

Agricultural Nicknacks.

Wheat Growing.

In the December number of *The Garden* I stated that my method of growing wheat begins with the seed and ends with the seed.

Experience and experiments prove conclusively that the seed is by far the most important factor in field, garden, and lawn. I am asked "how I make so small a quantity go over an acre?"

The results of one or two experiments will show the value of good seed, and the reason why sound and genuine seed goes so far.

In 1873 I planted 71 pounds of nice hand-picked wheat, on an exact square acre, in rows 18 inches apart. I cultivated it three times, and at harvest threshed out 67 bushels, 17 pounds—38 fold.

The same year, on 76 square feet, I planted 70 kernels of extra fine seed, weighing 45 grains Troy. This was cultivated and fertilized very carefully.

Thin sowing and cultivation of wheat very much encourage this habit. Winter wheat in particular, when the condition of the soil is favorable, thrives much better, and yields much more abundantly when sown thin.

Thin sowing will always and invariably produce a greater yield and of better quality when the seed is pure and the condition of the soil is favorable.

It is within the reach and power of every farmer to make his seed pure, and the condition of the soil favorable. Herein lies the secret of making large crops from thin sowing.

The encouragement of the tillering process and of cultivation necessarily give new vigor to the plant; consequently, the maturity of the grain is retarded, and at the same time, I think, it is made better.

There is danger, however, of rust when a crop of wheat is forced and permitted to grow beyond the time it should mature.

When thickly sown it makes but few if any tillers, and its tendency is to ripen earlier, with shorter straw, shorter heads, and fewer kernels.

"The greatest enemy of wheat is rust." Wheat cannot bear to be overwatered. It fails to carry out its natural habits; as well does it fail to develop fully in straw and grain.

In making the conditions of the soil favorable, the farmer must thoroughly understand the nature of his soil, and what it likes and dislikes, to put it in plain language.

For instance: It likes a high, dry, clay soil, not too finely pulverized—one that will pack well, and with but a little alluvial matter in it. It dislikes shade, damp low lands, and too much manure.

The selection of the seed has much to do with the yield. Poor seed makes the best and poor crops generally. The grain taken from the parent stock above-mentioned will be found to be the best in all respects.

The center stock of a cabbage, beet and radish plants bears the best seed.—Prof. A. E. Broun (Colorado Agricultural College), in the American Garden.

The Management of Horses.

A horse may live and work for thirty years. Usually at half that age he is worn out and of little value, if, indeed, he has not already succumbed to his fate.

On the average the useful life of a horse is reduced one-half by neglect; not willful, but thoughtless. And yet it is so easy to care for this noble servant and friend.

A little care, a little watchfulness, a few moments daily devoted to his comfort, would double the length of his life.

The first fault is in over-feeding or improper food. A horse's stomach is small and its food requires to be nutritious and concentrated.

Its digestion is not so vigorous as that of an ox, and it requires more delicate feeding. Its constitution is nervous and muscular, and its temperament active and sanguine.

Therefore needs nitrogenous rather than carbonaceous food, and oats, barley, bran and hay are more suitable than corn and coarse fodder.

But corn is excellent food if it is not given in excess, and a mixture of corn and oats makes the grain food on the whole.

But the food must be clean and sound, or the stomach is disordered, and plenty of time should be given for the thorough mastication of the food.

And the equally common fault is in over-watering or giving water at improper times. A horse's stomach is small—smaller relatively to the size of the body than that of a man, and it absorbs water with great rapidity.

When the stomach is filled with water, digestion cannot go on. For these reasons water should always be given to a horse in small quantities, never more than three gallons at any one time, and not more than half as much usually, and never soon after eating, but always before the feed.

If five minutes only intervene, that is sufficient for the absorption. And water should never be given in larger quantities than a quart when a horse is very warm.

In judging a horse many mistakes are made. A stable should not be too warm nor too cold. It should be free from drafts of cold air; it should be drained, kept clean and free from pungent odors; the light should come from the front, but the window should be high up and shaded; no dust from above should fall into it, and it should be well ventilated.

These are the major requisites, and if any owner will secure these, he will necessarily provide all the rest. Much mischief is done in shoeing. "No foot, no horse," is an old and true saying, and every owner of a horse should study the horse's feet.

