Semi-Weekly South Kentuckian.

VOLUME VII. HOPKINSVILLE, CHRISTIAN COUNTY KY., OCTOBER 9, 1885. NUMBER 81

CHAS. M. MEACHAM. W. A. WILGUS.

ISSUED EVERY TUESDAY AND FRIDAY MORNING BY

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COL. A. WINCHESTER ROGUS PISLE,

The Renowned Adventurer.

The distinguished gentleman whose portrait appears above, was born in the Sandwich Islands in the year 1812, and is consequently old and tough. His early life was spent on his native isle, where we find him at the age of manhood attired in tattooed cheeks and beads around his neck. The king of the island was not slow to discover the elements of greatness in our hero and at the age of 35 years he was brought before his majesty, who was so well pleased with the answers he gave to certain questions propounded that he made him commander-in-chief of his entire military forces. He waged a bitter warfare upon the enemies of his sovereign and when there were no longer any foes to conquer he expressed a desire to quit the scenes of bloodshed and enter the diplomatic service. He was consequently sent as Minister to Senegambia. After remaining for a few years in that country, he was detected in a conspiracy to seize the government and declare himself king. The head of the government had him arrested and sentenced to death, but he escaped from the guards on the eve of the day appointed for his execution, and put out to sea in a canoe, where he was subsequently picked up by an English steamer and afterwards made a tour of the world for the benefit of his health. He forwarded his resignation to his king as Minister to Senegambia and resolved to come to the United States and enter the Confederate army in the war of the rebellion, which was then fairly on. He was entirely destitute of funds at this time, but hit upon the happy expedient of expressing himself C. O. D. to the President of the Confederacy. This plan was entirely successful and he was received right side up and in good order and immediately sent to the front. He was engaged in most of the important battles and was severely wounded and left for dead upon the bloody field of Carnage. He was rescued and eventually recovered, but not until the war was ended, and he suddenly found himself called upon to meet the stern realities of life in a strange land. After deliberating whether he would study for the ministry or become a gentleman of elegant leisure he finally decided to adopt the latter profession. No sooner decided than acted upon, he supplied himself with fishing tackle and hied himself to the water's edge to angle for the finny tribe, or in other words to fish. In this calling he was eminently successful. He also became renowned as a hunter and succeeded in killing time the first trip he made. It was while engaged in the business of fishing that Col. Pisle made a discovery that speedily established his fame and fortune. He was sitting on the bank one day fishing and hour after hour passed without a single bite. All at once the idea struck him like an inspiration to spit upon his bait. He did so and almost immediately his cork disappeared and he hauled out a fine fish. Again and again he tried the experiment with a like result. From that time on his success was assured. For a year he kept the secret locked in his bosom and then having laid up enough money to take him to the Capital he went to Washington and secured a patent on his discovery. A revolution took place in the fishing business and Col. Pisle found himself famous and was regarded as a benefactor of the human race. The royalty upon his patent soon made him a millionaire and he retired from business and settled in this city to spend his last days in ease and plenty. As a mere means of beguiling the time and giving him something to think about, he runs a furniture store and undertaker's establishment. Probably no living man has had a more checkered career than the subject of this sketch, but his fortune is now made and he has nothing to do but settle down to the quiet enjoyment of the same. He has also found time to engage in literary pursuits and some years ago made considerable reputation as a poet by writing "The Beautiful Snow" and other gems. As a prose writer he has achieved still greater distinction, his first effort being a series of letters over the signature of Junius which attracted wide attention. He occasionally contributes to the periodicals of the day, but his modesty prevents him from signing his true name to any of his writings. Col. Pisle unfortunately labors under the delusion that he was born to be a great humorist, but further than this he is entirely sane and is perfectly harmless.

Superfluous Information.

[Texas Siftings.]

The students at University of Texas are always playing some game on the professors. Old Prof. Gasaway is generally selected as the target. About 3 o'clock in the morning one night last week he was disturbed by the ringing of his door-bell. Hastily enveloping his figure in a dressing gown he threw open a window and sticking out his head asked what was the cause of the disturbance. "The burglars are bad, and we only wanted to tell you that one of your windows is open." "Which one?" he asked anxiously. "The one you have got your head stuck out of, Professor," replied the students in chorus.

