

PRACTICAL FARMING.

THE PEOPLE'S BANK.

That a great many persons, especially farmers, are averse to banks, and bankers' ways, we are well aware; yet, there is one system of banking—a system that embraces both features of the production and security of values—that we are sure our farmer friends will endorse, because it is the kind of a system that enables many persons to be their own bankers. In one sense every farmer's corn-crib, haystack, stock yard and stable are branch banks that contain his valuables, but they are not in that refined and ready convertible condition, that the products or contents of the bank that we refer to are.

It is the poultry—the hens on the farm. They are the free coiners. They daily put into practical operation a system of free coinage upon the farm that is of great value to every farmer; and every other person, as well as the farmer, who has fowls, enjoys the benefits of this new system of coinage and banking.

The eggs that the hens coin daily from the table scraps and the pick-ups and cast-aways on the place are additional income for their keeper, for, where there are only a few fowls that require no special care or feeding, the eggs that the hens lay are just so much clear gain.

And, so it comes to pass that the large egg basket, lined with cotton or wool, which sits in the pantry or beneath the family bed, is in a literal sense the farmer's bank. A bank that he frequently draws on for the means with which to buy even the most common necessities of life, when there is no ready sale for other productions of the farm.

Eggs represent cash, and they are always salable. Hence the farmer who has a full egg basket—whose hens lay well, are healthy and thrifty—has a bank to draw upon when all other sources are closed to him.

CARE OF PASTURES.

There is too little estimate in some quarters on the value of good pastures and therefore they are neglected. A writer on cattle and pastures says: Our pasture fields are usually selected from the lands which we think will least repay us for the labor of cultivation, and so, because they are comparatively valueless, we think it will not pay to give them the care necessary to make them of greater value. The stock is turned into these fields to pick up what it may. If the stock is kept from starvation by the voluntary growth of the pastures, we are apt to consider ourselves so much ahead, but the stock kept in this way pays us little real profit, and the interest charges and taxes keep on accumulating every year upon the land. It is sometimes wise to select for pastures such portions of the farm as will least repay cropping. Sometimes the fields so chosen are unsuited by their natural conformation for profitable cultivation, and so the best use to which they can be devoted, both for the land and the owner, is the carrying of stock. Sometimes the land is too poor to grow a profitable crop, and so it is pastured as a means of restoring fertility. In either of these cases the land should have some care, and pains should be taken to make it profitable in the line to which circumstances have made advisable to devote it. Do not get into the habit of considering that it is only a pasture field, and so treating it as if it could never be anything else.

KEEPING CIDER SWEET.

To keep cider sweet, to sweeten sour cider, and to keep cider perfect, take a keg and bore holes in the bottom of it; spread a piece of woolen cloth at the bottom, then fill with clean sand closely packed; draw your cider from a barrel just as fast as it will run through the sand. After this put in clean barrels which have had a piece of cotton or linen 2x7 inches dipped in melted sulphur and burned inside of them, thereby absorbing the sulphur fumes, this process will also sweeten sour cider. Then keep it in a cellar or room where there is no fire and add half a pound of white mustard seed to each barrel. If cider is long made, or scoured when you get it, about one quart of hickory ashes, or a little more of other hard wood ashes, stirred into each barrel will sweeten and clarify it equal to rectifying it as above. But if it is not rectified it must be racked off to get clear of the pomace, as with this in it, it will sour. Whisky barrels are the best to put cider in. One-half pint sweet oil to a barrel may be added with a decidedly good effect. Isinglass, 4 ounces to each barrel, helps to clarify and settle cider that is not to be rectified.

GLEANINGS.

The general purpose horse is nearly worthless in the markets of the great cities. They are too light for any draft work, not fast enough for roadsters, not large enough for coaches.

A warm house for laying hens is an absolute necessity. We do not mean one artificially heated, although some breeders of the large comb varieties are obliged to use artificial heat to protect the combs from freezing.

Some colts are made so "tough" by finding shelter beside wire fences that they never bring anything better than "tough" prices. Shelter from storm and a few oats will make better colts than exposure and pawing the snow off to get a small bit of dried grass.

It is not every farmer who is sufficiently level headed to raise pigs and keep them growing at the highest possible rate of speed. To do this means only the right kind of feeding, regular feeding and good shelter. It is no complicated problem. Live up to it, and we shall usually succeed.

Healthy hogs should be taken from the sick, and not the sick from the well, as in the latter case the excrement and secretions containing the contagious principles are left in the pen on the ground, straw and troughs. It is furthest safety, during an outbreak, to have the swine in small herds and in small pastures.

