

## PRACTICAL FARMING.

### MULCHING THE GARDEN.

There is scarcely any other simple service by which the fruit garden may be so greatly benefited as by the application of a generous mulch of some kind. All fruit trees are greatly helped by it; all the small fruits with the exception of the grape, need it to help them through the great heat of our summers; some of them cannot be satisfactorily cultivated, indeed, without it. The strawberry is very greatly assisted not only to full-sized fruit but to a long-continued crop by this device for conserving the natural moisture of the soil. The mulch is also highly desirable to keep the fruit clean when ripening, at which time it is often "sanded" by showers, rendering it practically worthless—few people care for strawberries which have lost their flavor as well as their sand by being washed. The same treatment is hardly less needful to the raspberry, for those who raise this fine fruit well know how rapidly without it the berries diminish in size after a few hot, dry days; how, suddenly, also, they grow large and luscious again after a drenching shower. It will be readily understood, therefore, that a mulch of several inches of some protecting material will greatly help to keep up the quality and size of summer skiers.

The currant and gooseberry, of course, appreciate anything which helps to remind them of their natural soil conditions. What material is used for this purpose is of little importance; whatever is most easily available will generally do, except that for strawberries, which grow so near the ground, it should be of clean straw, hay or other like unobjectionable character. Bedding from a stable, the weeds from the garden, lawn clippings—which are excellent—the fine chips and chaff from the woodpile, waste excelsior from packing—are all useful for this end. Even coal ashes applied under the currants and gooseberries will do much good in this way. On most small places a good deal which could be used thus to very excellent advantage is annually wheeled away in a barrow at the expense of much pains to some distant dump—the rakings of the lawn in early spring, the prunings of shrubs and vines, chips and dirt and weeds of all kinds, which if thrown into a heap in some odd corner for the time being would be timely and useful now. Such refuse slowly decomposes under the shrubs and trees, and returns much of the richness to the soil which it has previously taken from it, while acting at the same time to prevent the exhaustion of moisture. And, while we are about it, let us not forget a good cool mulch for the roses—nothing in the garden will appreciate it more, highly or give a more priceless return.

### NECESSITY FOR GOOD WATER.

Water is directly absorbed into the blood with whatever impurity may be contained in it. It is to some extent strained or filtered of what it may have of solid matter not dissolved in it, but whatever is held in solution, and some of what it may have that is not dissolved to some extent, goes into the blood with it. Thus impure water poisons the very fount of life, says American Sheep Breeder, and carries into an animal what may be the most injurious to the health. There are, however, some injurious matters existing in water which are more especially deserving of notice on account of their very deleterious effects, such as the eggs or germs of organic matter, either vegetable or animal, as the spores of various minute plants, and the embryos of the most deadly parasitic animals. Of these may be mentioned the germs of epidemic diseases due to the growth in the blood of minute plants derived from these germs, and the deadly parasites such as the liver fluke, the various intestinal worms, and the ova of many tape worms. All these may be taken into sheep in water drunk from streams or springs or frequently from stagnant or polluted ponds. One of the most frequent sources of infection is the overflowing of pastures by streams into which a large extent of manured lands may have been drained, or into which the wastes of towns or cities may have been discharged. On this account the shepherd cannot exercise too great caution for the protection of his flocks, or estimate too highly those most favorable localities where the streams flow down uncluttered mountain slopes, from the primeval forests, or where the sparse population has never defiled the soil with filth and impregnated it with the germs of disease. Nor can he estimate too highly the pure artesian fountain flowing from far down below the sources of impurity, and supplying the flocks with wholesome drink. And in the choice of a range or for a farm for the rearing of a flock, this point is to be considered first and last as being of the most paramount importance.

### WATERING HORSES IN THE FIELD.

Some of the pleasantest memories of my boyhood on the old farm cling around "the old oaken bucket that hang in the well," says a writer. The farm lay on both sides of the road, with much of the arable land so near the house that it was rarely necessary to carry water to the field. Then when plowing or dragging a dusty summer fallow I would stop on the headland nearest to the well, and while the horses were resting I would run to the well. How refreshing to sip my fill from the dripping coolness! But what of my dumb helpers? Even now, after an interval of fifty years, it is not without self reproach that I remember how little thought was given to their wants. I was very fond of my horses and would not willingly have let them suffer. But no one thought of offering horses water, save at the regular hours—morning, noon

and night. Had I done so it would have assuredly brought down rebuke upon my head, for it was contrary to all precedent and practice. How is it now? When farmers "drive their team afield" these sultry days, do they take along a keg of water and a bucket? The last half century has unquestionably brought much good to horses. They are better shod, more intelligently cared for, less doped and mled, blistered, fired and physicked than they were. But in the matter of watering them often, there is little improvement. Now, as then, they are watered often when on the road. The clear stream, purling through the culvert, and the wayside watering trough offers hints which are not neglected. But in the field the thirsty horses are yet made to toil on under the sun without a cooling drop, until time for "knocking off."

