt.

Now let us see; I get six hundred bushels of flat turnips, from which I cut tops enough to keep one cow a hundred days, which paid for raising and harvesting, but the beets cost me about fifteen cents per bushel to raise and harvest.

Some considered me foolish in raising roots, they considering them hardly worth harvesting, but they were somewhat surprised to see me harvest such a crop, and still more surprised at the result of feeding the roots.

I fed out all the roots to cows in milk with poor poor hay, from which I got 14,000 quarts of milk, and when the roots were fed out gave in their place four quarts of shorts and two quarts of meal per day, to each cow, on which they fell off in milk over 15 per cent., showing roots to be better as a milk producer than grain.

Care should be used in feeding the roots as well as in cooling the milk, as it is necessary to get out the animal heat before shipping and the roots should be given soon after milking.

I think that cows do better on roots than grain, considering their general health, as I was not troubled with gargot as in the past. Try roots this season and report them next winter.—*Cor. Massachusetts Ploughman.*

## Trim the Hoofs of Colts.

In many instances the insensible portion of the hoofs of colts and of young horses will grow out so round and flat that fragments sometimes will be broken off. This is more particularly the case if colts are allowed to run at large occassionally on hard ground, gravelly and stony lands and hard roads; the hoofs will wear fast enough, as nature evidently intended they should. But if young horses are kept on smooth turf, their feet must be kept short by artificial means. The most convenient way to trim long hoofs is to let one person hold a block of hard wood against the hoof, or hold the hoof on the square end of the wood while an attendant cuts off small pieces with a sharp chisel and mallet. Use an inch fine chisel rather than a large one, as a two-inch chisel will require heavier blows with a mallet. A pair of sharp nippers (sometimes vulgarly called snips) may often be employed for such a purpose when a colt is so restive that a chisel and mallet cannot be used.

We have in mind a colt having unusually long hoofs, which had in his play stepped upon some hard substance and broken off the front of one part of the foot to the quick. The accident was attended with some bleeding and excessive lameness, the suffering brute being unwilling to put his foot to the ground. Ten minutes' work would have saved the animal much pain, and the owner might have had the benefit of three months' growth, instead of having it arrested for that period. But the occasional breaking off of a part of the hoof is a mere trifle when compared with other mischiefs resulting from the same cause. When the toe is too long the strain on the fetlock joint will be greatly increased, so that permanent injury to the suspensory ligament of the foot often follows. Young horses frequently have wind-galls and and other evidences of sprains before they are put to work. In many instances such ailments occur where shortening of the toe has been neglected until the hoofs have grown to an unnatural length.—*Practical Farmer.*

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A POSSIBLE PROJECT.—A more gigantic plot for enhancing the value of real estate through the wholesale improvment of the climate was never proposed than that which contemplates blocking the Straits of Bell Isle to the end that the Gulf of St. Lawrence be changed from a refrigerator to a tepidarium. Through these straits there yearly drifts an almost endless procession of icebergs, which slowly melt as the spring comes on and considerably lower the average temperature of the surrounding shores. How the mechanical difficulties are to be overcome is not yet announced, but the project has the merit of being a bold one.

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A politician who wished to degrade a bitter opponent, said of him, "give that man a fair chance, and I will warrant that he would be meaner than the meanest man in Connecticut!"

## Turning Cows to Pasture.

There is great difference of opinion among dairymen in regard to the time when cows should be turned to grass. Many contend that all kinds of stock should be kept off pasture grounds during spring until there is a good growth of grass. In other words, the herbage must have obtained such a start that the stock will not be able to eat it down short during the season, and thus they believe a supply is more fully insured.

Another plan, practiced by many, is to let stock have the full run of pastures as soon as the snow is off the ground, allowing it to pick on the old grass and eat of the early vegetation as soon as it springs up. The chief reason urged for this latter course is, that the change from hay to grass in feeding should be as gradual as possible, in order that stock may be kept in good health; that, if cows in spring are turned suddenly from dry food upon luxuriant pasturage, the change is very liable to produce serious troubles—excessive scouring—bloating and other disorders that impair health, often for a considerable length of time, and even if they do not lead to the total loss of the animal, they cause the loss of her milk for longer or shorter periods.

