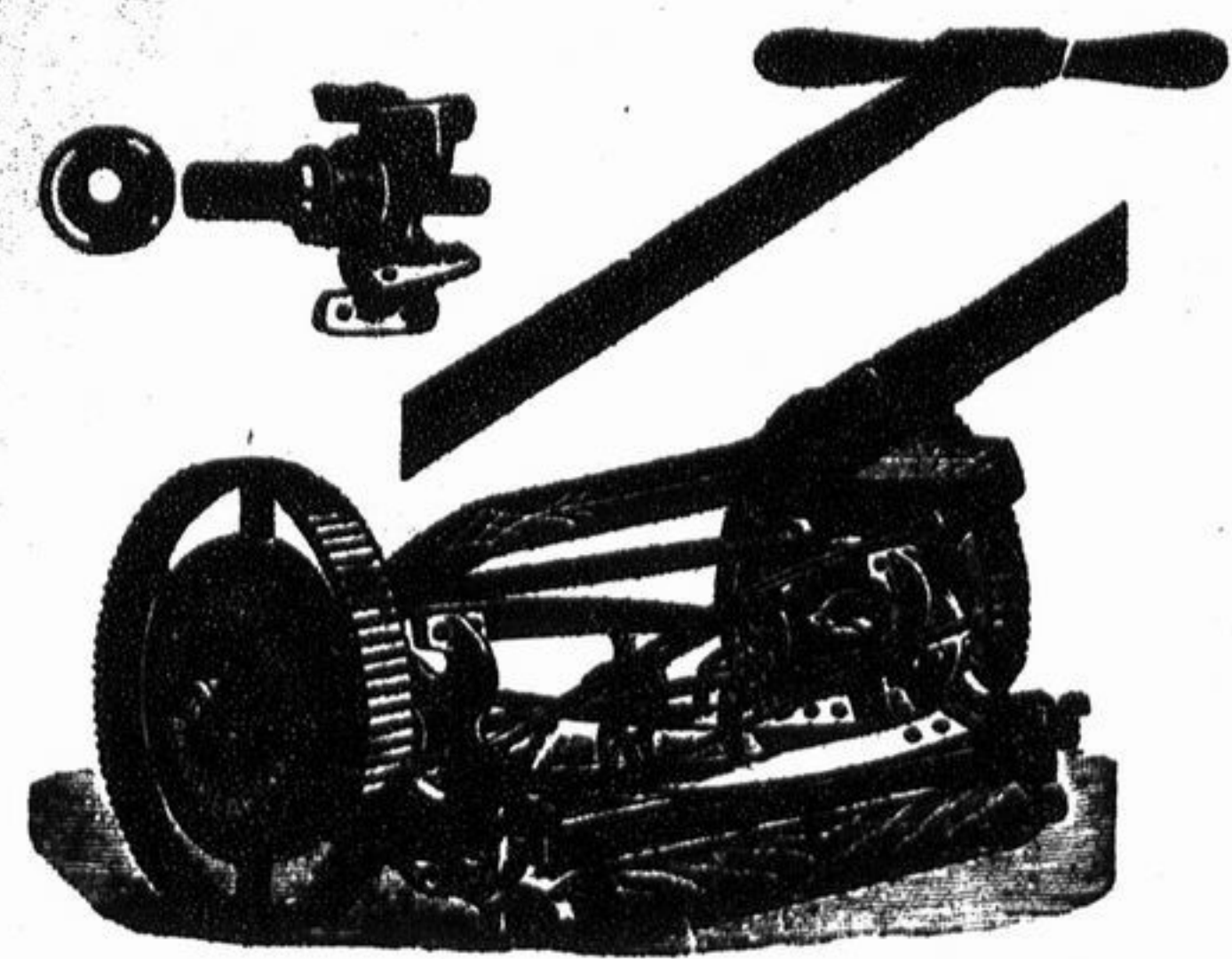


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RURAL TOPICS

PROTECT THE MILK. Experiments conclusively prove that milking in a stable where the circulation of air carries the dust out, wiping the udder with a damp cloth and scalding the utensils with live steam from boiling water will not only reduce the bacterial content of the milk, but largely increase its keeping qualities as well as that of the finished product.—Farmers Home Journal.