WINTER WHEAT.

The Lessons Farmers Should Learn From Recent Reverses.

We should learn lessons from reverses. Farmers have certainly suffered severe losses by the failure of the wheat crop the present season, and it will be wise in this day of adversity to consider if there are not some good and sufficient reasons for the failure. The primary reason is doubtless the exceedingly unfavorable season. But to lay the whole blame of the failure of the crop to this cause is equivalent to an admission that a man is helpless when contending against the elements, and may reasonably sit idly with folded hands and accept as a fatalist whatever fortune circumstances may bring to him. In like manner a man might as reasonably sow his seed and leave it a prey to weeds and then complain that the weeds had ruined his crop. It is one of the inevitable and unavoidable conditions of our existence that we have to strive against adverse influences of soil and climate. Weeds, storms, and injurious seasons have to be prepared for and evaded in some manner by the exercise of skillful and timely precautions. It is childish for any of us to say we can not help this or that adverse influence until we have exhausted every possible effort to avoid or nullify it. Has this been done in regard to last year's wheat crop? It must be confessed that in the great majority of cases this has not been done, and that the greater part of the losses are due to the imperfect manner in which the land has been prepared for the crop. Wheat is a highly cultivated and domesticated plant, and will not bear the rigors of winter unless it has every advantage of fertile and well prepared soil. Without these it succumbs to adverse conditions of weather, and is easily destroyed. There is no other crop grown that requires better farming than wheat, and it must be confessed that skillful farming is exceedingly rare. This is proved by every day experience, as well as by the very low average of wheat produced per acre, viz., about eleven bushels in the State of New York, against the possible average of twenty-seven bushels in other countries.

Just now farmers are preparing for the next wheat crop, and it is a timely subject for thought how the dangers to which wheat is subject may be avoided and escaped. Let us consider what the wheat crop requires for its perfect growth and then see how exceedingly rare it is that these requisites are provided. Wheat needs a peculiar condition of the soil. It should be made very mellow and fine about the seed and below it to a depth sufficient to give room for the roots to spread and take a firm hold. On the surface the soil should be somewhat loose and open and somewhat lumpy, but the lumps should be small and not so large as to be called clods. This condition is only secured by the most careful and thorough working. It requires also a soil free from stagnant water, and this is only procured by thorough drainage. No other crop requires drainage so much as wheat, and none is more quickly destroyed by the action of frost upon wet soil. The plowing of the soil is the first thing to think about, and this is to be done at the earliest possible moment. It will not do to leave the plowing for wheat until the week before it is time to sow the seed. Old farmers were in the habit of summer fallowing the land for wheat, and never considered it to be properly fitted without two or three plowings and six or eight harrowings. We are in too great a hurry to do this, but "haste makes waste," and in this respect the proverb is especially applicable. Moreover, if the ground is not plowed as soon as it is ready for the plow, the dry weather almost always interferes with or prevents the work, and it is done in the worst possible manner and in a hurry. The way to avoid this difficulty is to begin in good season and plow the ground as soon as it is cleared of the standing crop. It is one of the evils of our present too short rotation that wheat—which, as we have said, is the most particular and exacting crop—is made to follow oats or corn, and the latter is the worse of the two. Following oats the land is usually well manured and often limed, and if the oat stubble is plowed as soon as it is cleared little or no harm may ensue, but the immediate plowing is indispensable to the proper fitting of the ground. One good plowing, with care to turn even furrows and to follow with repeated harrowings, and rollings if necessary, or to work the land thoroughly with a good pulverizing harrow or some cultivating implement which answers as a plow and harrow and even a roller at once, will make an excellent preliminary preparation. Repeated harrowings will fine and consolidate the soil, working all the mellow earth to the bottom and making a compact and firm seedbed, and bringing all the lumps, which will be small, to the surface. Then we have the especial conditions which the wheat crop needs, and if the seed is sown by a drill, or broadcast and covered with a cultivator or small plow, all that can be done will be done, and the farmer may then wait with patience, confidence and hope that the ancient promises will be surely fulfilled, viz., that "seed time and harvest shall not fail," and that "the hand of the diligent shall be filled."