### DESTROYING BURDOCKS.

It is a comparatively easy matter to kill the burdock, though it may be hard enough to exterminate it, because it seeds so plentifully and the seed will remain in the ground for years until it has a favorable chance to grow. As the burdock is biennial it dies out after it has seeded the second year, says American Cultivator, but only after it has provided thousands and tens of thousands of seed to perpetuate its kind. All that is needed to kill the plant is to take a dull ax and chop the root something below the surface, and then throw on a handful of salt. The burdock root being soft and moist dissolves the salt, which quickly rots it so that further sprouting of a new top is impossible. No amount of cutting without the salt will do the work. The burdock, like most weeds is a very persistent seeder. We have seen it mown down with the scythe two or three times during the summer, and yet in fall showing several clusters of seed burrs near the ground, containing enough seed to start a hundred burdock plants the very next year. The seed burrs cling to clothing and to the fur of animals brushing against it. Hence the weed is sure to be always widely distributed.

### FEED FOR PIGS.

Warm skim or new milk is the most perfect feed for pigs, and when this cannot be had, the nearer to it the food can be made the better the result will be. Middlings made into a thin slop, steamed if convenient, and a little oil-meal added is probably the best substitute for milk. It promotes growth of bone and muscle, and does not make the young pig too fat. Cornmeal porridge, with a good proportion of oilmeal, is a good ration, except that the corn may prove too fattening. One hog may cost almost nothing, while the one or four may be expensive. One hog on a small farm will consume waste that will be sufficient, but which serves very little in the way of satisfying several of them. Weeds, skim milk, buttermilk, potato peelings, cabbage leaves, turnip and beet tops, and other refuse will be accepted by a hog and no grain need be given in summer.

### SHE SUCCEEDED.

An old lady in rural England surprised her friends by announcing at table one night that she would go to London in June to see the jubilee procession. Some of her relatives warned her of the burdens of age and failing health, but she would not listen to their objections.

"I know," she said "that I am eighty-three, but I was in Westminster Abbey when the queen was crowned, and I shall go up to London to see the jubilee parade."

The objectors shifted their ground. They mentioned the high prices which windows and platform seats were already commanding, and suggested that she was hardly rich enough to hire any place along the six-mile route.

"I shall arrange that little detail," she replied, confidently. "I shall write to the queen about it. She will know my name, for it is one of the oldest in England. She will insist upon having a seat provided for me."

The old lady's enthusiasm amused her friends, but she was wiser than they were. She wrote a respectful letter to the queen, relating her good fortune in having been a witness of the coronation service, and also of the first jubilee festivities, ten years ago, and adding that although she was eighty-three and very feeble, she was bent upon going up to London and seeing the second jubilee show.

The letter was sent to Windsor palace, and was answered by the queen herself with little delay. She was touched by the old lady's anxiety to witness the parade, and moreover recognized the name as one which had come down from the era of the Norman Conquest. The reply was cordial and gracious, and was in the queen's own hand. She thanked her correspondent for the loyal interest displayed, and announced that she had given orders that a window in Buckingham Palace should be reserved for her on the day of the jubilee parade. She hoped that one of the oldest and most respected of her subjects would live to occupy a seat in the window.

When this gracious letter was received the old lady was triumphant, and all her friends were called upon to rejoice with her.

"I knew," she told them, "that the queen had a kind heart, and also a good memory for a historic name like mine." The queen has a womanly instinct in such matters. She knew how much pleasure she could confer upon a worthy lady of ancient lineage by exceptional kindness and honor. Be thoughtful and considerate deeds like these has endeared herself to her subjects.

