

On the Farm.

CONCERNING POTATOES.

It is conceded by most men who can well versed in the raising of potatoes that there is one certain sort of the tuber that will do better than any other in any given locality and it ought to be the endeavor of every practical farmer to get the most out of his ground whether in the way of roots or grain. The potato that will do best in any district or soil is the one that is brought to perfection in that soil itself, and hence any farmer raising any large quantity of potatoes will do well to form a sub-variety, bred and perfected under the conditions prevailing on his land. To this kind of potato is not so hard as might be expected though the matter of selection may occupy several years.

Some of the best known varieties of the potato have been obtained by putting one of the eyes from a potato of one kind and then inserting it in a whole tuber of some other kind, the two potatoes chosen for the trial being representatives of the sorts that have done best on the land for which the new stock is wanted. The eye that is to grow ought to be cut from the potato, with quite a large pointed piece of the tuber attached and it ought then to be inserted in the mother tuber tightly fitting into a hole of the same shape prepared to receive it. The eye on the mother tuber ought then to be destroyed and the planting done. The tubers that grow from seed of this sort will have all the benefits to be derived from crossing and will partake of the qualities of the two parents. The best that grow from such seed may be selected to be planted again, and this process being repeated for some generations will result in the evolution of a sub-variety admirably adapted to the immediate soil conditions of the ground in which it was formed.

There is nothing new about this plan, but any farmer who inclines to experiment for practical purposes may in his way breed a sub-variety of potato for himself and may perhaps succeed in evolving one that will bring him a large sum of money.

THE SPECIAL-PURPOSE COW.

The man who keeps a large herd of cows for the purpose of making butter needs a cow from a strain that has for many generations been bred and fed for that purpose and in that he would seldom fail to find either the Jersey or the Guernsey to meet his requirements, the only trouble with the latter being to find them at a price low enough to meet the size of his pocketbook. If they were as commonly offered for sale and at as low prices as good Jerseys, we are inclined to think we would prefer the Guernsey both for the butter dairy and the poor man's cow. But the man who keeps his herd to sell milk where the amount of butter fat in it is not to be a factor in the price will do well to look for the Ayrshire or the Holstein blood. For light soils and scanty hillside pastures, we would prefer the Ayrshire, but upon rich pastures, where feed was abundant and plenty of grain could be had, we should incline toward the larger and handsomer Holstein. We do not mean to say there are not good milking strains or good butter-making strains among the Shorthorn, or good butter makers amongst the Ayrshires and Holsteins, for we know there are, but we would not feel sure of obtaining a good beef animal from a Hereford, an Angus or a Shorthorn, which are special-purpose breeds for beef.

"SPEED THE PLOW."

Many farmers are very impatient to start the plow in the spring. As soon as the snow disappears and they find a few dry spots in the highway, the plow is brought out and started. The soil being cold and wet, the up-turned furrow presents a smooth glossy appearance, and if future heavy freezing does not occur it will bake hard and firm, requiring several harrowings to put it into a proper condition for a seed bed. Not only is this extra labor required, but the soil at plowing is so soft that the horses at each stop sink almost to the bottom of the furrow. This is very injurious and most of these early plowers would not think of allowing other stock upon the fields when in this condition. The act of plowing obliterates the foot marks and they imagine no harm is done, but they are greatly mistaken. No farmer ever gained anything in the end by plow-

ing his soil when not in a proper condition. Perhaps there is some advantage in marking out lands in a field that is naturally wet and heavy as the furrows thus made act as surface drains, and if the land be nearly level the water is drawn from the surface soil to a distance of several feet upon each side, and if it can be drained off at the end of the furrows a positive gain will be accomplished.

SPRAYING THE ORCHARD.

Hundreds of people who own small orchards would like to spray their trees but are deterred therefrom by the cost of a spraying outfit usually recommended by writers. For spraying a few trees all the outfit that is necessary is a barrel to mix the poison in, and a small sled. One made of two planks four feet long will do. Lay them side by side and fasten them securely together by means of strips of board nailed across them. Chip off the under side of the front edges, set the barrel on it, mix the spraying materials, and with one horse draw it into the orchard and wherever needed. A good spray-pump for a few trees does not cost much; a piece of half-inch rubber hose about eight feet long, having the spraying end attached to a light stick the same length, will raise the nozzle high enough to spray most trees. If the trees are very large, one can climb into them, draw up a bucketful of mixture, set it firmly among the branches and send the spray over the entire tree.