The soft, unripened nibbins of corn will fatten a pig more quickly than the ripe ears will. So to boil the small potatoes with corn ears and feed the thick mush thus resulting, when it is nearly cold, will fatten pigs quickly and cheaply. Pork may be made for two cents a pound in this way after the pigs have run on a clover field.

Good butter in winter will sell at a price so much higher than in summer that it will much more than balance the difference in the cost of feed and care; but it will pay no better to turn out a poor product than at any other time. One must know his business from beginning to end, even to the style which is most inviting when his packages are put up for the market.

A careful breeder can take a pair of scrubs and by methods of feeding, care and selection produce an improved breed with fixed characteristics. It takes time and talent to do this, the talent consisting of common sense, and a purpose continually in view. If this is true, and nobody disputes it, any degree of improvement between the worst mongrel and the finest pure-bred is attainable by every farmer and stock raiser who possesses the qualifications above enumerated. No domestic animal should be permitted to mate without this object in view. Like will produce like, but careful selection of breeders will produce something better, and that is what is wanted.

DAIRY ITEMS.

Divide the pasture into two or more lots and you will gain in food and milk.

Milk is more sensitive in receiving and tenacious in holding impurities, than water.

For its bovine element why is the so-called butterine never called suetine or oleoic?

A cow heated and worried will not milk well, and her milk will not make good butter.

You cannot feed a scrub calf into a good one; you can stint a well-bred calf into a scrub.

SHOE EYELETS.

One of the Comparatively Few Things That Are Sold by the Million.

There are many things that are sold by the gross, and not a few that are sold by the thousand, but there are not many that are sold by the million. Among the things that are so sold, however, are shoe eyelets.

Shoe eyelets are made of brass, by machines whose operation is almost entirely automatic. Three or four machines are required to produce the eyelet in the form in which it is sold, the brass being fed into the first machine in thin flat strips. As sold to the shoe manufacturer, the eyelet is turned down at one end only. The eyelets look as much as anything like so many little bats with narrow brims and without any tops in the crowns. The upper end of the crown, which is like the end of a little cylinder, is put through the eyelet hole in the shoe, the finished brim or flange of the eyelet resting against the leather upon the outside. After the eyelet has thus been put in place its inner end is turned down upon the leather by a machine made for that purpose. In the manufacture of the eyelets a number of very slight vertical indentations are made at equal distances apart in the outside of the eyelet around the smooth, straight end. When the shoe machine smashes down the inner side of the eyelet the metal parts at these indentations and is spread uniformly, thus giving it a secure hold.

Eyelets are made of various sizes in diameter and of various lengths of shank or cylinder, according to the thickness of the material with which they are to be used, and after they come from the machines they are finished in great variety. Some are finished white—these are silver-plated; some are gilt finished and some are coppered. Eyelets are jappanned in black or various shades of russet; they are, in fact, made in any size and of any color that may be desired. Sooner or later the jappanning wears off, exposing the brass. There are now made shoe eyelets that are covered with celluloid, which keep their color, but these are much more expensive than the kinds commonly used.

Shoe eyelets are packed in boxes containing one thousand, ten thousand, two hundred and fifty thousand, and five hundred thousand each. Eyelets of the kinds most commonly used are sold, according to sizes and styles, at prices ranging from \$60 to \$135 a million. Some of the celluloid-covered eyelets sell for as much as \$500 a million.

The sale of shoe eyelets depends, of course, somewhat upon the prevailing style of shoe. When button shoes are more generally worn not so many shoe eyelets are sold, but the number sold is always very large.

Eyelets are made for a wide variety of uses, up to the great eyelets that are sewed into the corners of sails, through which the sail is lashed to the end of the boom or yard. Taking them all together the number is enormous; of shoe eyelets alone there are sold some thousands of millions annually.

SPITEFUL.

I think DeBowen is just too charming for anything in that Anvil Chorus, declared the pretty amateur.

Yes, snorted the real DeBowen. The fellow evidently got his musical education in a blacksmith shop.

TO MAKE IT EASY FOR HIM.

Aw, doctah, do you, aw, think it would be too much of a strain on my mind to play cribbage?

About the House.

PROPER VENTILATION.

As so much of the comfort and the happiness of the home is dependent upon the wife she should make an effort to keep the place as sweet and healthful as possible. She needs to keep herself and her family free from sickness and disease to the best of her ability. She wants to retain her youthful appearance and cheerfulness as long as she can, and ward off premature age and wrinkles if it lies in her power.

