

FOR THE FARMER.

Rhubarb Culture.

Rhubarb, like currant bushes, will grow almost anywhere and under any treatment, and consequently receives more ill usage than any other "green thing growing." But for this reason it should not be supposed that when growing under neglect and abuse it will do its best and produce as abundant crops and of equally good quality as when good treatment is given.

After it is once planted rhubarb requires little cultivation, but it must have at all times deep, rich soil, the richer the better. In field culture the roots are planted about four feet apart each way, and cultivated like any hoed crop. In the family garden they should be planted two to three feet apart, in a single row, at least four feet distant from other plants.

It may be raised from seed, but as there is little reliance in the seedlings being of the same variety as the parent plants, division of the roots is the method of propagation usually adopted. Any piece of root with a bud or crown will grow if planted about two inches deep in mellow soil firmly pressed around it. Roots may be planted in autumn or early spring. Plantations are usually renewed every four or five years, yet when a liberal dressing of manure is given every fall the roots will produce a crop for an almost indefinite period. Heavy manuring, clean cultivation, and liberal space are the essential requisites for raising large, succulent rhubarb. The varieties best known are:—

Linnæus, grown extensively for market as well as home use. It is early, very productive, and of a brisk, spicy flavor. Its principal fault is that it seeds so freely that unless all flower stalks are cut off as soon as they appear the crop deteriorates rapidly.

Victoria is later, has larger leaves and stalks, and requires very rich, rather heavy ground for its best development.

Paragon. This is a new variety, originated in England, and now introduced here. The stalks are bright red, heavy, and produced in quick succession and great abundance. It is earlier, of more delicate flavor, and decidedly less acid than any other variety we are acquainted with. But its most remarkable and most valuable qualifications is that it does not produce flower stalks, to which fact its great productiveness is mainly attributable, all the strength of the plant being used for the development of its leaves.

Weight of Milk.

A great many little things are constantly passing before our eyes that most of us fail to notice. Every one who eats apples knows that they contain seeds, but not everyone who eats apples can tell whether the seeds of the apples as they lie in their little seed cases or "nooks," lie with their small end or large end towards the stem of the apple. We have heard the question asked repeatedly in large congregations of apple eaters, without bringing out half a dozen correct answers, the large majority appearing among the number who did not pretend to know, while of those who thought they knew, more usually voted wrong than right. Most persons, probably, know as much about milk as they do about apples, and perhaps one ought not to be surprised that in a mixed gathering there might be a difference of opinion concerning so simple a thing as milk. Yet we are hardly prepared to find, upon a recent occasion, where a number of farmers were discussing the milk question, that scarcely one could tell for a certainty which of the two liquids, milk or water, was the heaviest, while of those who thought they knew, the larger number were in the wrong. Because milk contains fat, which is lighter than either water or milk, many think that the milk itself must be lighter than water. Probably very few farmers ever took the trouble to weigh a gallon of either water or milk to ascertain their weights or difference. The difference is comparatively slight, though varying according as the milk is rich or poor in the several milk solids. Take a vessel that will hold exactly 100 pounds of pure water, and fill it with pure milk of average quality, and the weight will be found to be about 103 pounds. In other words milk is 3 per cent. heavier than water.

Mr. O. S. Bliss, who is good authority on dairy matters, gives, in a recent letter to the *Rural New Yorker*, the specific gravity of pure milk, as found by many tests, to be, 1.032. The standard gallon of pure milk, taken at a temperature of 60°, is now generally understood to weigh 8.6 pounds, or 2.15 pounds per quart. By this rule ten quarts of pure milk at a temperature of 60° will weigh just 21½ pounds, which are easy figures to remember, and from which it is easy to reckon the number of quarts given by a cow after finding the number of pounds by weighing. A good many owners of large milkers have come to reckon two pounds of milk as a quart, which is wrong and very misleading.

Barbed Wire Fencing.

A correspondent of the *Rural New Yorker* gives the following experience:—From my own long experience with barbed-wire fencing and still longer experience with hedges, I can find no weighty objections to the former. I have heard some complaints and some expressed fears of possible danger to stock; but these objections have been given in comparison with the commendations given wire fencing. Its advantages as to durability, low cost and capability of resisting wind storms, are certainly evident. Economically considered, there is no fence that can compare with it. We do not in this vicinity, as a general rule, build fences of wire alone, preferring to use two six-inch pine boards at the bottom, with three wires above.