YOUR LEASE OF LIFE.

How to Find Out How Many Years You Are Going to Live.

An ingenious mathematician maintains that the number of years which any one is likely to live may readily be ascertained by applying the following rule:—Subtract from the number 86 the age already attained by the person and divide the remainder by 2. For example, suppose that we wish to find out how long a person who is now 50 years old is likely to live, 86—50=36; 36—2=18, and 18 years is the answer to the question. The same statistician also assures us that out of every 1,000 persons who are 60 years old only 599 will live to be 70, 120 to 80, 17 to be 90, and it is doubtful if ever 4 will attain to the dignity of centenarians.

A critic points out that these figures may seem very convincing, but that they cannot be accurate in all cases. It may be easy, he explains, to show how long a man of 50 is likely to live, but the rule applied in his case cannot be applied in the case of a man who is over 86, and hence it cannot be accepted as infallible.

SILK FROM A SPIDER WEB.

Folks in Madagascar Think They Have Found a Valuable New Fibre.

One of the most novel exhibits at the Paris Exposition is a complete set of bed hangings manufactured in Madagascar from silk obtained from an enormous spider known as the halabe, that is found in great numbers in certain parts of the island. The French have been investigating the value of this fibre at their technical school at Antananarivo and have reached the conclusion that the production of silk from this spider is worthy to become an important industry.

Mr. Nogue, the head of the school, says that each spider yields from 300 to 400 yards of silk thread. After the thread has been taken from the spider it is set free and ten days later is ready to furnish another supply. The silk is of a brilliant golden color and is finer than that of the silk worm, but its tenacity is remarkable. It can be woven without the least difficulty.

THOMAS JOGGED HIS MEMORY.

A certain elderly gentleman suffered much from absent-mindedness, and was frequently compelled to seek the assistance of his servant. Thomas, he would constantly say, I have just been looking for something, and now I can't remember what it is, whereupon the obliging Thomas invariably made suggestions. Was it your purse, or spectacles, or cheque book, sir? and so on, till he hit on the right object.

One night, after the old gentleman had retired, the bell rang for Thomas, and on reaching the bed room he found his master rambling restlessly about the room.

Thomas, Thomas, he said, I came up here for something, and now I've forgotten what!

Was it to go to bed, sir? suggested his faithful retainer.

Ah! the very thing—the very thing! Thank you, Thomas. Good night!

THE NEWS IN A NUTSHELL

THE VERY LATEST FROM ALL THE WORLD OVER.

Interesting Items About Our Own Country, Great Britain, the United States, and All Parts of the Globe, Condensed and Assorted for Easy Reading.

CANADA.

The Kingston Locomotive Works will be sold by auction on July 10.

Hamilton police will receive 14 instead of 10 days holidays in future.

Hamilton is making an effort to organize a regiment of Highlanders.

Just 137 new post offices have been opened in Canada during March, April and May.

The T. H. & B. Railway Co. intends to have ten passenger coaches built for the excursion business.

Kingston firms are shipping an average of 100 tons of hay daily to Boston and Providence, R. I.

Prof. Robertson, at Ottawa from Paris, says that Canada's exhibit is one of the best at the exposition.

Proceedings may be taken to disqualify two Montreal aldermen for receiving "side" money from the transfer of market stalls.

Bracebridge is asking the Government at Ottawa for aid in the construction of a railway from Bracebridge to Baysville, a village on the Lake of Bays.

The two ferry steamers running between Ottawa and Hull have been stopped by Government officers, on the ground that the engineers in charge of them are not properly qualified.

At Ottawa Alexander McMillan, a Sparks street jeweler, was fined \$1 and costs for keeping his place of business open after 7 o'clock in the evening, in violation of the early closing by-law. An appeal will be made with a view to quashing the by-law.

GREAT BRITAIN.

London newsboys have been prohibited from yelling the latest news. In three weeks London has had 100 suicides and 100 other suspected cases.

Creditors of the bankrupt Earl of Yarmouth will get about 50 cents on the dollar.

The chief bleaching firms in England have combined with a capital of \$45,000,000.

London has started an anti-noise crusade against 6,000 organ-grinders and street pianos.

