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BY R. H. TYSON.

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Osage Orange as Timber.

V. P. Richmond, of Madison county, Ill., writes thus to the Prairie Farmer: Some time last summer one of your correspondents inquired as to the lasting qualities of the osage orange for stakes and posts. I have had some trial and report as follows:

I noticed nearly twenty years ago that the trimmings of hedge rows lasted a long time for mere twigs. In 1853 I filled a side ditch with osage limbs to keep the hogs from filling the ditch up. These have lain there, sometimes covered with grass and weeds, frequently wet and dry. I enclose a section that you may judge for yourselves. Larger pieces are perfectly sound, showing the thorns in perfection. I have a set of bean poles in use four years, standing in the ground two winters, and all sharp and good for a dozen years, so far as I can see.

Having occasion to cut down some trees, I made them into fence posts, stakes, mallets, beetles, and wedges for splitting rails. For all above-named uses I find it good—fully equal to any in use. The posts have not been in use more than four years, but as some were set green, it is time they should show some decay if it is not a lasting timber. As they do not decay, it is reasonable to think it is good for posts. If there is any objection, it is on account of the hardness, when seasoned; splits very straight and easily when green, but works very hard when dry. There is very little shrinkage in seasoning.

In one case I made and used a mallet two years, cutting off green, and using a limb from the same tree for a handle. The mallet is good yet. The handle was only wedged twice, and was tight when taken out, having become split where grasped by the hand, it had to be replaced. It was first used to beat most of the mortices of a barn addition of 28 by 60. I am so well satisfied of the usefulness of osage, that I planted, in the spring of 1870, five hundred plants in a grove. I believe if I had set the first plants I raised (about 500 in number) for timber purposes, I should have now all the fence posts I

would require on 110 acres of farm. My oldest hedge is about twenty years old. I had at that time little faith in hedges, and let them grow as wind breaks. They turn horses and cattle, and most of the plants are large enough for posts. Where they have room they grow much faster, and when cut at any time of the year, and as close to the ground as possible, from six to a dozen new plants spring up, which in four or five years will do for fence stakes. Once start a grove and you will always have a grove.

I know of no timber as useful, and so easily propagated. For firewood none is better, burning well when green, better when dry. There is no better investment for the prairie farmer than to set a part of the farm to osage orange grove.

AUSTRALIAN FORESTS.

The report of the Inspector of State Forests in Victoria reveals a condition of things which could hardly have been expected in so young a colony. It appears that the demand for timber at the gold fields for mining operations is very great, and that the forests in the neighborhood of Ballarat and similar districts have been devastated in the most reckless and wanton manner. Frequently saplings of forty or fifty feet have been cut down for the sake of a few yards of timber, and the damage done by the proprietors has been rivalled by the carelessness of the splitters, who allow their camp-fires free range in ravaging extensive tracts of forest land. Unless vigilant supervision is exercised, it is feared that the supply of timber for fuel and other purposes will soon become alarmingly short. The Barrah Forest, the largest in Victoria, and comprising upwards of 70,000 acres of red gum trees, has suffered severely, not only from the encroachments of unlicensed persons, but also by shipments of its valuable timber having been made to India and other places. It is on this forest that the State chiefly relies for a supply of railway sleepers, and there can be no question that the red gum is the best indigenous wood that the colony produces. The Inspector draws the attention of the Government to the wasteful destruction and premature decay of the State Forests, and recommends that timber reserves should be at once constituted and strictly protected, and that every encouragement should be given to the plantation of fresh woods.—Pall Mall Gazette.

EXCLUSION OF FARM STOCK FROM WOOD LANDS.

