

**FARM ORCHARD AND GARDEN**  
BY **F.ETRIGG**  
**REGISTER, ROCKFORD, I.A.**  
CORRESPONDENCE SOLICITED



There are two precepts which, while not having much similarity, should always be kept in mind—one, that a fellow shouldn't put his hands in boiling hot water; the other, that he should no sooner sign his signature for a stranger.

There's a peg loose somewhere if parents who have given their children care and shelter through childhood years have to spend their declining days in the county poor farm when either son or daughter has so much as a roof for shelter or two crusts of bread.

The Minnesota experiment station has taken up a series of experiments with a view to eradicating wild mustard, which is a serious pest in many of the grain growing sections of the state. The method which is being followed consists in spraying the fields with a sulphate of iron, which kills the mustard, but does not seem to injure the grain.

A gardener near Peoria, Ill., recently suffered a \$10,000 loss by having the hail riddle 300 acres of peas which were being grown for a nearby canning factory. It is fortunate that cases of grief of this kind are not of common occurrence. The only return he will get from what was left on the ground will be a fertilizer for next year's crop.

Any man who approaches you with a proposition which involves the placing of your signature on a piece of paper which is to remain in his possession is nine times out of ten working a graft for the easy transference of money from your pocket to his own. When chaps of this kind come around, either tie your right hand behind you or set the dog on them.

A New York bird fancier and student of wild bird life has succeeded in domesticating the ruffed grouse, which is conceded to be one of the wildest and shiest of birds. He procured the eggs and set them under a bantam hen, but the second generation laid and hatched in captivity. Quails, which are much less wild than the grouse, have been domesticated in a number of instances.

With prime western lambs selling at \$7.30 and with wool fetching close to 80 cents a pound, sufficient incentive would seem to be provided to cause a whole lot of farmers to go into the business of raising sheep. A flock of them is bound to have a part in the thrifty, conservative and intelligent type of agriculture which will soon be adopted by farmers throughout all the western central states.

What a fool a fellow is to so load himself up with this world's business as to be driven from pillar to post of work from dawn to nightfall and never have a minute's time to take needed recreation. We know of such a one who when poorer than Job's turkey used to take a half day off every week to go fishing, but now that he has more business on his hands and is more prosperous he barely has time to so much as look at a fishing rod. He is a fool and has lots of company.

As contrary to a quite generally accepted notion, the superintendent of one of the government fish hatcheries is authority for the statement that the German carp does not thrive off the spawn of other fish, nor does it devour young fish of any description, but is strictly vegetarian, its food being the roots of tender plants to be found at the bottom of creeks and bayous, which it burrows after with its long snout. The carp is an inoffensive, awkward fellow, who will never put up a fight when he can get out of it.

Some idea of the enormous reproductive capacity possessed by the larger varieties of fish may be got from a calculation of an Iowa fisherman who took five and one-eighth pounds of eggs from one German carp. By actual count one grain contained fourteen eggs, which would bring the sum total of eggs carried by this fish up to approximately 12,410,290. It is this remarkable fecundity of the carp family that accounts for the fact that it multiplies with such rapidity in all waters where its eggs and young fry are protected from the ravages of its natural enemies.

**THE START IN ALFALFA.**

A reader of these notes, living at Petersburg, Ill., writes asking where he can secure pure and reliable alfalfa seed. In reply to this direct question we would say that the Payne Alfalfa company of Omaha, Neb., is recommended by the Iowa experiment station as one of the most reliable firms dealing in alfalfa seed. Seed which the writer got from it last fall gave a most excellent stand. In starting a patch of alfalfa only the best seed should be used, and this will come at about \$9 per bushel, which is the price of red clover seed. Our correspondent also wishes to know where he can get red clover bacteria with which to inoculate his soil. In view of the fact that such rank frauds have been perpetrated under the guise of furnishing cultures for the different leguminous crops, we would repeat what appeared in these notes a short time ago relative to this subject. In order to clear up a good deal of fiction concerning the matter, as well as to show up a number of firms that were swindling the public with bogus and worthless bacteria cultures, the agricultural department issued a bulletin which states that experiments conducted show that no beneficial results can be expected for a particular crop if the bacteria of that plant are already in the soil; that but little benefit can be expected if the ground is decidedly in need of other fertilizers, such as phosphates, potash or lime, and that practically no benefit can be derived from inoculation of the soil if it is already rich in nitrogen. Experiments carried on at the Iowa station under the supervision of Professor Holden show that very satisfactory results can be obtained by thoroughly fertilizing the plot to be used for alfalfa with barnyard manure and putting it in the best of tith before sowing the seed, harrowing in as with clover. It is conceded that there may be distinct advantage in taking soil from a field in which the plant has obtained a foothold and scattering it on the new land at the time the seed is sown, but the importation of nitro cultures from any firm which does not have the O K of the department of agriculture or one's own state experiment station is, as experience of many has proved, a very precarious speculation. Fit the land as you would to produce a bumper crop of corn and sow seed not later than Aug. 15.

