PRACTICAL FARMING.

MICE IN ORCHARDS.

I don't think I have ever seen so many field mice as there are this season. It seems they are more numerous during drouth and do more damage than at any other time. (However, says a writer, they girdle trees during the winter season, under the snow also, unless the trees have been carefully cared for and protected.

Those who have not done this work yet should not delay one day. Do it to-morrow, especially if there is any rubbish, weeds or grass around your trees—and there is this fall, for spring and early summer made a strong growth of vegetation of all kinds. I have no doubt but that there are thousands of apple trees already girdled in Ohio. The drouth was so general and so severe that soon after the first of October there was not a green spear of grass to be seen here. It was then that these little rodents commenced their work. It would seem that they do it more then on account of the absence of anything else green to eat. However, they will girdle trees more or less even when grass is green, if they are as numerous as this season.

It can easily be seen, now since the rains have come, how full they are of fresh clover; how they eat out the crown—in fact kill a large amount of it. In spite of care and vigilance we lost two trees in October, nine years old, and a few planted last spring. The cursed things tackle trees this year regardless of size—six, eight inches in diameter—but are usually worse on young trees that have no dry, rough bark on the outside.

There are many devices to prevent this destruction of trees by mice, and I shall only mention a few which I think best. Where newly planted trees were mulched, the mulch should be removed clean with an iron rake in a circle two feet from the trees. For trees that were not mulched and have no protection, take a sharp hoe, keep a file with you to keep it sharp, and remove all manner of stuff to the ground the same distance as for small trees. Use the hand if necessary close to the trees. Two men can do several hundred trees per day. The work should have been done this year during the latter part of September. Around newly planted trees it is best to throw up a little mound of clean earth, six or eight inches high. In the spring it may be raked down and the mulch drawn back.

Ordinarily if well done the above answers the purpose for one year. Mice don't girdle trees unless screened from sight. Instinct teaches the little rascals of the danger of some sparrow hawk's darting down upon them by day and screech owls in the night. (By the way, it always does me good—and I stop when I see one of these little hawks fluttering up in the air with his head turned to the earth; and presently he darts down like a shot and flies off with a little black thing in his clutches and lights on a stump or fence and dissects the blamed varmint!) Mice are not likely to circulate under the snow where it lies on the bare ground, and so they don't find the trees when the grass and mulch are kept away from the trunks.

For permanent and better work we put about a bushel of fine cinders around each tree in cone shape. For small trees less will do. Neither mice nor vegetation of any kind like cinders and in the winter the wind and a little sunshine cleans the top of the little black mounds from snow and gives the trees a safe and comfortable appearance. We get the cinders from the electric power plant. These are the finest. We want no clinkers which would roll out and be in the way about mowing, etc. They cost twenty cents per load.

I once tried wire screen for smallish trees. We cut it twelve inches square and roll it on a round stick, open it up and spring it around the trees and chuck it to the ground. A couple of years rusted them to pieces and freezing heaves it up the trees and gives the mice a chance just where they want it. I have tried tarred paper wrapped around the trees. Neither proved satisfactory. String soon rotted off and if wire was used, it would injure the trees. In conclusion I advise the use of cinders if the distance to haul will not make it too expensive.

ALL ABOUT THE CHICKENS.

When chickens have been kept growing thriftily from the time they were hatched, it requires but little care to fit them for market by or before Thanksgiving. When they have been neglected, and have grown but slowly and are only frames scantily covered with feathers, the task is more difficult.

As a first step toward fattening separate the cockerels from the pullets and then restrict their range to smaller yards.

To such as will be large enough to kill in four or six weeks, give every morning as early as they come from the roost, a mash of cornmeal, warm but not hot, made thick and dry enough to crumble as it is fed out, in which has been mixed dry beef scraps at the rate of a pint to four quarts of meal. If their feed has been principally wheat make the change gradually by reducing the amount of bran and increasing the cornmeal, and do not overfeed at first, giving only what will be eaten up clean very quickly. Remove the food as soon as they seem to have enough.

Occasional messes of boiled potatoes mashed up and made thick with the meal may be given to vary the feed, but do not feed these or other cooked vegetables too freely. If they have not grass, cabbage or turnip-leaves may be used as a green food, but should not be given until after the regular feeds and in limited quantities. At noon and night give good, sound wheat or corn, the latter being preferable for the last meal of the day, which should be given just before they go to roost.

In preparing the mash use boiling water and cover it up to cook through until cool enough to feed out.

Oats and wheat are not as good as corn for fattening. Plenty of clean gravel and pure water are indispensable for fattening.