The principal objection urged against barbed-wire fencing, is that stock is liable to serious injury from running violently against the barbs. So far as my observation has extended, this objection arises only from an apprehension of danger, and is not based on actual facts. Of course, one can conceive of such a thing, and shudder at the thought of a favorite animal being maimed; and at once the objection theoretically becomes a potent one; but I think very few persons have suffered loss in this manner. I have not heard of such an instance in this part of the country, and there are hundreds of miles of barbed-wire fence within a very few miles of this place. I notice that stock generally acquaint themselves with the nature of the fence, and after that leave it severely alone. The difficulty is largely

obviated by the board and wire fence, for horses running towards the fence, see the board and turn away.

Another correspondent in the same paper writes thus:—As to wire fences, I have about 400 yards of the barbed and more of the buckthorn, and like the latter much better, except for special purposes, such as a pig fence or a top wire on a board fence. When I should prefer the close set barb. I use chestnut posts three inches square, sharpened and driven down from 16 to 20 feet apart, and at every ninth and tenth post an eight-inch chestnut or oak straining post is planted three feet, and well rammed. The end straining posts only are braced. I find the best way to brace is to plant a stout post eight feet from the end post; put a brace from near the top of one to the bottom of the other, at the surface of the ground; then nail a thick eight-inch board from the top of one post to the top of the other. Put up in this way the straining-post will not "give." Without the board, it is apt to push the second post over when cold weather arrives. I have not found wire fences dangerous to stock so far. I first used three strands of wire, but now use four one foot apart, and the first one foot from the ground. This makes a good fence, and is about the right height. Cattle will put their heads through to reach grass outside the fence, but do not get hurt in doing so. I have never had an animal attempt to break through except an old boar, and in this case the fence was too low and he jumped it, and in doing so pulled the wire from the post.

WIT AND WISDOM.

Why is love like a potato? Because it shoots from the eyes.

It is said that girls who sing "Baby mine" seldom get married.

Leap year advice—Be sure your victim is rich before you jump at him.

Patience is the panacea; but where does it grow, or who can swallow it?

Those sentiments of love which flow from the heart cannot be frozen by adversity.

"Ye pays no more attention to me," said Patrick to his children, "than if I was a dumb baste talking to yez."

She that has never known adversity is but half acquainted with others or with herself. Constant success shows us but one half of the world.

A health journal says that you ought to take three-quarters of an hour for your dinner. It is well also to add a few vegetables and a piece of meat.

Many people economize the wrong way. They will worry the pennies and waste the pounds. A fortune, or so much saved and put away, is not made this way, but by a careful outlook all the way round.

Lady of the house (to cook)—"Maggie, I want you to be sure and baste the duck you are cooking." Cook—"Oh, yes, m'm, I will. And ye see I was just afther comin' for a naddle and a thrid to do it wid."

A gentleman once asked Abernethy if he thought the moderate use of snuff would "injure the brain." "No, sir," was the doctor's prompt reply; "for no man with a single ounce of brains would think of taking snuff."

A bookkeeper riding through a street in the West End of London, and seeing "Dr." on every other house, remarked that it would look a little more regular if there was an occasional "Cr." on the other side of the street.

What a lovely example of domestic simplicity is set by that sweet animal, the domestic cat, which rises at three in the morning, washes its face with its right hand, gives its tail three quick jerks, and is ready for the day's cares and pleasures.

"If your wife faints, do not spoil her dress by dashing a pitcher of water over her. Loudly kiss the back of your hand. She will immediately revive and want to know whom you are kissing. Do not tell her, and she will not faint any more."

"Any good shooting on your farm?" asked a hunter of a farmer. "Splendid," said the agriculturist; "there's the tax-gatherer in the parlor, and my mother-in-law in the kitchen. Climb over the fence, young man, load both barrels, and shoot the lot."

Distinguish exactly what one is, when he stands alone, and acts for himself, and when he is led by others. We know many who act always honestly, often with delicacy, when left to themselves; and like knaves when influenced by some overbearing characters, whom they slavishly submitted to follow.

An Ayrshire farmer who had been out in the late boisterous weather and got himself very wet went into a public-house in a country village and ordered a glass of whiskey. After taking off the contents neat without an effort he said, "Man, that whusky's uncommon mild; it's a wee like mysel'; I think it's been out in the rain!"

A minister, when visiting a farm-house observed one of the inmates begin to a large oag of porridge without having first asked a blessing on the food. Desirous of teaching the lad his duty in this respect, he said to him, "Without asking a blessing, are you not afraid the porridge will choke you?" "No," said the youth instantly; "there's nae fear o' that; they're no sae thick."

A gentleman who considered himself a crack shot with a rifle "at a mark" took a deer-forest last autumn. The first day's stalking, says a Northern contemporary, seemed to him "a day bewitched," for he missed every chance and several of them were good ones. He asked the headkeeper if he could account for his missing so often. Like a true Scot, the keeper replied by asking another question. "Are your rifle and cartridges gude?" "Yes, quite good—Westley Richards, you know." "Then you're no gude yourself."