CARE OF CATALPAS. The Forest Service says that the practice of allowing catalpa trees to grow two or three years before pruning is not to be recommended, since although a long stem is usually secured it is apt to become top heavy and easily damaged by the wind when the foliage is wet. The better plan is to keep the trees straight from the start. In cases of crooked trees, or where severe injury has been caused by mice or rabbits, the trees should be cut to the ground regardless of their age.

HIGH VALUES IN SHEEP. It may be well to recall the fact that at no distant day there were raised in New England breeding flocks that were sold for several thousand dollars each, and that became the foundation stock of many of the finest flocks of sheep in the world. What has become of this industry and this enterprise in New England—this rich reward for brains and effort? Had the children of those people kept pace with the development and value of the stock raised upon the farms of their parents and ancestors, would we now find them so generally members of the army of grumblers and fault finders?—American Cultivator.

A BIG INFLUENCE. The bull is one-half of the herd. The cows are the other half. The bull exerts his influence, his breeding, over every cow in the herd, whether it be for good or bad. If his breeding or pedigree is of the wrong sort, that is, for example, of a poor dairy sort, his influence is for bad, and the young stock will not be of the kind that develop into useful animals. This influence is not on one cow, but on all the herd. With cows it is different. If, in the herd, there be a poor cow, her effects are felt only on her calves while the calves of her sisters in the herd will be good or poor, according to the individual cow. The good bull will make his good qualities felt in all the cows.—American Cultivator.

WHEN TO PRUNE. The question arises every year, with some of us, how late in the spring can we safely prune? Of course the way to avoid this problem is to be beforehand and prune just as soon as the severe weather is over and before leaf growth starts. Foliage pruning is always more or less detrimental to the tree. This is shown by recent pruning tests in a 2-year old Kieffer pear orchard of F. M. Soper, Magnolia, Delaware, described by the Department of Agriculture. Some trees were pruned early and severely; others early and moderately; others in full foliage and moderately and others in full foliage and severely. Those showing up best were the early and severely pruned, and those early and moderately next best. The late pruning was a disadvantage. Whether it is better to prune late rather than not at all until the following spring is an open question, depending somewhat on the age of the tree and the need for thinning out the branches.—Farmers Home Journal.

SUGGESTS RULES FOR THE COW. The Broome County (New York) Medical Society having promulgated a lot of rules for dairymen to follow, a "Farmer's Son" becomes sarcastic and suggests the following additional rules. These he declares are about as sensible as some of the society's: (a) Every cow must be provided with a phonograph. It has been found that a phonograph is a perfect substitute when her bawling calf is taken away, and prevents a mourning cow from giving sour milk. (b) Every cow must be provided with a Merry Widow hat. All cows are merry widows, and a becoming hat which appeals to their vanity will sweeten the milk. (c) Apply the hat same as sun-bonnets are placed on horses. (d) If the cow's Merry Widow hat is trimmed with yellow, there will be more yellow cream on the milk. (e) Every cow must be provided with poppa gum. The Medical Certified Milk Society has observed that all cows devote quite a large portion of the time to chewing gum. The B. C. M. Society therefore orders that only poppa gum be provided; this will cause the cow to furnish predigested milk, suitable for infants, and for physicians' prescriptions at two dollars a prescription.—American Cultivator.

CAUSES OF DELAYED CHURNING. In home buttermaking one will occasionally encounter conditions which make it necessary to churn an unusual length of time. Even the butter sometimes refuses to gather and the entire churning is thrown away. We have found that there is no need of throwing the butter away in such cases. Instead of doing so, try the following plan: If the churned cream looks like ice cream add from three-fourths to one pintful of cold water to it and set aside for a few hours without stirring. Let the butter rise to the top. Then skim off all the thick cream on top and put it into a sack made of clean, firm, white cloth, which should be wet. Now squeeze all the water and milk you possibly can out of the creamy butter in the cloth.

By the time the water is nearly all squeezed out the butter will have gathered enough so that you can put it into the butter bowl and work it the same as any butter.