Over 7,000 dock labourers at London are on strike. The employers have violated the arrangements regarding overtime.

Queen Victoria has given orders that St. George's chapel, Windsor Castle, and the Albert Memorial chapel are to be lighted by electricity.

On Monday Cambridge University conferred the degree of LL.D. on Mr. Joseph H. Choate, the United States Ambassador to England, and Prof. John Williams White, of Harvard.

R. A. Ramsden has been appointed Vice-British Consul at Havana. He is a son of the late British Consul at Santiago, who remained at his post and sacrificed his life during the Spanish-American war.

UNITED STATES.

Chicago's total debt is \$32,688,099. The United States will spend \$100,000,000 in new warships.

A Kokomo, Indiana, man who tried to prove eating an unnecessary habit died.

Scarcity of wheat has caused many of the flour mills of Michigan to close down.

Oklahoma has a great wheat crop, and farmers worked at the harvesting on Sunday.

Douglas Hinson and Bruce Pounds killed one another in a street duel in Livingston, near Dallas, Texas.

Fifty boys tried to break into a circus at Chicago and were beaten by the employes after a hard battle.

The total estimate of area in cotton planted in the United States is 25,558,000 acres, an increase of 2,036,000 over last year.

United States Agricultural department's report shows further decrease of 1,676,000 in acreage of winter wheat and 567,000 in spring crop.

A check for \$50,000 was the golden wedding anniversary gift of Mr. and Mrs. John W. Hinton, of Milwaukee, to the Protestant Home for the Aged in that city.

The Mississippi River is reported at low water mark, and sawmill men are worried over the prospects of having their log supply cut off at a time when it means serious loss to them.

M. Rothstein, general manager of the Imperial Bank of Russia, is in

New York, and intends to establish a Russian bank in the United States, through which Russian disbursements, that aggregate to nearly \$10,000,000 annually, could be affected.

GENERAL.

Out of 75 plague cases at Cairo, Egypt, 34 have proved fatal.

The President of Chili is stricken with paralysis of the brain.

Over 2,000 men at the Bell Island mines, near St. Johns, Nfld., are on strike.

It is believed that the German Emperor will soon pay a visit to the Paris Exposition.

CAN YOU COUNT A MINUTE?

STORY OF A GAMBLER AND OF A WATCH SET IN A RING.

Made Thousands of Dollars With It—How He Turned the Laugh on the Scotland Yard Man—Made a Fortune and Retired.

"What time is it?" asked a man who was riding with a detective in a cab the other day.

The detective pushed an almost invisible lever on the side of the setting of a large cameo ring that he wore on the third finger of his left hand. Then he placed his left hand at his left ear, and listened for a moment.

"Seventeen minutes past three," he replied.

"Now you can go ahead and tell me about that," said the man who was riding with the detective. The man had watched the detective's method of ascertaining the time with interest. "I can see that that big ring of yours is a repeating watch, of course. Let's have the rest of it."

"This ring and repeating watch combined," said the detective, "belonged to one of the most notorious of the swaggar gang of short card players who used to work the ocean steamers. He is dead for ten years now, and as his family are pretty good people, and one of his sons is an officer in the army, I needn't mention his name. He was the champion of his class though."

"This card sharper had this ring I'm wearing made in Switzerland for a purpose. He made many of thousands of dollars with it. His game was this way: When a gang of men on one of the steamers on which he was a passenger would get together in the smoking room or card room and get to betting on the revolutions of the screws, on the weather, on the day's voyage, on any old thing, he would gently butt it with a crack to the effect that there wasn't one man out of a hundred that could properly

COUNT OFF A MINUTE.

that is, that could exactly, or anything like exactly, apprehend the passage of sixty seconds. This would lead to a discussion and the sharper would attempt to prove his statement by referring to the fact that few referees of prize fights are able to count ten seconds over a prostrate fighter with anything like accuracy. Then there'd be more chaw on this point, and finally the sharper would suggest that all hands present chip into a pool, say of \$100 each, the whole bundle to be walked away with by the man in the pool who could count the nearest to a minute. The crowd never failed to bite.

"Now if you want to experiment, you let your wife or someone hold a watch for you and you try to count a minute. If you come any nearer than five seconds to the minute without plenty of practice you may call yourself a man with a pretty good idea of time. There are few things harder to do than to agree with the second hand of a watch in counting sixty seconds."

