

PRACTICAL FARMING.

PRUNING TREES AND FRUITS.

In the matter of pruning, there is a difference between trees and small fruits that should be constantly kept in mind. All kinds of trees need pruning; but, as compared with small fruits and vines, they need it but moderately. In comparison with trees, shrubs, small fruits and vines apparently have more of the original curse resting upon them, or, to put it into other words, their natural habit of growth is such that it is a part of the function of the plant to make superfluous growth. The blackberry root sprouts, grows in massed confusion, and the shade, which it itself furnishes, causes the plant to thrive better, while the brush patch habit and the ample provision of thorns prevent destruction by animals. The vines of the grape use their climbing power and vine tendencies in their natural state to raise the plant to the light and the sunny side of trees, but in the cultivated state this tendency is objectionable and becomes a nuisance. The surplus growth is wholly unnecessary, is in the way of the planter, and can be advantageously pruned off. In trees, however, there is no such tendency to superfluous growth, hence they do not need so much pruning. It is true that among the different varieties of fruit trees there are some that make excessive growth and need extra pruning; but the greatest growers need nothing like as much pruning as small fruit plantations, such as raspberries, strawberries, blackberries, gooseberries, currants and the like. As a rule the effect of pruning upon trees is to produce a stronger and more vigorous growth of new wood. The same is true of small fruits. The strawberry is pruned by restraining the runners. Suppose you had planted one plant last spring. This summer it might possibly have set enough new plants to multiply to from seventeen to twenty-five. If these are left, it is likely that there will be that many hills of indifferent fruit. But if the grower permits the mother plant to fasten down but three or four plants around her, pruning off the other runner, the mother with the four plants around her will set clusters of fine berries and the five plants will have greater vitality. If in the raspberry or blackberry an old cane or hill of canes is retained there is a good growth for next year's fruit, and enough bearing wood left to produce say 1,200 berries, they will be under-sized because the plants are over-loaded and would not make over eight quarts; moreover, the hill would not produce more than about one-tenth as many new canes for the next year's crops as it did this year. But if, after the bloom appears, its bearing surface should be reduced so that the bearing capacity of the hill should be from one-half to three-fourths of that above indicated, the planter would get about the same amount of fruit with more than double the amount of new growth, and the severe pruning in removing the half would be a benefit. The same rule holds good with the grape, and it is advantageous to prune quite severely. But when we turn to the apple or cherry tree, such annual cutting back would often practically destroy the tree.

If from a third to a half of the tops of fruit trees were lopped off annually the loss would be supplied at a rapid rate with water sprouts, and when these in turn were cut off, the sprouting nuisance would only increase still more. The strongest and most vigorous water sprouts produce fruit buds sparingly, if at all. The rule is that they do not bear any fruit. They are but a rapid wood growth to repair some great and serious damage. Now, tree pruning should be done carefully from the start and if it is not begun young, but is resorted to later after much dense wood growth is started, it should be done moderately, and increased gradually, so as not to injure the vitality of the trees nor be so severe as to cause water sprouts to appear on the pruned tree as a quick repair of the damage done. If pruning is begun when the trees are small and the knife used separately, the buds being rubbed off when they are not wanted, this affords the ideal method of doing the work. Nevertheless in large orchards, where tree growing is done on a large scale, it would almost require sitting up nights to attend to it. In some seasons it is advisable to cease pruning altogether, because the series of seasons is such that there has been an excess of terminal wood growth, and more pruning would only cause the trees to push forward a still stronger growth and discourage bud formation for fruiting altogether. On the other hand, when there has been a long period of drought, and under these conditions growth stops, considerable pruning is an aid to stimulating it, and as a rule weak growths do not produce the best and most vigorous fruit buds. The better fruit buds are usually on moderate growths, and as a rule where trees plainly show male and female bloom, the most fertile and the best fruiters are found on the growths of moderate vigor and the greater percent of them is female, the male bloom being the most abundant on the weaker growths. This class of buds produce inferior fruits, and are the lowest in percent of fertile blossoms. With these facts in mind the pruner should remove the weaker class of shoots. Where trees are inclined to over-bear, pruning off fruit spurs is an excellent method of reducing the fruiting area of sorts having this tendency.

PEACH CULTURE.

The peach next to the apple is the most important fruit grown in our country. But its culture is greatly neglected by many otherwise good farmers. Why this is the case it is difficult to understand when we consider its wonderful adaptability to almost all

soils and climates. The peach has many things to commend its culture to public favor.