**THE PRICE TOO HIGH.**

In a few weeks now the great public school system of the country will be in operation again. We would say a word to the parents of many a bright and ambitious pupil. It is that rather than be encouraged to take up extra burdens of school work during the years between twelve and sixteen the pupil—and this applies more particularly to the daughter in the home—should be allowed to take but the regular work and less than this if the condition of health requires it. The cases are of all too frequent occurrence where an ambitious son or daughter has been urged beyond the limit of physical and nervous endurance simply to satisfy the shallow vanity of an unwise and shortsighted parent in the desire to see the child at the head of the class. A weakened vitality, ruined eyesight and a nervous breakdown are considerations which prove beyond question that the game doesn't begin to pay the candle. The boy possessing a somewhat larger endowment of animal spirits and having less ambition and pride than his sister will fire his books into the corner when the point of nervous tension is reached and go out of doors and refresh his tired spirits. It is only the "tomboy" girl who will imitate her brother in this respect, and fortunate she is if endowed with his feelings. There's not a high school, college or university in the country but has its quota of human sacrifices due to this abominable system of cramming, stuffing and overstudy. As the children in the home grow to maturity every care possible should be exercised with a view to giving them strong and robust bodies, their intellectual attainments being of entirely secondary consideration when got at a sacrifice of health. It is of mighty little satisfaction to the student when he finishes his school or college course to realize that in return for a store of more or less useless book knowledge he is doomed to lifelong invalidism and incapacity. Education is a valuable asset, but it is dearly acquired at an expense of physical bankruptcy.

**SHADE ABOUT THE HOME.**

As between a treeless, sun beaten yard and one covered with a surplus of shade there are few people but would prefer the latter condition, and yet from the standpoint of home sanitation and individual health the former is far the more desirable. It is but natural that there should be a prejudice against taking out any of the shade trees about the home which for years have furnished nesting places for feathered friends, provided refreshing and cool retreat from summer sun and served to break the force of winter winds. We come to look upon these mute friends with real affection, and no wonder that as a result of such attachment formed through long years of association we are loath to cut them out root and branch. They have al-

ways served us well, and it is with real twinges of the heart that the day arrives when it is necessary to thin them out and let in the germ destroying, wholesome sunshine, whose mission as a preserver and restorer of health was never realized in so large a measure as today. If the house is completely wrapped in shade, moss clings to the roof and little or no grass grows beneath the trees the time is ripe for action. Shade is good and pleasant, but from the standpoint of health too much is worse than none at all.

**THE HUMAN BRAIN.**

**It Undergoes Wonderful Changes During Its Growth.**

The wonderful changes which the human brain undergoes from the moment when it first appears in the embryo until it becomes the perfected laboratory of thought characteristic to the matured human being has been commented upon by several of the leading writers on biology, physiology, etc. During these successive changes, or, rather, transformations from the lower to the higher sphere, the human brain not only takes upon itself the general shape and form of the brains of various representatives of the lower classes of animals, but appears to have the same structural constituents, at least to a certain degree. Thus it has been found that the original germ of the brain as it appears in the human embryo has the exact outlines of a serpent's thought factory. After that the changes which take place while the brain is assuming the various shapes which it must undergo before it becomes perfect give it a decided resemblance to the brains of fishes, birds and mammiferous animals.

"Hein's 'Thoughts on the Structure of the Human Brain' and Wilson's 'Anatomy of the Human Body' both mention these queer transformations, as does also Hugh Miller in his famous work, 'Testimony of the Rocks.' Miller puts it in this way: 'It has long been known that the human brain is built up by a wonderful process, during which it assumes in succession the form of the brain of a serpent, a fish, a bird, and lastly, before it assumes the characteristic human form, it takes upon itself the outline of a mammiferous quadruped's brain.' Hence the remark made by scientific writers that 'man is the sum total of all animals.'"

**THE TIDY TADPOLE.**

**How This Cheerful Little Cannibal Eats and Develops.**

A wonderful spirit of tidiness seems to pervade the tadpole world. They always eat whatever has become useless—their own eggs, their superfluous companions. Even those who are only weakly are cleared out of the way and the victims take it all as a matter of course. I have disturbed a strong member of the community just as he had begun to dine off the tail of a weaker brother, but the sufferer has not troubled to escape—he simply waited till the fratricide returned to complete his deadly work.

For some time there is no grave change in the tadpoles. They simply grow and become so far transparent that their internal mechanism, which consists of one coil of intestines, is plainly visible. When, however, they are about three months old a careful observer can distinguish a tiny foot on either side of the base of the tail. These grow slowly, but seem unable to move independently until shortly before the border land is passed which leads to perfect froghood. The hind legs have reached their full size before the front ones appear, and, while the feet grow slowly, the hands are ready made and can be used at once. For a day or two they can be seen under the skin before they venture forth, and their possessor is very restless and excited. He rushes madly about, jostling his comrades, and no doubt being voted a bore; then a more vigorous effort breaks the skin and the tiny hand and arm appear.

There seems some rule about the order of precedence here, as there is when the whiskers go, for last year my tadpoles, almost without exception, had their right hands some hours before the left, while on previous occasions I have had an entirely left handed crew.—Chambers' Journal.

**A Commercial Transaction.**

"My dear lady, may I have the refusal of your hand for a week?"  
"A week? Why, I'll give you a refusal that will last forever."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

**Considerate.**

Nell—That horrid Mr. Hansom insisted upon kissing me last night. Belle—Why didn't you scream? Nell—I didn't want to scare the poor fellow.—Philadelphia Ledger.

The pretty girl was lavishing a wealth of affection on her mastiff, and the very soft young man was watching her.

"I wish I were a dog," he said, languishingly.  
"Don't you worry," she replied.  
"You'll grow."—London Tit-Bits.

Neither evidence nor common sense nor reason has the slightest effect upon prejudices.—Goethe.

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