Hard work and much of it ages even the strongest in a short time; but often it is the need of fresh air and proper exercise. True enough housework gives plenty of exercise, but it is always the same set of muscles that are exercised, and to keep the body erect and strong all of the muscles need to be exercised. But with exercise there should be plenty of fresh air. We are in the habit of despising what we can have in great quantities and at all times, and in some homes, judging by the unwholesome odors which pervade them, pure, sweet air must be considered of but little importance. Bedroom windows are not opened from the beginning of winter until spring, and all cooking odors from the kitchen are permitted to permeate every nook and corner. The cellar windows are kept tightly closed. Everything becomes damp and moldy, and whatever of fruit and vegetables are kept there decay or sprout, and so become unfit for food.

In such a home there is always some member suffering from severe colds, rheumatism, malaria, etc., and it is no wonder. Why should pure air be excluded when it is so very essential to every one's well-being? No one can live without it; neither can one get too much of such a good thing. Outdoor exercise is always to be recommended, but one should always have pure air at all times, whether in or out of the house. Unless the house is properly ventilated, bedding, furniture, carpets and clothing absorb all the ill smells and become damp and musty. No weather is so cold that the house cannot be subjected to a thorough airing every morning. The bedrooms are in special need of that attention.

The bedding should be made fresh and sweet by sunshine and wind every day before the beds are made. The kitchen, too, because of the cooking done there, should have thorough airings, and a window should always be open while meals are being prepared that steam and odors may escape. The cellar must not be neglected. There is always a tendency for dampness to collect there, and unless proper ventilation is provided there will naturally arise most unpleasant smells from it. Disease germs will multiply in such a place and endanger the health of the entire family. Generous sprinkling with lime and also an annual whitewashing of the cellar will do much toward keeping it in a good condition. But air, of which there is such a bounteous supply, should be purchased freely. It is the best of medicines, the best of disinfectants, the best preserver of health, and is indispensable to life. Why not have it in plenty?

AN OLD RECIPE FOR MINCE MEAT.

Here is a famous old recipe for mince meat which a writer says cannot be excelled:

Meat—Five pounds juicy lean beef, boiled, and three pounds of beef suet, both finely chopped.

Fruit—Two dozen Greening apples, pared, cored, and chopped; the grated peel of six lemons and the juice of three; the grated peel of four large oranges and the juice of two; two quarts of seedless raisins and currants, mixed, measured after stoning and stemming and finely chopped; half pound citron shredded.

Spice—Six grated nutmegs; one even tablespoonful cinnamon; one-half teaspoonful cloves; one-half teaspoonful ground mace; heaping tablespoonful of salt.

Spirit—One pint good brandy; one quart sweet cider; one pint high flavored sherry wine. (These ingredients may be replaced by boiled cider if desirable, as it no doubt will be for most of our readers.)

Mix gradually, allowing one bowl of granulated sugar to each quart of the other ingredients, putting them into a stopper jar in alternation, one bowl, meat, suet, fruit, etc., to one of sugar, stirring steadily, until all the ingredients are mingled and then add the brandy, cider and wine. Set in a cool place for a week before using, and stir to the bottom three times a day. Bake in puff paste and eat hot.

The quantities here given make a generous supply for the winter's use of a large family. It can be halved or quartered, still keeping the same proportions. This mixture will grow more delicious the older it is, and will keep until Easter if frequently stirred. The question of salt and spice is subject to variation from the quality of the fruit; if it lacks zest, more may be added, and after a month a little more brandy may be added. The recipe is an English one, with the emphatic endorsement of four generations of American descendants.

WEDDINGS AND LITTLE FOLKS.

Wedding Cake.—Beat to a cream six cups of butter and four of white sugar, add six eggs well beaten, then roll six cups currants washed and dried, three cups seeded raisins, two cups minced citron two cups almonds blanched and cut fine, half cup lemon peel minced fine, and one tablespoonful cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves and allspice, in three pints sifted flour, until they are well dredged with the flour, then add them all at once to the butter, sugar and eggs. Many add half pint brandy, but this can be omitted if desired. Mix the ingredients very thoroughly and smooth, put in a large cake pan well buttered and lined with paper in a very even oven for eight hours; watch it carefully and your cake will be elegant; ice it the next day with "transparent icing."