Guard especially against draughts of cold air such as would blow across the roosts. A cold at this season will take off flesh more rapidly than cornmeal can put it on.

A temperature of sixty degrees at night should be maintained, but they should not be so crowded as to get more than that when the glass is held near them while on the roost. As the flesh or fat can be sweat off as well as worked off.

Of course, lice must be kept off by using kerosene on the roosts and walls, and by blowing insect powder among their feathers if necessary. A little grease on the back of the head and under the wings may be needed to dislodge one species of large gray louse that frequents these points more than elsewhere.

COMMERCIAL PLUM ORCHARD.

In planting a commercial plum orchard, location, varieties and management must be well considered. While the plum is not so sensitive to location as the peach, it will not bear the neglect which so frequently falls to the apple. A good elevation is desirable, but not absolutely essential to success, provided other conditions are favorable, such as a good soil and thorough drainage. There should be but few varities in a commercial orchard, but those selected should combine size, quality, and a fine appearance. As a rule, blue and purple plum sell best, as the yellow varieties are frequently placed on the market before they are ripe.

A good general list will include the following: Of the dark kinds, Bradshaw, Duane Purple, German Prune, Lombard Englebert, Quackenboss; of the yellow sorts, Coe's Golden Drop, General Hand, Jefferson, Yellow Egg. There are many other excellent varieties, but the above is a good general list. Of the Japanese plums, Abundance, Burbank, Bailey, Satsuma and Willard have been highly recommended.

Thorough cultivation, early and frequent spraying, and the jarring sheet for curculio, are necessary to success. Before the leaves start, go over the orchard and carefully cut out and burn all black knot. This is imperative. The trees should receive what pruning they require before the buds start, and the first spraying should be given, just as the buds are opening. Corn and potatoes may be planted in young orchards, but when the trees come into bearing, they should receive the full use of the land. Never sow wheat or oats among trees, as they are sure to rob the orchard of more than they return the owner.

STREAKY BUTTER.

If the vessel containing the cream is exposed to the action of the atmosphere a part of the moisture will evaporate a part of the moisture will evaporate, and a scum or skin will be formed on the top of the cream. This will be broken up in the churning and there will be portions of thickened dried cream in the butter. Prevention is better than any attempt at cure. Let the cream vessel be covered and by frequent stirring prevent the skin of dried cream. The straining of the cream into the churn is also a good means of keeping specks of thickened cream or curd from finding their way into the butter. Occasionally butter-makers, find the butter full of streaks. That condition may be due to the retention of portions of the buttermilk in the mass of the butter. The addition of a quart of water for every two gallons of cream, after the granules of butter begin to appear and before the churning is completed will help to bring about a speedy and full separation of the buttermilk. When the buttermilk has been removed th egranular butter should be washed with cold water. In summer the temperature of the water should be about 55 degrees and in winter 60 degrees. In the washing the churn should be revolved a half faster than for the churning. A streaky condition of the butter sometimes results from an imperfect mixture of the salt with the butter. Reworking after the salt is dissolved will correct that and care should be taken to use only fine-grained salt. The presence of the salt should be perceptible to the taste, but not to the sense of touch.

NATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS.

A German and a Frenchman sat opposite each other at table d'hote in a certain hotel in Switzerland. "You are a Frenchman, I suppose?" inquired the German at the commencement of the meal. "Yes," was the reply. "But how do you manage to find that out?" "Because you eat so much bread," said the German. There was a long pause When the dinner was over the Frenchman in turn questioned his vis-a-vis. "You are a German, I presume?" "To be sure; but tell me pray, how you made that discovery." "Because you ate so much of everything," was the dry retort.

THE TALL HAT.

The tall hat worn by men first appeared in France nearly 500 years ago.

CARED FOR AND CURED.

LITTLE SICK CHILDREN.

Short Sketch of the Work Done by the Great Mother Nurse—The Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto.

From every country in the Province of Ontario children are admitted into the Hospital for Sick Children at Toronto, free if their parents cannot afford to pay.

And few of the poor little sufferers who are nursed and cared for have

rich parents, it would seem. Last year the expense of the Hospital was nearly $30,000. And to meet this but $1,325 was received from pay patients.

The balance must come from the more fortunate folks, who are charitable and generous.

The Hospital for Sick Children is the largest of its kind in the world—without exception. There are 200 cots. The average number of patients is 100 per day; 476 were nursed in the Hospital this year—312 little ones were cured and departed with health, strength and sturdy limbs.

In the dispensary department medicine was given to 4,133 children.

Thus nearly 5,000 children were treated in one year.

A great record of good.