A few words might be added to call attention to the rarity of this requisite preparation, but it is scarcely needed. Every farmer knows how carelessly the fall grain is put into the soil as a rule; how corn stubble is harrowed or scratched with the plow, and sown and left to produce a crop, or fail to do it, just as the season may happen; or how a weedy oat stubble, all dry, hard and baked, is broken up in a most imperfect manner, the rough surface rolled and just scratched so as to get an apparent smooth surface upon which the seed is sown, and then, as in the parable, the seed so sown where it has no depth of earth springs up, but soon perishes for want of the needed nourishment for the roots. All this is an oft-told tale—an "old, old story"—but it may be well to repeat it as a frightful example of how not to do it, which might be profitably exhibited in season and out of season.—*Henry Stewart, in N. Y. Times.*

—A Tennessee man finds there are 300,000 worthless dogs in that State, which consume food enough, if fed to hogs, to make 30,000,000 pounds of bacon, which would be equal to feeding meat to 100,000 able-bodied men a whole year. At ten cents per pound the bacon would be worth $3,000,000, and if in silver would load down ninety-four two-horse wagons and make a wagon train more than half a mile long. Again, the worthless whelps prevent farmers from keeping 2,000,000 sheep, the mutton and wool from which would be worth $5,000,000. Including the sheep annually killed, the whole expense of keeping the dogs of the State amounts to the pretty sum of $9,000,000.—*Chicago Herald.*

MOLDS.

Fungi and Their Appearance Under the Microscope.

All the forms of plant life—the yeast-plant, the protococcus, the diatoms and desmids and the bacteria—consist of single simple cells, and so are called unicellular plants. Now all plants, no matter how large they are when they have attained their full size, are in the beginning, unicellular. It is by the repeated division and subdivision of this original cell that the full-grown plant is built up. As the cells go on multiplying in this way, they undergo differentiation—that is to say, they become separated into groups each of which has special characters adapting it for a particular function in the life of the plant. Thus, some cells go to form the bark, others the wood-tissue, etc.

It will be interesting to take one of the simpler many-celled plants and trace out the steps of its growth from the time it consists of a single cell to the time when it has attained its full growth, and is made up of many cells. Let us take for this purpose one of the molds, *Penicillium glaucum.* The molds, with the appearance of which to the naked eye as white or greenish patches forming on dead organic matter in damp places everybody is familiar, belong to the larger group of plants called fungi. The species of mold we are now to consider may readily be cultivated for examination, by making a paste of flour and water and allowing it to stand exposed to the air for a few days. The first appearance of the mould is a slight whitish opacity at the surface of the liquid, and close examination would show little elevations at these places. These patches rapidly extend, and become more opaque, and in three or four days take on a bluish-green look at the center. The whole mass now seems to float on the liquid. After a while it acquires a more decided green color, the coloring appearing first at the center and radiating outward. If now one blows upon it a cloud of green dust will be seen; this dust is made up of spores.

Under the microscope, one of these spores is seen to be a spherical body one three-thousandth of an inch in diameter, and consisting of a bit of fluid protoplasm, invested by a more dense and tough sac. If one of the spores that has fallen into the liquid paste be watched, a change in its appearance will soon be seen to occur. The spore grows larger, its liquid contents become granular, and in three or four hours there is a protrusion of the cell-sac. This protrusion soon becomes an elongated process, and gives off branches from its sides. Just before the places of branching, cross-partitions are formed, and so the plant has now come to consist not of a single cell, but of several cells united. Meanwhile, other processes have been growing out from the spore and giving off branches, and after a time they become intertwined with one another and with those from other spores, and thus a delicate white film forms on the surface of the paste. This film is called a mycelium, and the separate branches of which it is made, hyphæ.