Sand Hearts.—This recipe is for the little folks, and if the mothers do not believe it will please them, just try one batch. Use two pounds of flour, two pounds of sugar, one pound of butter and three eggs. Make up into a dough as you would for cookies. After rolling out and cutting into heart-shape, place the cakes on a pan and beat up one egg, spread some of it over them, then sprinkle with coarse-grained granulated sugar, mixing with it a little finely powdered cinnamon, which gives them the sandy appearance.

SHARING HOUSE WORK.

Many a woman has been in the treadmill so long she has ceased to care expectant eyes toward restful green pastures. As often as not she is herself to blame. A little more resolution, a little less care what others think of her housekeeping, a deal less of the belief that no one can fill her place, and she would fare better.

Where more than one woman lives in a family they gain much of brightness and hopefulness through alternating work with pleasure, as one doing the necessary work and oversight one week and the other the next week. It ought to be possible in every family to arrange to secure an occasional period, long or short, in which to forget accustomed cares. Women who are thus favored wear longest, as a rule.

PERSONAL POINTERS.

A Few Notes About Some of the Great People of the World.

The private estates of the Czar cover 1,000,000 square miles.

The lord mayor of London wears a badge of office which contains diamonds valued at \$60,000.

The bishop of Gloucester and Bristol is reported as the latest cycling recruit in England.

The wife of the late Sir Augustus Paget, British Ambassador at Vienna shows personality valued at \$130,000.

Count Tolstoi is fond of music, but refuses to attend any entertainment for which an admission fee is demanded.

When the Queen of Italy enters a store to do some shopping the doors are closed and the public excluded until she has left.

There are now only two ex-judges in England. These surviving ex-occupants of the bench are Lord Field and Sir Edward Fry.

Queen Christina of Spain is at present the only sovereign who possesses a motor car. This car was on exhibition in London and is now probably on the way to Spain.

Dr. Bergmann, of Berlin has been summoned to St. Petersburg to perform an operation on the Czar, who is suffering from the results of a blow received in 1891 from a Japanese fanatic.

Miss Jane Addams, the founder and head of the social settlement in Chicago known as Hull House, is one of the three women street inspectors of that city who voluntarily watch and report on the condition of the streets.

Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild, M.P., has left for London to join his steam yacht Bona in the Mediterranean, for a cruise of a couple of months among the Greek isles and in the Levant.

The Prince of Wales, president of the St. John Ambulance Association, has sanctioned a grand ambulance fete and demonstration to be held at the Crystal Palace in May or June next, in commemoration of the Queen's long reign.

Perhaps as fine an autograph album as exists is the visitors' book at Haverdweston, wherein the names of Gladstone's guests are recorded. It contains entries as far back as 1860. The most recent of consequence is that of Li-Hung-Chang.

The British Bishop of Bath and Wells was surprised, after putting up at a little hotel in the Pyrenees, to receive a number of plumbers' business cards. It developed that his name had been inserted in the visitors' book as "Mr. Bishop, England; profession, baths and wells."

Statistics collected by the Chicago Tribune show that there were 6,520 deaths by suicide in the United States last year—an increase of 761 over the previous year. The number of suicides due to disappointment in love was 180. The murders committed in 1896 numbered 10,652, as against 10,500 in 1895. Of these 401 were occasioned by jealousy. Detroit congratulates itself that it had only five homicides last year.

Earl de Grey has kept a record of the "game" he has killed in twenty-eight years. It amounts to 316,699 head his average for the last twenty years being about 10,000, while in 1895 his record was 19,135. He has put to death 200,000 pheasants and partridges, 47,000 grouse, 6,000 other game birds, 566 deer, and 9,000 miscellaneous animals, including pigs, capercaillie, sambar, a dozen buffaloes and tigers, and two rhinoceros. On one day last month 3,000 birds were shot on one of the Marquis of Ripon's preserves, the largest bag being Earl de Grey's.

NANSEN'S BOATS.

Nansen invented the model of the Fram, making her ball round and slippery, like an eel, with no corners or sharp edges for the ice to seize upon. She is the strongest vessel ever used in Arctic exploration. He said that pressure would simply lift her on the pressure would simply lift her on the ice, and so her bottom, near the keel, was made so flat in order that she might not capsize while on the ice surface, and her screw and rudder were also ingeniously protected. The many experts who said her design would not save the Fram from instant destruction were mistaken, for she met these resistless ice pressures, and they merely lifted her out of her cradle, and she rested safely on the surface.

WHICH IS WORSE.