In twenty-two years some 24,000 sick children have been nursed and cared for by the Hospital for Sick Children.

Where do the little patients come from? From all parts of the province—cities, towns, villages and townships.

How do they come? Very often parents hear of the work of the Hospital through the newspapers. In some instances friends of the little sufferers make application on behalf of parents who are poor, but independent and self-reliant.

It generally falls to the lot of the chairman of the Hospital Trust to decide when there is a question of ability to pay. One day, about a year ago, this gentleman was driving towards the city of Brockville, and while passing a school-house the scholars rushed out in eager haste for the fifteen minutes of joy they crowd into recess. Mr. Robertson smiled as the youngsters passed him, but the smile vanished when he observed in the rear a little chap who was hobbling along on crutches, happy but crippled. One of his legs was bent at the knee to a right angle. The carriage was stopped, and the little fellow called.

"My boy, how did you injure your leg so badly?" was the enquiry.

The lad explained that he had met with a mishap one day while chopping wood; that he had been treated in an eastern hospital for some time, that his leg had been straightened, but had again become useless. His parents and schoolfellows looked upon him as a cripple for life.

And so he might have been.

"How would you like to have your leg straightened for good?" asked the Hospital chairman, who knew of the complete cure effected at the great Toronto institution in similar cases.

"Well, mister, there is nothing I would like better," said the boy.

He was assisted into the carriage, and told to direct the driver to his father, who had a blacksmith shop near by. The boy was one of a family of seven children. Most gladly did the father give his consent to the child's removal to the Hospital for treatment.

The little deformed lad thus fortunately met on the highway near Brockville is a cripple no longer. His leg is stiff, but it is straight. He remained in the hospital for many months. But it was a joyous home-coming when the boy walked firmly and straight without the aid of stick or crutches.

This is a single case. Thousands of cases might be cited.

The editor of this paper has been informed that if anyone knows of any sick child under fourteen years of age who is suffering from accident or disease, and whose parents cannot afford to pay for proper medical or surgical assistance—they are asked to communicate with the Hospital for Sick Children.

There is room for such children in the Hospital. They will be nursed, cared for, and in all probability, cured.

There is a debt of $70,000 hanging over the institution, $20,000 of which is for debts which must be paid at once.

Even with the strictest economy it requires no less than five executive officers, 24 nurses and 20 domestics to carry on the work of the Hospital. Twenty-five more children could be taken care of with the same number of attendants.

The work of the Hospital is ever increasing. Its doors are wide open to every ailing child in the province.

Such a work should have a million friends in Ontario. If each friend could spare a dollar—what a rich endowment with which to carry on the work.

But the trustees only ask for $20,000—a sum which they are required to pay before the end of January.

Everyone can help.

The need is most pressing.

The appeal is the appeal of poor, weak, suffering childhood, of little, wan-faced babies and children who lie on beds of pain.

The Hospital appeals to you—the reader of this newspaper.

Your dollar will bless you in the giving.

And you will give it.

Every penny aids—every dollar helps—and your dollar may restore health, strength and straight limbs to some poor crippled boy or girl.

Won't you help?

This is a home charity — something that should appeal to every heart.

It was Charles Dickens, that great-hearted Englishman — the friend of the fatherless, the reliever of the oppressed and down-trodden, who appealed to every human heart, when he said: "The two grim nurses—poverty and sickness—who bring these children before you, preside over their births, rock their wretched cradles, and nail down their coffins."

In this enlightened Canada of ours—this bright Province of Ontario—this shall not be as long as the doors of the Hospital for Sick Children remain open.

Help remove that mortgage.

Help unload that load of debt.

(Group of children who are being treated by the best doctors in Canada, at the Hospital for Sick Children.—reproduced from photograph.)

Contributions for the delivery of the Hospital from this bondage of debt will be acknowledged by letter and also in the columns of The Evening Telegram, a copy of which will be mailed to each donor.

Money may be forwarded to Miss Maria Buchan, treasurer, 165 Bloor St. East, Toronto, or to J. Ross Robertson, chairman of the Hospital Trust, Toronto.

DOGBERRY IN NEW MEXICO

WILD, WEIRD JUSTICE RENDERED BY MAGISTRATES.

A Fine of $5, With an Alternative of Being Shot — Justice for a Poor Boy — An Old Mexican's Breach of Promise Suit.

Among the wild, weird, and wonderful things to be found in the Southwest are the decisions sometimes made by new Mexican Justices of the Peace. Most of the Justices in this Territory are Mexicans. A few of them are men of sufficient intelligence and education to know something about the first principles of law, but most of them are very meagrely equipped.