A true friend of the horse will never permit its feet to be carved and cut of shape, or the cushion provided by nature to protect the sole—the frog—to be pared away from the feet or left without protection.

Deep drains are best because they secure the slow percolation of the water, giving the soil a chance to take up or absorb the nutritive properties which in the other case would go directly into the drain and be lost. The drain first carries off the very cold water of the subsoil, and the warmer surplus moisture from above taking its place, warms the land and hence offers a large area for the crops to amplify and thus gather up greater stores of plant food.

Farmers should teach those pretenders who propose to cure moon blindness in horses by knocking out the so-called wolf teeth, that they can do a great deal of harm in that manner. It is easily seen that these teeth have nothing to do with such blindness. That is a disease of the eye, of a constitutional nature, and it is barbarous to pretend to associate the breaking out of the animal's teeth with the cure of the diseased eye.—National Agriculturist.

Curious Trees.

The India rubber tree is a native of India and South America. The guava tree, from the fruit of which the delicious guava jelly is made, is a native of the Indies.

The latter tree was discovered in the central part of Africa; from the kernel is prepared a nice butter which will keep a year.

In Malabar a tree called the talow tree grows; from the seeds of it, when boiled, is procured a nice talow which makes excellent candles. There is a tree in Jamaica called the "life tree," whose leaves grow even when severed from the plant. It is impossible to kill it, except with fire.

The banyan tree, a native of India, is an object of great veneration among the Hindus and Brahmins, who look upon it as an emblem of the Deity.

The manna tree grows in Sicily and Calabria. In August the tree is tapped and the sap flows out, after which it hardens by crystallization, and the manna is left, which is of a sweet but nauseating taste.

There is no tree more frequently spoken of in the bible than the fig tree, and a common cry even now in the streets of Cairo, in Egypt, is, "In the name of the fig tree!"

The milk tree is a native of South America. Its fruit is about the size of a small apple, but the milk is the greater wonder, which is produced by making notches through the bark. At first when it runs out it is as thick as cream. It has the same properties as glue.

A tree called the "traveler's tree," of Madagascar, yields a copious supply of water from its leaves, very grateful to the traveler. It grows in arid countries, and is another proof of the tender care of our Heavenly Father in supplying all his creatures' needs.

The camphor tree grows in Japan and in some of the islands of the Pacific. The camphor is extracted from the wood of the tree, where it is formed into concrete lumps, some of which are as large as a man's arm, though this is rare. The tree has to be sacrificed to procure the camphor.

The sorrowful tree is found in the island of Goa, near Bombay. It is called so because it nourishes in the night. At sunset no flowers are to be seen, but soon after it is covered with them, which close up or fall off as soon as the sun rises. It has a fragrant odor and blossoms at night the year round.

The cow tree, or dato de vaca, grows on the rocks in Venezuela, South America. It has dry and leathery leaves, and by making incisions in its trunk a kind of milk oozes out, which is tolerably thick and of an agreeable balmy smell. At sunrise the natives may be seen hastening from all quarters furnished with large bowls to receive the milk.

The island of Ferro, one of the largest of the Canaries, is so dry that not even a rivulet can be found, but by a wonderful provision of providence which in the other case would go directly into the drain and be lost. The drain first carries off the very cold water of the subsoil, and the warmer surplus moisture from above taking its place, warms the land and hence offers a large area for the crops to amplify and thus gather up greater stores of plant food.

The date tree is a palm tree, and leaves cut from date trees, under the name of palms, are used in the ceremony of Palm Sunday, which is the Sunday before Easter, when the Greeks took books of the Old Testament, beginning with those of Moses (who was born 1788 B. C.), and some of the writings of Confucius (born 551 B. C.), there is nothing antedating the writings of Herodotus that is regarded as history.