Examining a single one of these hyphæ, it will be seen that it is separated by cross-partitions into chambers. Each of these chambers constitutes a perfect cell; each consists of a liquid inner part and a surrounding tough, transparent envelope. Usually the inner part has four or five clear spots in it, called vacuoles.

For some time all the hyphæ lie parallel to the surface, but after a while a few may be seen to hang down in the liquid. These are called submerged hyphæ. Soon after, other hyphæ grow up into the air, and it is then that the mold begins to take on its green color. These erect hyphæ are at first like the others, but by-and-by become modified. They give off branches both at their sides and ends. The latter, or terminal branches, next become pointed, and these points swell out into balls; the necks of the balls then elongate, swell, and so form other balls, and this process is continued until a row of six or eight of them is produced. Now, each of these balls is a spore; as soon as it has become ripened, it falls from the hyphæ to the surface of the liquid, and gives rise to a new plant. Of course it often happens that a spore is carried off by a current of air, and then the matter of its living or dying must depend upon the kind of material upon which it chances to fall. If it falls upon some organic matter from which it can get food for its growth, it becomes a new plant; if not, it dies. That such spores float about in the air in great numbers is shown by the commonness of molds.

Another common mold *Mucor mucedo,* has a life history different in some respects from the above, and sufficiently remarkable to deserve notice. This mold is quite large, and the hyphæ can readily be seen with the naked eye; it commonly grows upon the fresh excrement of horses. In *Mucor* the ends of the erect hyphæ enlarge into single, spherical box-like bodies within which the spores are contained. These boxes, or sporangia, when the spores are getting ripe, become covered with a thin coating of oxalate of lime, and at the same time the hyphæ lengthen out a great deal, and bend toward the light. Thus, after a while the sporangia strike against the surface from which the mold is growing, and its brittle covering bursts and allows the spores to escape.

Sometimes *Mucor* reproduces itself in a way still more remarkable. A couple of hyphæ come together at their tips swelling out as they approach each other. When they have come in contact, partitions form, cutting off the ends of each. The two ends then unite, forming a spherical body, and in it spores soon make their appearance. The body after a time becomes detached from the hyphæ and falls down. After lying for six or seven weeks, the covering bursts through and the spores are diffused.

These two methods of generation occur alternately, and afford an example of the process called alternation of generations, and known of both animals and plants.—*Cor. Country Gentleman.*

Hemp.

The culture of hemp suffers from the competition of substitutes. From 75,000 tons grown in 1880 our annual product has fallen to 5,000 tons in 1884. Foreign jute has almost entirely driven out American hemp from the manufacture of cotton bagging. The cause for this is the enormous disparity between the cost of labor here and in Asia, where jute is grown and prepared, and it does not seem probable that the transfer of the industry from America to Asia can be arrested until some suitable machinery for preparing home grown fiber at a less cost than that of the foreign grown stalk shall be brought into use.—*Exchange.*

HAYING.

The Ancient and Modern Systems of Cutting Grass Contrasted.

There is scarcely any occupation that has undergone so great changes during the period of a generation as that of haying. Many speak of the revolution that has occurred in almost every kind of manufacturing establishment by the introduction of the various machines that are propelled by water or steam power. But a greater change has occurred in the field where grass is cut and cured for the support of animals during the winter. In almost all manufacturing establishments some of the hand tools that were in use forty years ago are still needed to do the work. In the haying field, however, the work is now performed by machines drawn or operated by animals. On many large farms, where several hundred acres of grass are harvested, not a hand-scythe or rake can be found. Grass that can not be cut with a mowing-machine is left untouched. After the grass is cut the tedder scatters it about or places it where it will be in the best condition to dry. When it is sufficiently cured the horse-rake collects it into windrows. On many farms all, or nearly all, the pitching is done by machinery. The labor is placed on animals to perform. The machine has driven out of the haying field all kinds of hand tools.