1. It bears fruit soon after planting. Put a pit in the ground just where you wish it to grow, cultivate it well, and you can begin to eat the fruit the third year. It bears as quickly as blackberries, raspberries or most of the small fruits. In this respect it has a great advantage over the apple, which requires several years of growth before it makes much return.

2. Its season is quite well extended. By planting several varieties, it is not difficult to have peaches from the tree for four months, or one-third of the year.

3. There is always a good market for fine peaches. All know how abundant peaches were the past season, yet even medium-sized ones brought as much per bushel as wheat, and the finest peaches were worth two or three bushels of wheat.

4. Peaches will grow well on land that is too rough and rocky to be cultivated with profit in grain. In fact, the peach flourishes best on rough land. Land that is worth only a few dollars per acre will grow as good peaches as the best farm land.

5. No other fruit is more certain. A peach tree under proper cultivation will bear every year if the buds and blossoms escape frost. It is the only fruit that is liable to be killed in the bud, but this does not often happen. Not more than once in twenty years. But on the other hand, it will survive quite a hard freeze when in full bloom, enduring cold better than any other fruit at this trying period.

6. No fruit keeps its taste better or is more easily preserved either by canning or evaporating. The canned peach is always regarded, not simply as a luxury, but as a necessity in every home.

This is a very brief summary of some of the good qualities of the peach. In our next article we shall try to give some hints about its cultivation, drawn from many years of experience.

A SUGGESTION.

Farmers are not so often annoyed by visits of their neighbors' chickens to their yards as are village people and those who live in city suburbs. In some localities this chicken visiting becomes a trying nuisance.

The following is related of a down east farmer who was much annoyed by feathered visitors to his barn yard. The uninvited chickens would not only ruffle the feathers of those that were there by right, but would feed upon the corn that the good farmer threw to his feathered creatures with a liberal hand.

Instead of attending meeting last Sunday the aggrieved farmer remained at home, determined to take radical steps to rid himself of trouble and his barnyard of his neighbors' chickens. He took a pint of corn and through the center of each kernel he bored a hole. Then he took some silken thread and fastened a short piece to each kernel. On the free end of the thread he attached small slips of paper, on which, among other sentiments, was inscribed: "Trust in the Lord and feed your own hens," "We do not cast our bread upon the water for broilers," "No free meal tickets," and "Please keep me at home and I'll not get into trouble." In due time the neighbor's chickens gathered in the good farmer's barnyard and swallowed the kernels to which the sentiments were attached. It did not take the chickens that drew prizes long to reach their separate roosting places, and the town was aroused by the sight of fowls making tracks through the by-roads, while in their immediate wake fluttered slips of white paper.

The good farmer's barnyard was respected the next day.

DEADLY FIGHT IN THE DARK.

How at a Hungarian Christening at Mayfield, Pa.—One Man Dead, Two Fatally Wounded.

A despatch from Scranton, Pa., says:—As the result of a fight at a Hungarian christening in Mayfield, Pa., on Thursday, one man is dead, two are dying and five others were badly cut with knives. Strong liquor flowed freely at the christening, and soon many of the men were mad with drink. Seven of the participants in the feast went to the house of Lucatz Krutchas. Krutchas soon had to resent an insult to his wife, and then the knives flashed out. Mrs. Krutchas dashed out the light and fled from the room. A fearful fight followed in the dark. The drink-maddened men cut and stabbed each other and rolled together upon the floor in deadly grapple. Finally a constable and posse broke into the house, and when a light was had a ghastly picture was presented. The furniture was battered and broken and blood was everywhere. Stretched on the floor were eight apparently dead and dying men groaning and cursing. A physician was hastily summoned. Krutchas was so terribly cut that he died in a short while. The injuries of the other men show the savage nature of the fight. They are:—Peter Guzy, cut over the heart; left hand severed at the wrist; will die. Wazy Zubal, stabbed in the back; lung pierced and piece of flesh cut from shoulder; will probably die. John Turpakone, cut off and numerous slashes on shoulder and back. Paul Pawlak, face and arms slashed. John Nester, face, head and breast badly cut. Michael Oleaniz, stabbed in the face and back. Andrew Telep, stabs and nose broken. These men are under guard in the hospital, and an investigation of the affair is being held.

HIS HARD LINES.

Poor man! exclaimed the prison missionary, to whom the sheriff's guest had been relating a tale of woe. Your life seems to have been one unbroken series of misfortunes.

Yes, sighed the fallen one, I have had many trials.

A Prescott man has been fined \$18.35 for chopping the tail off his horse.

HOUSEHOLD.

CHILDHOOD TO GIRLHOOD.