One such administrator of the law holding office in northern New Mexico decided that it was his duty to try a man who had been charged with murder. Accordingly he impaneled a jury of six persons and tried the case. The jury found the man guilty and the Justice at once ordered the prisoner to stand up for sentence. He delivered a long lecture to the murderer upon the heinousness of his crime and warned him never to appear in his court again upon such a charge. Then he impressively pronounced sentence—$5 and costs— and dismissed the court, his face beaming with pride and satisfaction over his oratorical effort.

Before another Mexican Justice of the Peace who dispensed his ideas of law in southern New Mexico, there came a Mexican man and maid to be tied in wedlock. The Judge looked them over critically, and apparently had doubts about the compatibility of their tempers, for he put a limit upon the combination and as he pronounced the words which made them man and wife, he added with emphasis, "for the space of two years only." As they went away he told them if they were dissatisfied with their venture before that time to come back and he would divorce them

FOR THE SAME FEE.

Still another, who won his fame in Texas, tried a man for some petty offence, found him guilty, and fined him $5 and costs. But this was too much for the prisoner at the bar, who declared that he could not pay the fine; that he had not so much money in the world. The Justice looked over him with fine, large Texan contempt for any one so ornery, shrugged his shoulders and turned to the marshal with the nonchalant alternative:

"Very well. Then take him out on the mess and shoot him!"

One venerable disciple of the law, who for a long time has balanced the scales of justice in the town of Las Cruces, is famous through all that region for his remarkable decisions. Before him a Mexican boy, through his father, sued an American rancher for $60, which he claimed as the wages due for three months' work. Between a Mexican and an American, any Mexican Justice can always see that the right is plainly on the side of the suitor of his own nationality, and no matter what the evidence, he can usually find some way of making his decision express his sympathy. In this case the defendant proved that the boy had been hired to do chores for his board and that it had been expressly stipulated that he was not to receive money payment. The Justice considered the case with frowning brows and laboring brains for some time. Then he announced that the plaintiff had failed to prove his case.

"But," he added, "the boy is a poor boy and it would be a shame if he did not get something out of this suit. He is entitled to something, and I hereby award him the defendant's black mare that is tied in front of the door."

This same Justice had to decide a unique

BREACH OF PROMISE SUIT.

Among the Mexicans it is the universal custom for the bridegroom to defray all the expense of the wedding. He must furnish the bride's trousseau and all the housekeeping equipment, and he must pay for the wedding feast and all the native wine that the guests can drink. He may be so poor that he will have to live with his wife's parents afterward, but he must not think of matrimony until he has money enough to pay for the whole affair, from the first article in his bride's trousseau to the photograph in their wedding garments, which they invariably have taken after the feast is over. A Mexican bridegroom would no more expect his bride to pay for her wedding clothes than an American lover would expect his bride to pay for the license.

An elderly Mexican in the town of Las Cruces, whose heart was as warm as his head was white, had gained the promise of a pretty young senorita and together they went to the store to buy her trousseau. From under her long black lashes she flashed her black eyes at him with such effect that he opened wide his purse and bought her all the pretty clothes she wanted. And the senorita took advantage of the occasion to want pretty much everything she saw. As soon as she had got the pretty things stowed away at home she jilted her elderly lover, and would not even allow him to come to her house.

While clad in the dresses he had paid for, she would sail past him in the street with her head in the air and give him not the least notice. That was too much for a hot-hearted but cool-headed lover to stand, and he brought suit for breach of promise, asking damages to the amount of the value of the trousseau. It came out on the trial that the elderly lover had borrowed the money with which he had bought the wedding finery. Then the Justice decided in the girl's favor, on the ground that the things didn't belong to the man because they had not been bought with his own money.

Many of these Mexican Justices cannot speak English. But that is not so much of a disqualification as it might appear, for the territorial law commands all court proceedings to be carried on in both English and Spanish. Every New Mexican court has its official interpreter, and every word spoken in either language by Judge, lawyers, or witnesses is translated aloud into the other tongue.

WHEN HE GROWS TALL.

My little boy looks up at me—
I'm twenty-eight and he is three.
And three feet tall, I'm six, and oh!
He envies me my inches so!

But as the days go by I guess
The difference will be less and less,
For while through years of youth he'll climb
I'll bow beneath the weight of time.

And by and by, as summers flow
And winters ebb, a'as! I know
The little boy I bend to see
Will sigh as he looks down at me.

ABSENT MINDED.

The Maid—You forgot to kiss me this morning, Mr. Jones.

Mr. Jones—Dear me, how absent minded I'm getting! It must have been my wife I kissed.