Now a middle course, between the two plans named, we think, is to be preferred and will give the best results. In the first place, it may be remarked, pasture lands will be injured in productiveness by allowing stock to roam over the fields early in spring before the ground is settled, and while it is soft and easily trodden. The "poaching of the land," by the frequent tread of cattle, destroys the grass in places while the surface is rendered uneven or filled with holes made by the feet of cattle. Again, when the frost is coming out of the ground it is often rendered so loose in texture that the roots of grasses are easily pulled out and cows feeding on the old herbage not unfrequently injure the turf by pulling up grass by the roots. It will be advisable then not to turn stock upon pastures until the ground is fully settled, and is not in condition to be injured by the feet of cattle. Nothing is gained by allowing pastures to get a tall growth of grass before turning stock upon them, because they tramp the herbage down in places, and by neglecting to feed other portions down, it soon becomes hard and woody and will not be eaten.

Grass is sweetest and gives the best results in milk when it is eaten off at regular intervals and is not allowed to get a large growth. In this way the product is greater while the exhaustion to the soil is less than it is where tufts of grass are allowed to mature and go to seed. Cows ought not to be turned at once from hay to pasture, since a sudden change of this kind will be apt to affect their health. A better way is to give them the run of pastures for an hour or two at first, and so allow them gradually, from day to day, to become accustomed to the the change of food, and they should be fed from time to time with hay after they have been turned to pasture altogether. Cows will frequently eat greedily of hay when they have been out to pasture for a considerable length of time and rations of hay will often be found useful in correcting a tendency of looseness of the bowels or scouring.

Some dairymen are in the habit of giving salt to animals at certain intervals of time, but the better way is to keep it constantly before them or within their reach so they can take it daily or at will. Nature regulates the quantity of salt needed much better than it can be done by portioning it out at intervals, and if the animal always has it within reach there is no danger of over-feeding and the milk will show less variation in character. An important point to be observed in the management of milch-stock is to keep them in a healthy, thrifty condition, and if cows on turning to grass, are inclined to lose flesh and run down weak and thin, they should be fed rations of ground grain and thus kept up to the maximum of health and strength.

## The Advantages of Evergreen Trees.

The earlier settlers were not unmindful of the advantages of shelter, hence their dwellings were generally located at the base of a hill that the fierce blast of winter might pass above unheeded, for science had not then recorded the greater degree of cold pertaining to valleys, though perhaps felt less from the absence of winds. But in such situations the fogs are wont to linger while the hillsides are clear, and fogs are destructive to health and comfort, at any season of the year. These facts being at present generally understood, persons about to locate a dwelling choose an elevated position as being more cheerful and healthy, and affording a finer and more extensive view of the landscape, but subject to the fearful blasts of winter which in many situations are of such severity as almost to make an otherwise agreeable residence untenable. Yet happily, man has power to overcome and set at nought, in great measure, the fierce winds that sweep the land in winter by confronting the elements in nature's own way by surrounding our habitations with strong belts of hardy spruce, which when planted close form a complete barrier to the wind. I have such an hedge eleven years planted, which is fully 25 feet high, and so dense as to completely break the force of the wind, in a situation where fomerly the ground was swept bare of snow in winter and the soil was cast about in clouds of dust. This has long been the home of many singing birds which gladden place with music, for although the condition of the mind may be such that the sweetest notes of the human voice may fail to please, yet man is ever made happier and better while his soul is stirred by the welcome of birds, and it is a duty that the owners of the soil owe to humanity and to God's little songsters that they furnish them a place of shelter from the storms and refuge from their enemies, for if it were not for the assistance of birds in keeping the insect herds in check, man would plant and sow in vain. It is surprising how great a number and how vast a variety of birds will dwell about a place where there are many evergreens. Some enterprising citizens are endeavoring to introduce quails into this country, but quails and partridge require a close covert of evergreens for protection in severe storms, they often huddle together for days under the snow-laden branches of evergreens. These are also a chosen nesting place and place of refuge in time of danger. Many and various are the advantages of planting beautiful evergreen trees, not the least of which is the value they add to an estate, for ignore it as we may, whatever adds to the beauty, cheerfulness and comfort of a home is regarded by a purchaser, which is of importance in this land of unrest where the larger portion of homesteads are awaiting a purchaser.—*Dutchess Farmer.*

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A little girl who was sent to the pasture to drive home the cow, fell and was severely scratched and bruised. On returning she was asked if she cried when she fell. "Why no," she replied. "What would have been the use? There was nobody to hear me."