When the daughter is stepping from childhood into girlhood, it is not only, as a rule, a period of awkwardness and uncertainty for the girl, but it is a moment of great anxiety for the mother. It is an age when a child is ungainly and angular and less lovely than at any other time in her life. A time when a certain shyness begins to manifest itself and raise a faint veil between the young developing mind and the parents or friends of childhood.

It is a time when the mother should try to retain the fullest confidence of the child, and constant watchfulness regarding mind and body is most essential. At this period of transition girls should not indulge in any over-violent exercises, of gymnastics or skipping, running or any extreme physical exertion, for they are easily fatigued. Cold bathing should by all means be avoided, for an ill-timed shock to the system may cause a life-long misery.

It is extremely unfortunate that just at this age, from fourteen to sixteen, the hardest educational work is usually pressed upon girls. Unwise pressure of study at this age may do much mischief. It would seem as though some reform in the educational system at this period was a crying need. Indeed the health and welfare of the mother and daughter of the land depend upon it in no small measure. Too many mothers shirk the responsibility of this trying time; but let me urge you as mothers, and as you love your children, leave them not to ignorance, but with gentle, kindly voice, give them simple but invaluable lessons from the great book of life, which you have learned from experience.

EARLY SLEEP FOR CHILDREN

"It is criminal economy to attempt to save a little money by not giving every child in your family a bed to himself," was the strong way in which a physician put it the other day, addressing a woman's club on "Some of the Important Little Things of Children's Health." Another thing emphasized was the need of early sleep. "It is so easy to let a nervous child lose sleep in the early evening, when he or she should be hard at it," said the speaker. "When a physician prescribes some important remedy that must be taken and which is not pleasant, a mother feels that it is time well expended to coax and wheedle, and even bribe the little one to swallow it. Spend just as much thought and effort in getting your child to sleep every night, if he does not fall off his chair at the evening meal from drowsiness, as the normal child should. Give up concerts, theaters, parties, anything till you have secured for the nervous, twitching boy or girl, the benign habit of sleep. Coax him to his room, give him a quick sponge bath, tuck him in his single bed, with a light wool blanket over him besides the sheet, and in a lowered light sit by him and talk to him till he is quieted. Tell him gentle, soothing stories, nothing to excite his imagination, and when he is finally asleep, have the room, cool, dark and quiet. Don't let him try to sleep in a room which has been a sitting room all the evening, without having it thoroughly refilled with fresh outdoor air, which may be accomplished by throwing windows wide open for fifteen minutes."

FOR BREAKFAST.

Corn Cakes.—One quart of sifted meal, one teaspoonful each of salt and soda, and butter-milk to make a thin batter. Bake or fry on very hot grid-iron.

Buttermilk Biscuit.—Three cupfuls of buttermilk, one of butter, half a teaspoonful of soda, a teaspoonful of salt, and flour enough to make dough stiff enough to admit of being rolled out into biscuit.

Baked Eggs.—Grease well a dish or pan, with butter, break into as many eggs as you wish to cook, sprinkle over a little salt and pepper and place them in the oven a few moments, they are very good if well cooked.

Ham Toast.—Mix with one table-spoonful of finely-chopped ham, the beaten-up yolk of an egg, and a little cream and pepper, heat over the fire and then spread the mixture either on hot buttered toast, or on slices of bread fried quite crisp in butter; served very hot.

Fried Breakfast Bacon.—Remove the rind and cut up several slices of bacon, scatter in the frying pan and fry gently. Beat up six eggs, add to them salt and pepper, pour over the bacon, let it set nicely and turn. Have ready slices of toast, on which lay the bacon and eggs, pour over a little melted butter.

Pancakes.—The yolks of two eggs, beat them up lightly, add a pint of milk and a little salt, and flour enough to make a thin, smooth batter. Beat the whites of the eggs to a stiff froth, and stir them as lightly as possible into the batter just before baking; they are very nice, and made without baking powder or soda. As fast as fried flap over or cover with a pan, till ready for the table.

Breakfast Fritters.—Two eggs, beat well, two cupfuls of butter-milk or sour milk, a little salt, a half teaspoonful of soda, and flour to make a batter stiff enough to drop from the spoon. Have a skillet of hot lard and fry a light brown. They are nice and light. For a change you can put in some chopped meat or oyster for each fritter, for those that like oysters.

Egg Toast.—Cut some small slices of bread, brown and butter. Take the yolks of hard boiled eggs, put in a bowl with salt and pepper, melted butter, rub together and spread on the toast. Set where it will keep warm. Put a teaspoonful of milk in a saucepan with salt, butter and a little corn starch. Have the whites of the eggs chopped, and dropped in the sauce-pan, let boil and pour over the toast.