Andrew Douglas, author of "The History of Ferryden," used to keep an evening school during the winter for the benefit of the fisher lads who were engaged with their fathers during the summer. One of his pupils had got as far advanced as cloth measure, in reduction, when going up one day to the master with his slate, the master (who had an impediment in his speech), after looking it over, told him his answer was wrong. "Fat's the matter wi' the coon't, maister?" says the scholar. "W'wy, d'don't you see that you h-h-have got h-h-half a yard t-t-too m-m-much in your answer?" "Oh!" says the scholar, "that's nae faut ava, maister, for it will a' be needit, for there's a great big hole i' my breeks."

ROMAN FOX HUNTING.

Sport that is no Child's Play—Dangerous Ground and Reckless Riders.

The Romans as a rule do not "go in" for many sports much. There is something in the soft southern air which predisposes them to inaction. They are quite content with the mild exercise of a drive on the Pincio, varied, perhaps, from time to time, by a day's shooting over the Alban hills. But one sport, and that one of all others the most exciting, does flourish here—fox hunting. The hunt meets two or three times weekly throughout the season, and there is generally a good muster. On some mornings as many as forty or fifty riders may be seen on the trail of poor reynard, and not unfrequently there are twice as many people go out "on wheels," especially if the meet happens to be at Cecilia Metella, by the Via Appia, or at the Tre Fontane—the two most popular rendezvous in the Campagna. It is the fashion among many smart sportsmen who never saw a meet to sneer at Roman fox hunting and Roman foxes. But they would find, if they condescended to try it, that the sport is perhaps often more exhilarating than would suit their fancy. The foxes are bona fide, "natural" foxes. They are not, as an Englishman insinuated the other day, "shaken out of a bag," or "numbered," or "put down" a couple of hours before they are "sighted."

The hounds are kept at a farm outside the Porta Salaria, about three miles from Rome. It is chiefly supported by the subscriptions of the Roman nobles, though a dozen foreigners are members of the hunt and contribute their quota. Duca Grazioli, the M. F. H., is a great favorite. To look at his delicate face and figure in a drawing room you would never credit him with the dash and endurance he really has in him. But put him in the saddle and he is a changed being. He is a splendid rider—takes the stiffest rails and walls as though they were kitchen-fenders. His only rivals are Reynolds, the huntsman (who hails from Leicestershire), Count Zucchini, a hard but rather unlucky rider, and a gentleman in the Italian foreign office named Simonetta, who usually bestrides a superb chestnut steeplechase mare, which has played him several ugly tricks lately, and, indeed, nearly broke his neck the other day. Count Zucchini, by the by, also had a narrow escape a short time ago. While hunting a particularly knowing fox at Conto Celli one morning his horse stumbled into a hole, and he came a regular "neck and cropper." He was picked up with a broken shoulder-blade and a damaged collar-bone, which obliged him to go into hospital for over a fortnight.

Among the other patrons of the noble sport Prince Odescalchi (Mario's great friend) is one of the most constant. He is the only man in Rome who wears an ulster, and he wears it ostentatiously, even going the length of riding to meet in it. Very often Prince Rossano Borghese and his brothers also join the "pink 'uns." Duca Magrignano and Prince Dora have been less assiduous of late, and we have too often missed Princess Doria, the dashing daughter of his grace of Newcastle. But though one fair huntress has thought fit to desert us the field has rarely been quite deprived of feminine attractions. Only very important engagements or illness would induce Countess Bobinsky, for instance, to forego her periodic run with the Roman hounds. Countess Celeri, a go-ahead Roman lady, has been out pretty often during the last two or three winters. She has five English hunters in her stable—regular "flyers" some of them—and will ride at anything when her blood is up.

The low, rolling plain between Rome and the mountain is rather ticklish ground for a novice or a stranger to hunt over. The soil is treacherous, pitfalls are plentiful, and the ruins strewn about in the grass constitute awkward stumbling blocks—especially if you alight on them after taking a flyer over a four-foot rail or a good hedge. Near the city the land is comparatively level, however. The danger begins about Roma Vecchia, where the relics of the dead past lie so thick together that you have to pick your way as if you were riding through the cemetery. And, indeed, the Campagna is a cemetery, the greatest, grandest, and most crowded in the world. Besides natural obstacles, you have to reckon with artificial obstacles in the shape of rough stone walls (very like those in the English lake country), fragments of tombs, and forgotten chips of fallen temples.