Arthur Bryant, of Princeton, Ill., writes to the Rock River Farmer thus: "The preservation of wood lands is a subject which has of late attracted increasing attention. The rapid destruction of wood in all parts of the country, and the growing scarcity of the more valuable kinds of timber, render the growth and preservation of the forests a matter of primary importance. Yet many who are anxious to perpetuate their wood lands are perhaps not aware that they may be extinguished by pasture; not indeed as speedily, but as certainly as by a summary process of felling. So well is this recognized in New England generally, that all land-owners who look forward to the interests of posterity, exclude farm stock of every description from their forests. In Illinois, on the other hand, the pasturage of wood land is almost universally practised. The cost of fencing may have had its influence—probably many have never bestowed a thought upon the subject, yet a little consideration must convince every sensible man of its inexpediency. The undergrowth of a forest is entirely extirpated in a few years by the admission of farm stock; and the young trees upon which the continuation of the forest depends are destroyed. Cattle will often bend or break down slender trees twenty feet high, for the sake of browsing the leaves from their tops. The lower branches of large trees are stripped of their leaves and die. The growth of the wood is injuriously affected by the admission of cold and parching winds—by the tramping of cattle, which hardens the soil and injures the roots of the trees—by the close fed turf which grows wherever the shade is not too dense, and by the lack of the accustomed mulch of leaves, which in thick woods everywhere covers the ground. From this combination of causes some of the trees perish; others are destroyed by the axe, and thinning once commenced, goes on in an increasing ratio as they are deprived of the accustomed protection afforded by close companionship. An illustration is afforded by the wood lands of Kentucky. The owners of valuable forests in that State early adopted the practice of cutting

out the undergrowth and worthless trees, and sowing the soil with blue grass for pasture. But for many years the trees in these noble parks have been rapidly perishing; and their reproduction, if ever accomplished, must be effected by means of artificial plantations. It is said that some landholders in Illinois have adopted the same plan, and the result will, doubtless, be the same.

With proper protection and management, a forest will continue to reproduce itself for an indefinite period of time. Nature, if left to herself, will carry on her operations successfully; but if they are not assisted, they must at least be unchecked.

A Woman Defines Her Position.

A correspondent of the San Francisco Chronicle, who signs herself "Tormented Woman," defines her position thus:

I am pestered with offers. Now I never offered to marry a man. I never had the presumption to say to a gentleman, "If you will be my exclusive companion for life, I will support you; I will be a mother to your children. As to congeniality, why I've only seen you in company dress, but you please me in that, and I'll take it for granted that in all their intricacies and complications our natures will come in perfect sympathy and consanguinity with each other. But men will make propositions after a six week's acquaintance, when in reality they know no more of the woman whom they ask to marry, than they do of the man in the moon. There are men who will propose marriage to us, whose business would keep them two-thirds of their time in the wilds of the continent. They seem to imagine that an hour of their name and alliance would be a sufficient compensation for a life spent two-thirds in grass widowhood, or of one entirely subject to the provisions of the backwoods. There are others, confirmed invalids, who, because we are pleasing to them, elect us to the station of nurses for life. Others are as poor as poverty, yet not for a moment do they hesitate to offer us shares in their like poverty.

You men are deluded on this subject of matrimony. You meet a woman attractive to you, and forthwith you conclude that she is all and end all of her existence here, is a place in your own private cage, where she is to sing for your own exclusive benefit. We propose soon to take a hand in this world's little game; we are trying to learn from you how you have managed so long and successfully to stock the cards; we propose to trump our share of the tricks, and see that the honors are more equally divided; we may not all vote or shriek, or officiate; as platform statuary for a Stanton or Anthony; but things are working; a new deal all around is being quietly shuffled out, and in a year or two more some of you gentlemen who deem all the woman's fitness to be for making your beds, cooking your food, scrubbing your floors, and rocking your cradles, will be astonished by the positions held by us."

A WELL ON FIRE.—A farmer living four-and-a-half miles from Mattoon, Illinois, while boring a well in his dooryard, at the depth of twenty feet, liberated a flow of gas. A pipe was procured and inserted in the well, projecting above the ground several feet, and the gas was ignited. For weeks the flame produced from this pipe has been plainly visible from Mattoon at night. This gas is described as pure hydrogen, almost without smell, affording a bright light, and giving out an intense heat. It appears to be much better adapted to heating and illuminating purposes than that which has been found in the neighborhood of Buffalo. The pipe placed in the well has a capacity of 15,000 feet per day, and the pressure of the gas is said by the Superintendent of the Mattoon Gas Works to be as great as in the mains to that city. The farmer who owns the well proposes to light and heat his house with the gas which has been so unexpectedly added to the products of his farm.