"Well, they'd all go into the pool and some disinterested chap 'ud be brought in to hold the ticker and each man's count would be set down on a slip of paper. As the man, who suggested the pool, the card shark would modestly wait until they'd all had their trials before he essayed to count his minute. He'd rest his head in his left hand and watch them amusefully while they tried to make an even-up-minute with the watch—and it never happened that any of 'em got within better than three seconds of it, one way or the other: They were always at least that much shy or that much overdue."

"Still leaning his head in his left hand, then, this crafty, cheerful worker of the steamers would wait for his turn, and then, with this almost inaudible, but audible enough, bit of a ticker right close to his ear, he'd wade in and count sixty seconds to the dot, almost. He never did it exactly to the dot, because he didn't

want to excite suspicion, naturally, but he always got under the wire a winner by a second or so from all the rest of the bunch in the pool. As I say,

HE WON THOUSANDS

at this scheme, and only one of the victims ever suspected that he had an inside way of keeping tab on his minutes.

"He worked the trick once too often. Oddly enough a Scotland Yard man got next to the gag. Now, Scotland Yard men are as a rule pretty obtuse and opaque and a few other things like that, but this Scotland Yard man was an exception to the rule, and he tumbled to the card sharper's little stall. The Scotland Yard detective was in a minute-guessing pool for a five-pound note himself, and the attitude of the short card man in counting off his precise sixty seconds struck him as being a bit peculiar. He didn't say anything right then, but after the short-card man had gone out, after gathering up the pool, he mentioned his suspicions to a couple of other passengers. When the short-card player returned to the card cabin the Scotland Yard man, sure that he was right, walked up behind the sharper, who was sitting down, and suddenly grabbed his left wrist, saying:

"Let's have an inspection of that ring!"

"The sharper promptly jumped to his feet and knocked the Scotland Yard man flat. The cat was out of the bag, however, and all the men in the compartment, who'd been in the minute-guessing pool called upon the sharper to show up his ring. With a very much aggrieved air the shark pulled off the ring on his third finger and threw it on the table, protesting in a dignified manner that they had no right to doubt his integrity. When they'd got through examining the ring without finding anything unusual about it, he took it back, laid it on the table again, got a hammer and broke it open. It was just a plain cameo ring, that was all, with no works or anything else inside of it. This sharper was a wise gabbu in his generation, you see, and he had a duplicate—as far as the outside went—of his watch ring along with him for just such an emergency. The Scotland Yard man got the laugh, of course, and the shark was restored to the favor of all the men who'd suspected him on the detective's say so, and was able to pose before them as an outraged man for the remainder of the voyage. But he never tried the game again.

"This short card man quit the steamers and with a competency led a square life for some years previous to his cashing in. When he was on his last bed he sent for me—I'd known him for a long while—and handed me this ring. Said he didn't want to leave his children any old thing that had served him in his former life of grafting. It's a fine bit of work and is worth about \$1,000. I've worn it off and on for a number of years now. No," concluded the detective smiling, "I haven't done any business with it."

ASIA'S GREAT SINK-HOLES.

While Asia has the loftiest mountains in the world, it also possesses the deepest and most extensive land depressions, several of them, as is well known, sinking below sea-level, so that if the ocean could flow into them they would be filled to the brim. In the deepest parts of most of them water now stands, forming small seas. Others are destitute of water. Among these is the Lukchun depression in Central Asia, concerning which General Tillo writes, in the "Proceedings of the Russian Geographical Society," that in places it sinks as much as 400 feet below sea-level. This sink-hole in the middle of the largest of the continents is also remarkable for its meteorological features, the yearly amplitudes of the barometer being greater than are recorded anywhere else on earth. In summer the temperature rises to Saharan heat, a record of 118 degrees Fahrenheit having been obtained in July, while the air is of desert dryness.

Penn—I suppose the painting was ruined?

Stubb—Not a all. Maroon tells people there is no hole there. That it is a realistic fox den.

DOING FINELY.

How's yer daughter gettin' along in the high school, Rafferty? asked Mr. Dolan.

Foine. She kin tell the names iv as many as a hundred words iv foive syllables; she knows the main iv at laste fifty and a few more. She kin even spell.