

## MOON SIGNS.

A southern correspondent writes us that in his neighborhood they had a dry season, short pastures and but little water for stock, and hence farmers have been obliged to sell their stock at a sacrifice. He does not understand why farmers should be in such hard lines in that particular county in that part of the country, while in other parts of the state and adjoining states the rainfall has been abundant. He wishes to know why it is, if the moon governs the tides and seasons, that in some sections of a state or county it rains and in other parts is as dry as powder. Has the moon anything to do with it? Most certainly not. The same moon shines in his county that shines in the counties where rain and crops have been abundant. This moon superstition dies hard.

In an exchange we notice a communication which expresses the views about the moon with which we were quite familiar when a boy, and which we condense simply to show what farmers thought on the subject fifty and sixty years ago, as follows:

"Put in all grain in the light of the moon; also all vegetables and fruits that produce their fruit above ground; but plant everything that goes to root in the dark of the moon, preferably in the last quarter before the new moon."

This is the general principle. He further particularizes:

"If you have a twenty-acre field, one half sowed in the dark of the moon and the other half in the light of the moon, any man passing along the road when the grain is ripe can see the difference both in quality and light."

He proposes another test, as follows: "In making fences dig your post holes and place fence posts and nail on the boards in the light of the moon. The next spring they will be tipped to one side; but if you will dig the holes in the dark of the moon the posts will stand straight. Similarly, if you shingle half your house in the dark of the moon the shingles will lay flat and smooth; but those put on in the light of the moon will begin to turn up at the ends."

Here is an easier test which he gives: Place a plank or flat sandstone on your blue grass in the light

of the moon and let it remain during the summer months. The grass under it will turn a whitish yellow, but still grow; while if it is put on in the dark of the moon for the same length of time the plants will die, roots and all.

He also avers that if the moon shines on edged tools it will take out the temper, and that if you kill a corn-fed hog or beef in the dark of the moon it will go to grease and shrivel up when you fry it and not be fit to eat; but that if killed in the light of the moon it will be nice plump meat.

The signs of the zodiac also figured largely in our boyhood days. We have heard farmers aver that in planting potatoes you must plant them in the sign of the scales; that surgical operations on the farm should be performed when the sign was in the feet (mothers would not wean their babies by any other sign); that if you wanted to deaden timber you must do so when the sign was in the heart; and that if you wanted to quit smoking you could do it easily when the sign was in the feet, but with great difficulty when the sign was in the heart or in the head.

The interest in this article, we think, will lie in the indication it gives of the agricultural advancement in the last half century. We observed, however, even when a boy, that farmers who planted their grain by the ground instead of the moon, preparing the seed bed carefully and sowing good seed, generally had good crops, and that "moon farmers" had no better with the same preparation. Can it be that these moon signs are a relic of the old worship of Astarte, or moon worship, that has come down to us from the Phoenicians, or possibly through our superstitious ancestors in the forests of Germany? Isn't it about time we were studying soil physics and tillage, and letting the moon attend to her proper business of giving light by night?

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**"RAMBLER" DISSEMINATES VALUABLE INFORMATION.**

The writer leaving his office a few nights ago noticed a large automobile standing on a main street and approached the chauffeur for information, as the night was a very cold one, to ascertain what was the best

means to prevent the cylinders of a water-cooled car from freezing and breaking in frosty weather. This chauffeur advises that he drains his cylinders every night and opens up every petcock on and near the radiator. This does not drain out all the water. He then starts up the engine and runs the engine five minutes or so, that the heat of the engine would burn out all water that is left in all the pockets in the radiators, pipings and cylinders; he also has his fan removed and when he is driving the car and has occasion to stop any length of time, he watches the car very closely and if it is liable to get cold, he starts the car going. This explanation appeared to me very strange for it required so much work and it was necessary to go to so much trouble, and knowing that an average owner of an automobile, who took care of it himself, could not take time to drain the water from cylinders, open up the petcocks, then start the engine again and run it until the heat of the engine would evaporate all the remaining water in the car, I stated my objections and the chauffeur replied that the regular anti-freezing mixtures which was, by the way, a mixture of wood alcohol and glycerine, one part of this mixture being placed with three parts of water, was not reliable, and from his information there was no solution or mixture that could be relied upon and hence the necessity of draining the car after every trip the car makes. This set me to thinking that the general public should know more about these conditions and should have them in mind firmly should they contemplate buying an automobile, for when cylinders are frozen, in many cases it means almost an entire new engine and radiator and other expensive parts, and prospective customers should post themselves on this subject, for the only rational means of cooling automobile cylinders is by air. The preference for a reliable air cooled car should be apparent. The air cooled Franklin automobile never has any trouble during frosty weather—the owner does not have to drain cylinders. He does not have to have his car run idle on a cold day when going into a store for ten minutes, burning up enough gasoline to run the car several miles, and when the public further consider the air-cooled

Franklin cuts all the plumbing apparatus out of a car, it at the same time saves one-third of the time that would be required to look after a water-cooled car. What I am presenting is facts and they are not overstated—you can do as much if not more work with a Franklin air-cooled in the hottest summer day than you can do with any water-cooled car, and the water-cooled cars are at a said disadvantage, as you will admit, during cold weather. I have never heard of a Franklin car that has had any cylinder troubles during hot weather. I am sure I have had no trouble with my own car and have used it very roughly. A duplicate of my car came out with a perfect score in one of the most severe tests that has ever been held in the United States, running twenty-four hours every day for over sixteen hundred miles over the roughest roads that could be located adjacent to Boston, Mass.

A Franklin car was the only air cooled car in the contest. The average consumption of gasoline was seventeen miles per gallon on this trip, much of the work being done on low gear up and down sandy country.

The Con. W. & M. Co., who handle —"RAMBLER." the Franklin report that machine out-selling any car in the local market.

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**IRRIGATION POINTER.**

Very often where a person has water available only during the dormant season it may be applied and kept in the soil by careful cultivation. This, of course, requires that the soil have a high water holding capacity and that the culture be as good as can be given. If the soil is light and shallow the probability is that the trees will suffer for want of water during the latter part of the summer. It is also essential that irrigation of this kind be not given in the fall of the year until the trees are entirely dormant, or a late growth will be induced which will likely cause considerable trouble. As regards the number of gallons of water needed per tree I cannot say. It is exceedingly variable and will depend entirely upon the size and kind of trees, nature of soil, whether or not the tree is bearing and the mulching given to prevent loss of moisture.