She—What worries you, dear? Have you made any bad investments?

He—No, but your father has.

PEST OF NEW ZEALAND

THE NOTORIOUS KEA PARROT WHICH KILLS SHEEP.

When Once Attacked the Poor Animal is Utterly Unable to Get Rid of Its Tormentor.

It has always been considered an unpardonable sin in a dog to kill sheep. Wolves, bears and the like are expected to do so, and sheep folds are guarded against them. But the sly and destructive visit of a household dog that has become a confirmed sheep killer is something that the honest farmer dreads and despises.

The notorious Kea parrot of New Zealand has by a quick process of evolution become a confirmed flesh eater, instead of confining its diet to the orthodox food of parrots the world over, viz., seeds and fruits. The story of this strange change of life in that green parrot of New Zealand, is one of the oddest chapters known to ornithologists.

Nothing was known of this bird until one of the early explorers of New Zealand sent two specimens from the South Islands in 1856 to the Zoological Society's collections in London. It was a dark green parrot that led a strictly Alpine life in the lofty mountains, about eighteen inches in length, with

AN IMMENSE BILL.

It was generally seen soaring aloft among the rocks or foraging over the close, stunted Alpine vegetation.

Now comes the strange story of this parrot. Within the last twenty years the whole region underlying the Alpine home of the Kea has been changed into a herding and sheep growing district by settlers. At every shepherd's station there is, of course, a meat gallows, where fresh killed carcasses are skinned and hung for the use of the herders.

During the continuance of unusually severe winters the Kea has been driven down to the lower country in search of food. Half famished it has discovered the life-giving qualities of this supply of the meat gallows, and soon the carcasses of beef and mutton were regularly visited by these birds in large flocks, generally by night. The rapacity and capacity of the birds were so great that the shepherds organized clubs and regularly sat up nights to shoot the robbers.

One of the settlers noticed first and then the notice became general that the sheep in great numbers appeared to be afflicted with an inexplicable disease. Neighbors and shepherds were equally at loss to account for it, having never seen anything of the kind before.

The first appearance of this supposed disease was a patch of raw flesh on the loin of the sheep about the size of a man's hand. From this matter continually ran down the side, taking the wool off of every part it touched, and then

DEATH USUALLY SUPERVENED.

At last a shepherd noticed a Kea parrot sticking to a sheep and pecking at a sore while the poor animal seemed utterly unable to get rid of its tormentor. This gave the hint to the sheep owners, and they directed their shepherds to keep watch on the parrots. Then the discovery of the ability and determination of the mountain parrot to kill sheep was soon made.

As the flock fed upon the high ranges near the snow line several parrots would swoop down and surround a sheep, singling it out at random, and each bird, alighting on the animal's back in turn, would tear out a morsel, full of wool and make the blood flow. Then the half frozen sheep would run away from the rest of the flock, vainly seeking for some shelter from these attacks. The birds would pursue it, continue to tear and tear at the skin and flesh out on the spot first broken and force the sheep to run about until it became stupid and exhausted. When in that state it would throw itself down and lie as much as possible on its back to keep the parrots from picking the part attacked, the bloodthirsty parrots would pick a fresh hole in its side.

This point of attack on the sheep's body by the Kea is singularly made wholly and exclusively by its just over the kidneys, and the aim of the birds seems to be to get at the kidney fat alone when they are not desperately hungry.

HIGH HANDED.

I don't like a friend to domineer over me, said the young man with the patient disposition.

Who has been doing that?

My roommate. He borrowed my evening clothes.

That's a good deal of a liberty. I didn't mind it. But when he asked for my umbrella, I told him I might want to use it myself. But he got it just the same.

How?

He simply stood on his dignity and said: All right; have your own way about it. They're your clothes that I'm trying to keep from getting spoiled; not mine.

LONG DAYS AND NIGHTS.

There are two places on the earth's surface where there is but one day and one night throughout the year.

An enterprising schoolmaster, of Westbrook, Me., seeing a fine rooster choking to death on her way to school one morning, caught it, cut open its crop, which was clogged with thoroughbred, and sewed up the rooster in a barrel where there was nothing to eat. Three times daily for two days she gave it medicine, and it came around all right.

The order requiring mustaches on the Queen's officers runs thus: "A report having been received in the department to the effect that it is getting the fashion in some regiments for young officers to shave the upper lip, the Secretary of State for War requests that you will be so good as to take such steps as you may think necessary to insure the provisions of Queen's regulations being adhered to."