We accidentally discovered this way of gathering butter after we had churned for some time. We had occasion to try it again later and found it an excellent way when the butter will not gather by being churned. Although it is more bother to gather it this way than by churning it, still it is much better than having to throw the churning away.—Win. H. Underwood in the Indiana Farmer.

WHY CULTIVATE AN ORCHARD? For the same reason that we cultivate a hill of corn. We plant apple trees 30 feet apart, while we plant corn three and a half feet apart, for the reason that the foliage of an apple tree bears the same relation to 30 feet that the foliage of a hill of corn bears to three and a half feet. Also, that the roots of the tree occupy the entire thirty feet of space as well as the roots of corn occupy the three and a half feet of space. Cultivation is as absolutely necessary for the one as for the other. Cultivation will give thrift to either and unthrift without it. To produce a good crop of corn, break the ground eight inches deep and pulverize a fine seed bed. In cultivating the orchard we break three inches deep only, on account of roots, and make the same finely pulverized surface.

This bed contains moisture to the very surface in a dry season. By this kind of preparation and a fine, level cultivation, we retain moisture to the tree-tops during a drought, and consequently thrift of trees and large, smooth apples, fit, indeed, for any market. A hill of corn half cultivated produces small ears of corn. An apple tree cultivated, set in pasture, for the same reason, produces fruit hardly fit for worms. The downfall of thousands of orchards commences when their foolish owners sow them to grass and turn their stock in, and if possible tramp them still harder than they were before. A belt of grass around a tree is about as fatal as a rope around a criminal's neck, especially if it be thimothy, the great robber of moisture.—Green's Fruit Grower.

FARM HINTS. Every farmer should have a pair of scales. It is the only way for the farmer to know exactly where he stands in his buying and selling. An ounce of reconciliation over a line fence is better than a lawsuit. A wolf kept lawn reflects the good taste and nature of the owner. The horse is man's best friend, therefore he is deserving of a friend's treatment.

Don't forget that the barnyard manure is the best all-around fertilizer you can obtain. Pasture makes the cheapest hog feed on the farm, and clover makes the best hog pasture. Don't let money act as a padlock on your heart, and shut in all the kindness and happiness. The animal that has a full, bright eye is apt to be healthy. And a moist nose is another indication of health. Talk over with the good housewife all the undertakings of the farm. She will have some good advice to offer. Don't borrow too much. It is more satisfactory both to yourself and your neighbors to have tools of your own.

The burning of straw and stalks, except in special cases, is a wasteful practice and has no place in judicious farming. Bees help to make the crop and pay the farmer for the privilege. They are little trouble and may be the source of a good income. If he harvest and haying tools were not put in repair last fall it will be a pretty good plan to look them over and order new parts now. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Take heed to this old proverb.

Diet for Sleeplessness. Dr. William Stevens says that insomnia is not a disease itself, but the effect of an unhealthy condition of body or mind. When the cause is removed the insomnia may be expected to disappear. Every physician has had some stubborn cases of it which would not yield to any treatment and for which a change of air or of scene became necessary. But such cases as these should not occur, and do occur only when the sufferer has neglected precautions that should have been taken when the trouble first made itself manifest. Insomnia results from causes which can be removed if attended to in season. The most common cause is found in the digestive organs. Either unsuitable food, causing indigestion, or a feature of indigestion, or insufficient food, causing the patient to be kept awake by hunger. There are few things which can be universally recommended as diet for sleeplessness since what will agree with one man will disagree with another. But two things that may almost be recommended are lettuce and celery.—London Globe.

Pup Keeps Cool. A cute little Boston terrier pup showed some of his higher brotherly in the Darwinian scale on Massachusetts avenue, Cambridge, how to keep cool yesterday. He was trotting along behind an ice wagon, and each time it stopped to make deliveries the cunning chap sprawled out under the awning, where the chilly trickles from the melting ice would strike his fevered body. The way he squirmed in delight when the drops splashed on his pink stomach made all the business men long to follow suit.—Boston Post.

WEEKLY WEATHER BULLETIN

U. S. Department of Agriculture, Illinois Section.

For the Week Ending August 3, 1908.