There was some exciting, though rather disappointing sport out toward the Roman race-course the other morning. We mustered about thirty strong, among the number being, of course, Duca Grazioli, Prince Odescalchi (in pink, like many of the men, but unlike the rest, disguised in the inevitable ulster), M. Simonetta, etc., and last, but not least, one lady—Countess Celeri. The fox was sighted shortly after 11, and away we swept, over the brow of a rather high hillock and down again into a deep dip, the hounds owning the scent faithfully for some time. After a sharp run of twenty minutes, however, they were seen to be at fault, and after all reynard succeeded in getting away with his brush, to the intense disgust of Reynolds, the huntsman, and the hunt generally.

Lavish Hospitality.

Entertaining, even when it is simply done, if carried to excess, will make great inroads on a limited property, and in Virginia hospitality was literally unbounded. Even to this day, to ask a Virginia to come and stay from Monday till Friday, or from Wednesday till Saturday, mentioning, that is to say, a limit for his visit, would be considered a most barbarous outrage. There is something almost ludicrous, if it were not so pathetic, in the picture of poor Mr. Jefferson's declining years at Monticello. His property, which had amounted to something over £40,000 when he left office, was literally eaten up by the swarms of visitors of all kinds, whom his ideas of hospitality forbade him to close his doors to, and when he died, the sale of his property failed to cover his debts.

There was a musical entertainment in Denver a short time ago, and a local publication thus describes it: "Sweet strains of music floated out upon the gentle breeze of the quiet night with that enchanting melody which lifts the soul of man from the narrow limits of human enjoyments to pleasant anticipations of those seraphic pleasures in which the angels are wont to engage."

Time once passed never returns; the moment which is lost is lost for ever.

The Orthodox Paradise.

The true and orthodox terrestrial paradise of the Middle Ages lay, not across the mysterious Western ocean, but in the equally mysterious lands of the sun-rising. It was usually identified with the Garden of Eden, in which Adam and Eve had been placed; and it was therefore impossible to seek it in any other quarter than the East. Now, in mediæval times the limits of the known world were shrunken far within the boundaries known to the later Roman geographers, Ptolemy, Strabo, and their fellows. In the twelfth or thirteenth century the Western world knew almost exactly as much, or rather as little, of Asia, as Herodotus had known 1,600 years before. The very stories which the father of history related of Indians and gold-producing ants, of griffins and Arimaapi, had returned to their old localities in Central Asia, though in Roman days they had for some time continually receded further and further into the unknown North-east. Now, again, as in the fifth century before Christ, men believed that beyond an India of no great extent there lay no more inhabited lands, but only desert and sea. But, unlike the ancient, the mediævals placed in the furthest part of this region the earthly paradise, either as an oasis in an expanse of rocks and sands or as an island in an unnavigable ocean. Sometimes we read of it as inaccessible by reason of lands of mist and darkness, or insurmountable precipices; sometimes it is tempestuous seas or rivers which bar the way. But beyond them, if a man could but penetrate, he would find the Eden where our first father had dwelt, where rise the four mysterious rivers, and where grows every tree that is pleasant to the sight or good for food. "There," says Neckam, "is a beautiful, and where whole tracks are overgrown with the noble vine; there are clear springs and groves watered with pleasant streams. Glorious is the fruit which enriches its gardens, and no sterile trees can grow in its soil. Never do storms come near it, nor violent winds, but there always blows a gentle breeze. Neither never came the waters of the all-destroying flood."

AN ELEPHANT AT LARGE.

Demolishing Fences and Breaking into a House—The Inmates Flying.

An elephant belonging to a circus at present located in Coventry broke loose early one recent morning, and went in the darkness toward several detached cottages. Finding his progress barred by a fence and a gate, he smashed the gate into fragments, and carried a portion of it with him. Having gained access to the gardens which surrounded the cottages he discovered a tub containing food for pigs, of which he made a meal, and then, in continuing his exploration, he became wedged between a tree and the wall of one of the houses. In his efforts to turn round he burst open the door of the house, the noise alarming the inmates to such an extent that they dared not leave the upper rooms. Proceeding to the next house, the elephant broke open the door with his trunk, which he pushed into the room, and when the man of the house came down stairs to ascertain the cause of the noise he was struck with consternation, and quickly retreated to the upper room.

The man threw first a flower pot and then a board at the intruder, who manifested the utmost indifference, and eventually quietly walked away. He was followed through the garden by several of the alarmed householders, one of whom was despatched for the keeper. Meanwhile the elephant reached the street, and was met by a policeman, who turned on his bull's-eye, the flash of light drawing from the elephant a contemptuous grunt as he moved onward. Before he had proceeded very far his keeper got within hailing distance, and at the sound of his voice the elephant turned about and marched quietly back to his quarters.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

Rye will grow at a low temperature, and continue to grow later and start earlier than most other grains.

Put a few ears of corn into the oven and let them remain until reduced to charcoal. Feed this to the fowls and notice the increased egg production.

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