A HOMEMADE SEWING BASKET.

Procure a good-sized piece of firm, heavy pasteboard or cardboard, cut from it a perfect square, six inches square, and four pieces for the sides, measuring six inches wide at the bottom, nine inches wide at the top, and about four inches high. The measurements must be perfect and the sides must be carefully measured and divided so that each slant is of the same length. Cover the five pieces neatly on both sides with cambric, saten or cretonne, and if wisled all the edges may be bound with braid or ribbon. When this is done the basket may be put together. The sides are first sewed together, fastening with a few stitches at the top corners and a few at the bottom; then the bottom may be fastened in. Now we have a basket measuring six inches square at the bottom, nine inches square at the top and about four inches high. Inside, on the sides, should be fastened two small cushions for pins, a pocket for the thimble and a small flannel needle-book with pinked edges.

A very pretty basket of this kind was seen recently. It was eight-sided and covered with dark red silk. The tiny cushions and thimble bag were also of red silk, and the entire basket was bound with red satin ribbon. Such a basket is harder to make, as one must be very careful to have each side of the octagonal bottom the same length. Each side of this one measured two inches, which made the bottom sixteen inches in circumference. Each of the side pieces was about three inches wide at the top and three and one-half inches high.

TWO APPLE RECIPES.

In spite of their name, apple biscuits do not belong to the bread family at all, as neither flour nor yeast enters into their composition. Peel and core some ripe apples and reduce them to pulp; flavor with essence of lemon and mix while warm with their weight of powdered sugar; drop on plates or into paper cases and dry in a slow oven for several days. The heat should never be sufficient to bake, only to dry them. When thoroughly dried they should be packed in glass or tin for winter use. Apricots, pears, raspberries, strawberries, plums, etc., may be done in the same way.

For apple bread boil a dozen good-sized apples that have been carefully peeled and cored, until they are perfectly tender. While still warm, mash them in double the amount of flour, and add the proper proportion of yeast. The mass should then be thoroughly kneaded without water, as the juice of the apples will make it sufficiently soft. It should be left to rise for twelve hours, then formed into loaves, and baked when quite light. Apple bread was the invention of a scientific Frenchman, and it has always been highly commended for its healthfulness.

FILLING A BULLDOG'S TEETH.

An Operation That a Scranton Dentist Did With Hesitation, but Success.

A powerful and ferocious bulldog, owned by Dr. Ward of Scranton, Pa., enjoys the distinction of having a big gold filling in one of his incisors, and a good many citizens, who have caught a gleam of the gold in his mouth, wonder how the filling was done. Some think it was done through hypnotic influence by the doctor over the dog, while others insist that it was through the dog's implicit obedience to his master's command.

The bulldog's name is Gem. He is as ugly in appearance as a prize winner in a dog show. His nose is a mass of wrinkles, and his eyes have a wicked gleam for any one but his master and Mrs. Ward. His affection for them, however, knows no bounds. When Gem was discovered one day clasping his muzzle between his paws, rolling over and over on the floor, and moaning, his mouth was examined, and it was found that there was a big cavity in one of his incisors. It was decided that a dentist should be consulted. The dentist found that it would be necessary to use a rubber dam, and he promised to fill the cavity provided Gem was etherized. This was done and the operation was considered a successful one although Gem evidently thought otherwise. Some time afterward the filling came out, and Gem's last state was worse than his first, for he refused to submit to another operation with ether.

At the first sniff of the anaesthetic he not only added a score of wrinkles to those already in his nose, but showed his teeth in so dangerous a way that the dentist refused to proceed. Dr. Ward insisted that he could make Gem stand on the table and have the tooth filled without wincing. The dentist was dubious about trusting his hand between the brute's jaws, but finally consented to try.

Gem was put on the table and his master stood in front of him, kept his eyes fixed on Gem's, and told him to open his mouth. Gem did so, and a rubber dam was soon adjusted in place. The dentist set to work with the instrument of torture called a burr, and one of Gem's ears went down in a threatening way, while the other remained cocked. The doctor held one finger raised and kept his eyes fixed on Gem's, and kept his eyes fixed on Gem's, that never wandered from his master's gaze. The attitude of Gem's ears proved a barometer of his sufferings, when the burr touched a spot close to the nerve. When both ears went down, the dentist knew he had gone so far as dogs' nature would let him go. Gem's eyes never wandered from the doctor's in the hour and a half the dentist was at work. Gem stood the final polishing, and when his master gave the word for him to get down from the table Gem danced with demonstrations of joy at his release. Since that day he has no trouble in masticating the biggest beef bone.

