

the kitchen above. Exclamations, peals of silver laughter, rattling of dishes, and a melée of sounds generally. And then the two culprits in the cellar heard the girls descending the cellar-stairs.

"They are hiding somewhere, of course," said Kate. "Charley has bragged so much of how he could cook, and keep a house in order, that he'd rather die than face us. And he knows I should tell Anne. Good heavens, what a mess!"

"The girls came daintily along, holding up their skirts. Directly, Kate got a glimpse of Sam's face, smeared with smut, and hair disordered. She uttered a piercing scream.

"It's a negro," she cried, seizing Mary and dragging her back. "He's as black as the ace of spades. And such a dreadful countenance. I shall die of fright."

"Two of them," cried Mary, as Sam and his friend rose from their concealment. "Heaven help us! I'll call the police." She started to rush up the stairs, but Sam Brooks caught her by the skirts and held her back.

"Do stop Mary—for heaven's sake, stop, and don't make an alarm. It's only Charley and I, and we—we—that is, we've been doing a little cooking, and we ain't just ready to see company."

"Oh, Charley, Charley," cried Kate, "what would Anne say if she could see how you've kept house?"

"I was an ass to boast," said Charley, frankly, "and I am willing to confess it. You may tell Anne so when you write to her. And Sam and I will get our meals at a hotel. I think it will be cheaper, and easier for all concerned."

"I should think it would," said Kate. Sam and Mary Hartley lingered behind, to say that they thought it would, too; and to say something vague and sweet about the housekeeping that they proposed to set up jointly. Only Mary, not Sam, was to be housekeeper.

Charley Johnson is a "sadder" if "wiser" man. He never brags any more about how nicely he can keep house.

Propagating By Layers.

A layer is only a cutting that allowed to remain attached to the parent plant until it has produced roots through which it may collect sustenance for its support. Various methods are employed to produce this result such as ringing, girdling, twisting, tonguing, or partly dividing that portion of the stem or branch on which it is desired that roots shall be formed. All these distortions of the stems or branches of the plant layered are for one object, that is, to check the downward flow of sap. Roots then become necessary for supplying sustenance to the cutting, or layer, and are consequently formed. The most common method of preparing layers is that of making a tongue on the under side of the branch. The operation is performed thus: Make an incision in the branch or part of the plant to be layered, just below a bud cutting through the bark and into the branch to the depth of one-quarter to one-half its diameter; then pass the knife upward for an inch or more, according to the size and nature of the plant being layered, splitting the branch lengthwise, forming the tongue. The branch is then bent down and fastened in place by means of a hooked peg, and the end tied up to a stake. That part on which the incision is made is covered with soil or other materials that will exclude it from light air, while at the same time keeping it moist, thus aiding the development of roots. In making layers of certain kinds of small herbaceous plants, slender vines, it will not be necessary to use pegs or stakes to hold the layer in place; but with larger plants they are usually needed for keeping the layered branch steady in one position while the new roots are being mitted.—*American Agriculturist.*

Weed Out The Fleck.

This is the best season for classification of ewes and disposing of the poorest. By this time a correct judgment of the lamb or lambs reared by each ewe can be formed, and the weight of each fleece is known. The profitability of the ewe depends upon the number and quality of the lambs she raises, her weight of wool, etc. One ewe may raise a lamb while another loses hers; yet the former will shear such a poor fleece that she is really the less profitable. The loss of a lamb often occurs through no fault of the ewe. Nevertheless, proficiency is a desirable quality in a ewe. A good ewe properly treated before and after shearing, can rear two good lambs without injury to herself. Some ewes are better mothers than others.

It certainly will not be profitable to keep the inferior sheep through next winter. If the classification is made now, the rejected class can be made ready for market on grass, which makes the cheapest flesh. Many farmers will find the most profitable market for these culls on their own farms. Truly there is a prejudice among consumers against aged ewes. But this is chiefly owing to the fact that such are often put upon the market in poor condition. A lean sheep does not make good mutton, whatever its age. It is not claimed that fattening an old ewe will make her yield the best mutton; but it may be made good and palatable. When the ewes are culled out every year, there will soon be no very old ones. This is not the season for the consumption of salt pork; and all things considered, mutton will be a good thing for the farmer's larder.—*American Agriculturist.*

Most farmers have learned how to use Paris green by thoroughly mixing one pound of poison with one hundred or more of finely ground plaster. Occasionally some inexperienced person uses more, and always with bad results. Too much Paris green kills the sheep, and it will not kill the potato plants, and it will not kill the bugs, as it repels them and they do not eat it.

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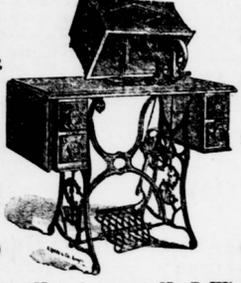
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