## The Higher Aim in Farming.

A recent writer says: The higher aim of every intelligent tiller of the soil should be the improvement of the productiveness of his land until it reaches the point where maximum crops are produced at the least expense. Wise husbandry regards the farm simply as a machine for turning out crops. The machine is the matter of first importance. This is always to be kept in good running order, and its efficiency is to be increased by all economical methods. The man who farms upon this system will never sacrifice soil for a great crop. His aim is to have every crop taken off, leaving the land in a better condition than he found it. He aims in every working of the soil to increase its depth and to add to it more elements of fertility than he removes in the crops, and to make the crops pay not only for themselves but also for the improvement of the acres upon which they are grown. In carrying out this aim, so as to realize these results, a man shows his skill as a cultivator. It is a comparatively easy thing for any one who has money to improve the soil so that it shall produce crops paying for the labor of growing them and the interest on two or three hundred dollars an acre. Stable manure enough, well ploughed in, will do this. But it is altogether another matter to make this improvement pay for itself. Yet it is a possible thing to do this, and there are farmers skillful enough to accomplish this result, and this we hold to be the true aim in the cultivation of the soil. The most judicious improvements—those which finally pay the largest profits—require several years to bring in their full returns. It is a matter of great importance that the farming population should not only be settled, but that they should feel settled, and plan all their operations upon the farm as if they expected to spend their days upon it.

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CHICKEN CHOLERA.—When we see among young chickens one or two standing about in a listless manner, their feathers ruffled and their wings hanging loosely, we look for symptoms of cholera. Ordinarily we should lay the trouble to vermin in shape of head or body lice, but these do not infest our chickens, and among the many hundred that we have growing up not a single louse is to be found. Cholera among chickens begins with a slight diarrhœa—at least cholera in this section of the country does—and its presence may readily be detected by examining the excrement of the chickens, which if the birds are diseased will have a yellowish and greenish tinge. If the chickens are examined there will be found below the anal aperture a few feathers or particles of down sticking together, The liquid exudation from the anus by which the adhesion is made indicates cholera, and if it is dried on the feathers it is as sticky or rather it holds the feathers or down exactly as would glue or mucilage. Treatment at this early stage may be made successful. For a medicine give extract of Jamaica ginger in milk in the proportion of a tablespoonful to a quart of milk; by giving them nothing else to drink for a day or two a cure may be effected. —*Massachusetts Ploughman.*

## PASTIME.

"I have a pardonable desire to live elsewhere," said a man writing to the president for a consulate.

Which is the oddest fellow, the one who asks a question or the one who answers? The one who asks, because he is the querist.

It is said that the new style of the common hand-organ has only one stop. It begins in the morning and stops at night.

We have reason to think that Cowper the poet didn't pay his hotel bills, for he obed for a lodge in some vast wilderness.

A Missouri paper, in speaking of the cold winter of 1827, said: "Hogs, cattle, ducks and turkeys, roosting on the trees were frozen to death."

There is a place in Maine called Moddyhemps, it having been christened after all the words ending in skook, coggin and goggin had given out.

"Ho, all ye dyspeptics!" says a patent medicine advertisement. If all the dyspeptics would hoe regularly, their number would be reduced.

The New York woodcock are said, upon their first arrival in the state this season, to stop at the nearest bookstore and inquire for a copy of the game laws.

"Did you do anything to resuscitate the body?" was recently asked of a witness at a coroner's inquest. "Yes, sir. We searched the pockets!" was the reply.

The English claim to have been the first people to use forks at the table. Probably invented for Queen Bess. She always wanted something handy to throw at a fellow.

"We're in a pickle now!" said a man in a crowd. "A regular jam!" said another. "Heaven preserve us!"—*Ex.* Right in for "sass," weren't they?

Policeman Orbus appears on the rolls of the San Francisco force. If in order, we rise to suggest that this is a clear case of collar 'em-Orbus.

The foolish man will ask a woman if her baby is not a trifle cross-eyed, but the wise man will take the cars for Chicago and make his inquiries by postal card.

The St. Augustine hotel in Florida is the largest hotel in the world. It must be for a correspondent says that among the guests are "the Smiths of New York."

The Norristown Herald suggests that the guillotine be called into requisition to suppress the tramp. Well that would be a capital way to get a head of him, that's a fact.

"Mr. Jones,