LIKE THE BLACK PLAGUE

THE TERRIBLE BUBONIC PLAGUE MAY REACH AMERICA.

Swept All Europe in the Seventeenth Century—The Breeding Place of the Plague—Some Features of the Disease.

Recent despatches from London say that two cases of the bubonic plague have developed there—the same disease which since 1891 has been ravaging certain parts of China. This is only another reminder to us here in America that these Eastern epidemics only too frequently girdle the earth before they have run their course, as did la grippe, which first was heard from in an alarming form in distant Russia, but which soon reached over our shores with the disastrous results which are still so fresh in mind.

Already two cases, of it have occurred on one of the Pacific mail steamers on the way from China to San Francisco. Two Chinese stokers were stricken and died of the disease shortly after the vessel sailed, and both were buried at sea.

It is said on good authority that the bubonic plague has been more or less prevalent in certain parts of China ever since the seventeenth century, when it gained such terrific headway that it

SWEPT ALL EUROPE,

and nearly depopulated Marseilles, to say nothing of the De Foe horrors it wrought in London. The disease took pestilential form in Canton about two years ago. There is a wide, open ditch about a portion of the city into which all the refuse and exuvia of the swarming population is emptied. It is the placid Chinese theory that the tide washes the festering mass away. The tide does nothing of the kind, and the filth remains there in the blistering sun to the depth of two or three feet, a breeding place for myriads of rats and other foul vermin.

It is a curious fact that in all violent outbreaks of the bubonic plague rats seemed first to be seized with it, and their death in great numbers always preceded by a few days corresponding ravages among human beings. The rats swarming out of the extra-mural ditch about Canton and dying by thousands was the first warning the Chinamen had that an epidemic of the disease was upon them. They burned red paper, tried to fool the gods by changing the date of the new year and died by the thousand convinced that they had taken all the sanitary precautions within the power of man.

From China the disease got to Formosa and the Malay Peninsula. The Japanese, with their modern learning and freedom from the idiotic superstitions which afflict the besotted Chinamen, made a strong and intelligent fight against the deadly invader and kept him comparatively at bay. But the disease crept into India and among certain groups of the natives there has spread with

FRIGHTFUL RAPIDITY.

A press despatch from Bombay last week reported 2,094 cases and 1,494 deaths up to date. Europeans and such natives as were able to get away were leaving the city by thousands. The newspapers were threatening martial law unless the natives obeyed the sanitary regulations.

In India, as in China, the advent of the plague was heralded by an epidemic among the rats, which were found dead by the hundreds in and about the native dwellings. In some instances rats, evidently suffering from the disease, swarmed, swollen and dying, into rooms where were human beings. They reeled and staggered and wandered aimlessly about as though in the same delirium which marks a certain stage of the disease in man.

A feature of the disease is the suddenness of attack and the awful rapidity with which one stage follows another until death ensues. The first symptom is usually a chill, as in an ague. Then follows an acute nervousness and mental disturbance, with a fever that sends the temperature up to from 100 to 107. The patient staggers like a drunken man. Headache, a burning thirst and intense pain in the upper part of the abdomen follow.

A sticky perspiration exudes from the pores, and then follows the glandular swellings from which the disease takes its name.

The last occur in the groin or neck, or, very frequently, under the armpits. The swellings are oval and egg-like in shape, and the more of them there are the less dangerous is the attack. Sudden, stab-like pains shoot through the body, and this gave rise to the superstition among the Turks that the man with the plague is wounded by the arrow of

AN INVISIBLE DEVIL.

Dark spots—whence come the name of the "black death"—appear on the skin of the victim just before dissolution. These spots were called "the token," and their appearance was the signal for abandonment of all hope in the Middle Ages, and the victim was then and there scared to death by being told that all was over.

An eminent Japanese bacteriologist, Prof. Kita-Soto, who studied in Europe under Koch, has discovered the microbe of the "black death," and his discovery was confirmed by Prof. Gersin, formerly attached to the Pasteur Laboratory in Paris. The bacillus is short, thick, easy of culture and when inoculated on Guinea pigs kills them in twenty-four hours. Specimens of bacilli-infected glandular swellings taken from victims of the disease have been forwarded to Paris, and it is hoped a vaccine may be obtained that will prove efficacious.

STOLE HIS ARSENAL.

I hear Mrs. Derby, that your husband has two revolvers and a Winchester for any burglars who may call. He had, but they came the other night and got them.