Journal of Education.—This excellent publication comes to us regularly, filled with a fund of valuable information, particularly to those interested in school matters. The last number contains about twenty-five articles of general interest. Among them is one on the "Prevention of Crime," which should be read by everybody. Teachers and school officers will find this a valuable paper for them. Published at the small sum of \$1 50 by J. B. Merwin, St. Louis, Mo.

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The Man Who Drinks.

The man who drinks is never, in the end, "the man who laughs." He is generally the man who weeps, or for whom others must shed bitter tears. He is, alas! a member of no particular class of society. You meet him everywhere, from the highest to the lowest places of this world, and always find him not only his worst enemy, but the unconscious enemy of all who trust in him. If among a band of hard working mechanics you find one who, on wages others deem quite sufficient for decent clothes, tidy rooms and comfortable dinners, is always out at the elbows, always at loggerheads with his landlord, and always complaining of hard times, ten to one but that he is the man who drinks. If on the Judge's Bench you meet a man who deals unjust, who judges unrighteously, who is factious in the presence of mystery, and makes crime a jest, and the sentence of some poor wretch an excuse for stupid puns and vulgar witticisms, there also you may know the man who drinks—in his own snug little room, perhaps, not openly, but all the same, a drunkard. If you see a woman worn, pale and wretched from some unknown cause—fear in her eyes and anxiety in her voice, youth gone too early, and her daily duties mere burdens, ten to one her husband is the man who drinks; for whoever knew that man to keep his vow to love, cherish and protect his wife? The beggar children in the gutters, ignorant, vile and wretched beyond description, are his off-springs. The jail opens to let him in. The gallops sometimes ends his life. The man who drinks is not always an idiot, as one might believe. The greatest Statesmen have ceased to be great; the best writers in the world dropped their pens when they were the most useful and brilliant splendid fellows; whom men admire and women love, have fallen to their hey-day because of rum. In one word, half the world is a failure, its hopes all wrecked, its love and offering on a ruined shrine, its schemes dead failures, its crimes legion, its prisons and its charnel house full, because of the man who drinks.—N. J. Ledger.

A WONDERFUL BALSAM.—A manufacturer and a vendor of quack medicines for rheumatism and the growth of hair combined, frequently wrote to a friend for a recommendation of his (the manufacturer's) balsam. In a few days he received the following, which we will call pretty strong: "Dear sir: The land composing this farm has hitherto been so poor that a Chinaman could not get a living off it, and so stony that we had to slice our potatoes and plant them edgeways; but hearing of your balsam I put some on a ten acre field surrounded by a rail fence, and in the morning I found the stones had entirely disappeared and a neat wall encircled the field; the rails were split into firewood, and piled up symmetrically in my back yard. I put half an ounce in the middle of a buckberry swamp, two days saw it cleared off, planted with corn and pumpkins, and a row of peach trees around it in full blossom through the middle. As an evidence of its tremendous strength, I would say it drew a striking likeness of my eldest son out of a mill-pond, drew blister all over his stomach, drew a load of potatoes four miles to market, drew grease out of a flint, and eventually drew a prize of \$97 out of a defunct lottery."

ON THE WRONG TRACK.—Two would-be Nitrods of the goodly city of Sacramento anticipated the appearance of the sun above the horizon a few days ago and rose from their slumbers at the early hour of 3 A. M. Accoutred in all the habiliments necessary for the chase, and equipped with rifles, guns, powder, game bags and shot, our valiant hunters started off for a fifteen-mile drive to their chosen hunting grounds. Cold and dark was the morning, and they urged their steed to do his best, marveling somewhat at the hard surface of the road. After riding about an hour, the possibility of being on the wrong road seems to have entered their minds, and as they approached a house, declared by one of the twain to "look familiar," inquiry was made as to their whereabouts. Imagine their disgust on ascertaining that they had been journeying round and round the Yolo race-course—evidently on the wrong track.

A fortune seeker at the Forest Hill Claim, California, abstractedly picked up a grimy lump interfering with his operations, and casually glancing at it, found it to be a solid nugget of gold, which, when tested, weighed nine hundred and twenty one ounces, of which seven hundred are pure gold.

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