Not many years ago haying was the most laborious occupation on farms. Now it is one of the lightest. Then it employed not only all the men and boys on the places, but all that could be procured in the neighboring villages. Often many kinds of business were suspended to give the men an opportunity to work in the haying field. They were sure of receiving higher wages than could be obtained in most other employments, and of having a chance to work while there was little going on in towns. Not unfrequently women, girls and children worked in the haying fields. They spread out the green grass from the swath, turned it when dry, and "followed the cart" that the men were loading. It was generally necessary to employ all the available help in the neighborhood in order to secure the hay crop in proper season. Haymakers were obliged to work very long hours. The mowers were expected to be up by daylight and to be in the field before sunrise. Time was often too precious to admit of going to the farm-house to obtain meals. Lunches and often dinners were brought out for the men in the fields, and supper was not eaten until it was too dark to admit of working. With the many laborers, the hard work and the long hours, the haying season was extended through fully two months.

Haying has now become an easy occupation, employing only the number of men who ordinarily work on the farm. Old men, women, girls and little boys are no longer seen in the haying field. There is nothing for them to do. The hours for haying are no longer than those for planting or cultivating. It is not necessary to cut grass while the dew is on it because the work is done easier. The machine and the horses that draw it never complain of being fatigued. Men engaged in haying do not go to the field in the morning twilight or remain till dusk. The cost of hay machines has been greatly reduced in places where improved machinery can be employed to advantage. In many parts of the West grass is cut, cured and put in stack for seventy-five cents per ton, although laborers receive much higher wages than they did thirty years ago. There is no longer trouble in securing all the hay needed to keep any amount of farm stock. Hay is so easily put up in many places that farmers pay little attention to taking care of straw or to saving corn fodder. They raise no roots for stock food and sow no rye for affording winter pasturage. Scientific discovery and skill in the construction of labor-saving machinery have accomplished more in the haying field than in the workshop.

In no respect has the condition of the laborer been injured by the introduction of machinery into the haying field. The poets, novelists and painters find little to admire in the haying field at the present time. "I know nothing," writes an English novelist, "so cheerful, so genial and yet so peace-bestowing, as the sound, in the first hours of the morning, of the whetting of scythes. It is the happy mean between utter rural silence and the roar of the crowded city; so exhilarating, so sociable and yet so undisturbing is its unaffected music. What a quiet, happy laugh there is in it! What half-subdued humor, what friendly good nature! The sound never ceased. Field after field took up the magic morning music. Sometimes it was played on a perfect orchestra of instruments." All the pastoral poets from Virgil to Wordsworth have sung of the merry haymakers. The painters of every land have transferred the picturesque scenes of the haying field to canvas. They have shown the mowers bending to their work, the boys spreading out the grass to dry, the women and girls, clad in scarlet frocks, with gypsy bonnets on their heads, raking the hay, and the strong men pitching it on to carts. The building of the stack has been the subject that has inspired many painters. There is little poetry or romance about the modern haying field. Everything pertaining to the picturesque has departed, never to return. Every machine designed to do a large amount of labor in a short time is, in the nature of things, prosaic. It is only suggestive of gain, and any money-getting employment is unpoetical. The losses that have been sustained by the introduction of machinery into the haying field have, however, been very small compared with the gains. Cheap and abundant hay amply compensates for the loss of a few picturesque scenes and a little poetic sentiment.—*Chicago Times.*

Milking a Left-Handed Cow.

A clever lady, living in the Cove, was once caught in the wrong, yet extricated herself gracefully. She was trying to milk her first cow, her husband's gift, and in her ignorance had stationed herself on the left. It was near the public road. A man riding by stopped at the novel sight and blurted out: "Madam, you are on the wrong side of that cow." It was news to her, but her ready mother wit came to her aid. "Yes, sir," was her pleasant reply, "but this isn't a common cow. She was raised by a left-handed woman." She came off conqueror.—*Walker (Ga.) Messenger.*

—Crack race-horses have their meat and drink more carefully attended to while traveling than royal personages. The English runner "Paraday," on his late trip to Paris, had his own particular brand of water carried over with him in cases like a monarch's private champagne.

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