Some interesting and extraordinary data have been compiled respecting the Mississippi. It appears that it boasts no fewer than fifty-five tributary streams, with a total length of navigation of 16,571 miles, or about two-thirds of the distance around the world. Even this, however, represents but a small amount of the navigation which will follow when the Federal Government has made the contemplated improvements in the Upper Mississippi, in the Minnesota, Wisconsin and other rivers, in which it is now engaged. But while the Mississippi has 16,571 miles navigable to barges, this navigation is divided between twenty-two States and Territories in the following proportions: Louisiana, 2,500 miles; Arkansas, 2,100 miles; Mississippi, 1,380 miles; Montana, 1,310 miles; Dakota, 1,280 miles; Illinois, 1,270 miles; Tennessee, 1,200 miles; Kentucky, 1,200 miles; Indiana, 840 miles; Iowa, 830 miles; Indian Territory, 720 miles; Minnesota, 660 miles; Wisconsin, 560 miles; Ohio, 550 miles; Texas, 450 miles; Nebraska, 400 miles; West Virginia, 390 miles; Pennsylvania, 380 miles; Kansas, 240 miles; Alabama, 200 miles; and New York, 70 miles. Nearly all sections of these States and Territories can be reached with ease. Louisiana, Arkansas, Mississippi, Montana, Dakota and the Indian Territory possess more miles of navigable stream than miles of railroad, all of which are open to everybody who wishes to engage in commerce.

Herodotus is the oldest of the Greek historians. He was born 484 B. C. He is generally recognized as the father of history. Herodotus was an educated priest of Babylon, who lived about 460 B. C., and wrote in Greek three books of Babylonian-Chaldean history, the materials for which he declares he found in the ancient archives of Babylon. Manetho was an Egyptian historian, of the priestly order, who lived in the reign of Ptolemy Soter, in the beginning of the third century B. C. He, too, obtained the material for his works from the temple records at his command, from which he wrote two works, one on the religion and the other on the history of Egypt. Only fragments of the writing of Herodotus and Manetho remain—preserved in the works of Josephus, Eusebius and other later writers. There are historical records on the ancient monuments of Egypt, Babylon and Assyria which date back to earlier days, but, except the historical books of the Old Testament, beginning with those of Moses (who was born 1788 B. C.), and some of the writings of Confucius (born 551 B. C.), there is nothing antedating the writings of Herodotus that is regarded as history.

In 1816 one bushel of corn would buy one pound of nails. In 1883 one bushel of corn will buy fifteen pounds of nails. In 1816 it took twenty to thirty dozen of eggs to buy one bushel of salt. In 1883 one dozen of eggs will do the same thing. In 1816 it required sixty-four bushels of barley to buy one quart of broodstock. In 1883 five bushels will do the same. In 1816 it required one bushel of wheat to purchase one yard of calico. In 1883 one bushel of wheat will purchase thirty-five yards of a better article. In 1816 a pair of wooden blankets cost as much as a cow. In 1883 a cow will buy from six to twenty, superior in every way.

Patash is necessary to successful potato growing. The easiest and best way of supplying it is in the form of wood ashes. It is also contained in salt coal ashes and well rotted stable manure.

A New York farmer says he has found by experience that an acre of Hubbard squashes will go farther in fattening hogs than the corn raised on the same ground.

Starch makes a better paste to use in papering walls than flour, and is less expensive also; a little will go so much further.

Health and Science.

A good many years ago an epidemic of disease was supposed to be a "visitation," or "judgment," and prayers were offered up that its progress might be stayed. Now-a-days, when individuals or neighborhoods are attacked with typhoid fever, diphtheria, or any one of the long range of malarial disorders, there is an immediate inquiry as to the condition of that house, or that neighborhood, and the disease is traced to its source.

For this advance we have to thank physiological and sanitary science, but it will not help us much to know a thing unless we act upon our knowledge. It will not get rid of the causes of disease to know that those causes are, unless we go vigorously to work to counteract them. It has been ascertained now beyond a doubt that infectious disease is primarily occasioned by living germs—that these germs have their origin in dirt, overcrowding, bad air, putrid vegetation, imperfect drainage and the like conditions. It makes no difference whether these conditions are found in tenement house, cottage or in the street of the city, or in the green lanes of the country, the result is the same—it is sickness and death.