GENERAL SUMMARY. Maximum temperatures of 90 degrees and more obtained nearly every day during the week ending Monday, August 3. The minimum temperatures on the 1st were in the fifties; the remainder of week they were in the sixties and seventies. The mean temperature for the week was 3 degrees over normal; the temperature extremes were 90 degrees on the 30th and 50 degrees on the 1st. A cool wave overspread the State on July 31st and August 1st. It was of short duration.

Scattered showers, mostly of very light measurements, occurred on two days, the 27th and 28th. Most localities received no rainfall whatever. The drought has become serious in localities and damage is ensuing. At the Springfield station only 1.3 inch of rain has fallen in twenty-eight days. There was more bright sunshine than during any previous week of the season. The average for the State was about 90 per cent.

THE COLD-BATH PROBLEM.

How It Was Solved for One Shriveling Soul.

"I always did say the cold bath would be a great boon, if it could be taken in warm weather," remarked an East Side man recently to a Cleveland Plain Dealer writer. "And now I've solved the cold-bath proposition to a nicety or, rather, I had it solved for me. "I had been feeling sort of 'punk' ever since the hot weather came on and I went to the doctor to find out whether I had cirrhosis of the liver or merely bilious plague. He told me that a good cold bath the first thing in the morning was about all I needed. He said that it was a good time to start in while the weather was warm. "The next morning I started in. I put my great toe in the water and then withdrew to think the thing over. I wondered if cold baths were really all they were cracked up to be. It seemed to me that I had never come into contact with a body of water that so improved me with a desire not to get into it.

"I don't know when I have felt so worried or when the world seemed so cold as during the time that I stood there peering into the calm half-foot of water in that bathtub. I would reach in to see if it really was so cold and then think it over further. "Finally I made a leap into the tub, gave two or three convulsive splashes and jumped out again. Thank goodness it was over! Then I inserted myself into my clothes rapidly and I must confess that I felt first rate. When I sat down at the breakfast table my wife made some disparaging remark about the time it took me to take my bath and get dressed. "The next morning the water didn't seem cold at all. 'Ah,' I thought to myself, 'it's only the first time that's tough.'

"And now, just when I had got to feeling good and cheery over the way I had overcome the cold bath, my wife has confessed to me that she has been putting some warm water in with the cold every morning before I go into the bathroom. She says that it took me too long to make up my mind to get in when the water was cold and that breakfast got cold by the time I was ready."

HE IS A SLAVE TO HABIT.

Clerk Who Can't Work Without His Own Chair, Typewriter and Pen-knife. "If it is just the same to you, please let me have that chair you are sitting on," said a clerk in an office the other day. His request was granted without any objections, but several men in the office wanted to know why he wanted the particular chair, says the New Orleans Times-Democrat. "Well," said the clerk, "I have simply got in the habit of using it, as well as a certain penholder, pencil, desk, typewriter, and so forth. This thing they call habit is worth some thought and study, even for busy clerks. Now, for instance, I suppose you are used to smoking a certain brand of cigar. Your dealer might try to convince you that another cigar is as good, or even better, but you would cling to the old friend. Getting in the habit of doing things is responsible for this. "Again, you may be used to wearing a certain style of shoe, which pleases you very much and looks well also. You want to buy a new pair. The shoe-store salesman has a new one he wants to interest you in, but you ask for the same old style as before, simply because you have been accustomed to it, that's all. I recall an incident which brings my theory into full relief as an example. I used a typewriter in my business. I need not mention the make, but I may add it is a standard machine and reputed to be very fine. Well, I went away for a few days in the country. I wanted to use a typewriter, but I could not secure my old make. Try as I would, I could not think with any certainty while using the machine. I tried to write in pencil. To my surprise, I met with the same difficulty. "I might go on citing many other habits I have acquired, but I am quite sure you are a victim of the 'get the habit' fever. My wife never buys my neckwear or collars any more, because she tried to please me several times, but I had simply become accustomed to wearing things after my own style, and the wearables she bought did not appeal to me."

Never call an aggressive man a liar to his face. Use a long-distance phone and break the news to him gently. Music isn't necessarily fragmentary because it comes in pieces. A beauty specialist sometimes encounters hard lines.

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