It is not entirely a gratifying thing to lazy, irresponsible people to find that health, and the best conditions for living useful and reasonably happy lives, are within their own power, and that they are responsible for their fulfillment. It is so much easier to keep on in the old way, to pile up refuse, to let the drainage go, to build a house like a soap box, and transfer the consequences to the shoulders of Providence, or the Almighty. But it is too late to do this now. Providence has been responsible for the results of our shortcomings long enough, science has discovered that they are within our control, and that it is our business first to discover what the laws are that govern health and disease, and then adapt ourselves and our circumstances to the obligations they impose.

There is no occasion, in the nature of things, for persons to be born diseased, or die prematurely. A pure and temperate life, in a healthy location, and amid healthy surroundings, are far guaranties for a green old age.—*Dominion's Monthly.*

Big Gold Nuggets.

On the 16th of August, 1893, a large piece of gold was taken from the Monumental Quartz Mine, Sierra Buttes, which weighed 1,395 ounces Troy, the value of which was estimated at from \$21,000 to \$30,000. The nugget was sold to H. B. Woodruff of San Francisco, for \$21,636.52. A fine specimen was taken from the Rainbow Quartz Mine, Chipp's Flat, 1881. It was taken from a depth of 200 feet. Later it was shipped to London and worked off, yielding \$22,000. In 1855 a nugget was found at French Ravine that weighed 332 ounces, and was worth \$10,000. It contained considerable quartz, which is not calculated in its weight. In 1851, at French Ravine, a nugget was found which weighed 427 ounces, and was valued at \$8,000. A nugget is reported to have been found at Minnesota valued at \$5,000. In 1850 a piece of gold quartz was found in French Ravine which contained 269 ounces, worth \$4,800. At Little Grizzly Diggings, in 1863, a nugget worth \$2,000 was found. At Smith's Flat, in 1864, a nugget was found weighing 140 ounces and worth \$2,605. A nugget weighing 94 ounces and valued at \$1,700, was found at the Hope camp, four miles below the Mountain House. At French Ravine, in 1869, a nugget was found worth \$1,757, and weighed 93 ounces. At Smith's Flat, in 1861, a nugget was found which weighed 80 ounces and was valued at \$1,500. From 1854 to 1862 23 gold nuggets, ranging from 30 to 147 ounces, were taken from the Live Yankee claim at Forest City. From 1856 to 1862 a number of gold nuggets, varying from 20 to 100 ounces, were found in the Oregon claim at Forest City. A specimen weighing 100 ounces was taken from the Oriental (Gold Gate) quartz mine.—*Sierra County (Cal.) Tribune.*

The Mississippi River.

Some interesting and extraordinary data have been compiled respecting the Mississippi. It appears that it boasts no fewer than fifty-five tributary streams, with a total length of navigation of 16,571 miles, or about two-thirds of the distance around the world. Even this, however, represents but a small amount of the navigation which will follow when the Federal Government has made the contemplated improvements in the Upper Mississippi, in the Minnesota, Wisconsin and other rivers, in which it is now engaged. But while the Mississippi has 16,571 miles navigable to barges, this navigation is divided between twenty-two States and Territories in the following proportions: Louisiana, 2,500 miles; Arkansas, 2,100 miles; Mississippi, 1,380 miles; Montana, 1,310 miles; Dakota, 1,280 miles; Illinois, 1,270 miles; Tennessee, 1,200 miles; Kentucky, 1,200 miles; Indiana, 840 miles; Iowa, 830 miles; Indian Territory, 720 miles; Minnesota, 660 miles; Wisconsin, 560 miles; Ohio, 550 miles; Texas, 450 miles; Nebraska, 400 miles; West Virginia, 390 miles; Pennsylvania, 380 miles; Kansas, 240 miles; Alabama, 200 miles; and New York, 70 miles. Nearly all sections of these States and Territories can be reached with ease. Louisiana, Arkansas, Mississippi, Montana, Dakota and the Indian Territory possess more miles of navigable stream than miles of railroad, all of which are open to everybody who wishes to engage in commerce.

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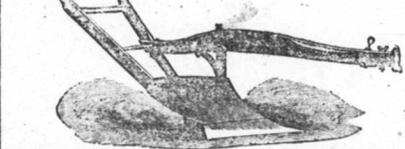
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