### PERSIA'S RULER.

The Shah of Persia is brusque of speech; he is also a magnificent shot, and can shoot a hole through a copper coin tossed in the air. He goes off on rough hunting trips, and has big game and in the best gun shot in Persia. He is neither a fool nor an imbecile, and is a man of swift action.

## KLONDIKE MINING-CAMP.

### WHERE IT IS SITUATED, AND HOW TO GET THERE.

The Discovery Was Accidental—George Cormac, With Two Indians, Found the First Gold—Story of the Pay Dirt—Prices of the Necessary Life.

The Klondike River, on which the new placers were discovered, is in the British Northwest Territory, two thousand miles almost directly east of St. Michael. It is fifty-two miles from Forty Mile Post, which is the nearest large station. From Juneau it is six hundred and fifty miles in a northwest coast. Dawson, the headquarters of the new diggings, is at the junction of the Klondike and Yukon rivers. The population last June in Dawson was 1,000 says a writer in Harper's Weekly.

The discovery of this new northern bonanza was an accident, as mining discoveries usually are. An old Yukon miner, George Cormac, who had lived for twenty years under the arctic circle, and who had made little money in all this time, went up to the confluence of the Klondike and Yukon rivers to fish for salmon, which usually run in large quantities in the Yukon River at that point at the end of spring. He arrived at the place in June, 1896. The salmon did not run, and hence he had recourse to prospecting in the creeks that empty into the Klondike a few miles above its mouth. He knew that this territory, had been prospected by experts, and that their decision was that there was no gold in paying quantities north of the Yukon, and especially in the British possessions where he then was.

He travelled up the Klondike three miles, then made his way through tangled thickets up a little stream with precipitous sides. He had two Indians with him, and the three set to work to prospect in the primitive Yukon fashion, that is they cut wood, set fires every night on the ground to thaw out the frozen gravel, and each day dug out of the prospect hole the loose earth which was thawed down not over twelve inches by the fire. In this way, in about ten days they reached bed-rock at a depth of fifteen feet, when Cormac was astonished to pan out from the loose dirt near bed-rock from FIFTY TO ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS

in coarse gold to the pan. By this time his provisions were nearly exhausted, so he sent an Indian to Forty Mile Post, fifty-two miles away, for supplies he remaining on the ground to prospect further. He also sent a note to several of his friends in Forty Mile Post, telling them of his discoveries. Several men responded and came up, took up claims, and began to prospect; but it was not until nearly three months had passed before any came with an adequate supply of provisions, and with tools to work the claims properly. These men soon took out several thousand dollars' worth of gold dust, and it was the return of two of his party to Forty Mile Post, late in the fall, which led to the unprecedented gold rush to this little camp. Not fifty able-bodied men out of a population of 1,500 were left in the camp three days after this gold-dust was brought in.

With the mercury 53 degrees below zero, with snow covering the ground in every direction, the party packed their household goods on sledges, and with dogs and by hand they pulled these sledges over the ice of the Yukon and over the snowy fields until they reached the junction of the Klondike and Yukon rivers, where there was a small settlement gathered around a little saw mill operated by Joe Ladue, one of the old Alaska Company's traders. The party pushed on to the creek where Cormac had made his big discovery, and which they promptly named Bonanza Creek. This and the neighbouring creek, called El Dorado, were promptly staked out in claim, and work has begun immediately. At first, in the delirium of this good excitement, there was a prospect of fatal quarrels, over the location and the extent of the claims which each man could take up, but luckily the Northwest Territory official surveyor, William Ogilvie, was on the ground, and his suggestion to resurvey the two creeks and to give each man the allotted space under the

### BRITISH MINING LAWS

was accepted. He promptly surveyed the territory, and each claimant received 500 linear feet, extending across the width of the creek. In this way some men obtained claims 1000 feet wide, but the great majority received allotments about 600 feet wide.

The news of the extraordinary find spread with great rapidity down the Yukon, and in a few weeks most of the old mining-camps for 1000 miles down the river were partially abandoned, and the few people who had been working in mines that paid from \$5 to \$20 a day arrived at the new bonanza. Around Ladue's old mill sprang up a town of tents and shanties, while the original British surveyor, who mapped out all this far northern territory, The Alaska Commercial Company sent in all the provisions that it could gather up from its stations, but most of this food did not reach the camp until the following spring. There would have been actual famine in this little remote mining district had not one man had the foresight to bring in food. This was Clarence Berry, a young farmer from Fresno County, California, who had been mining with indifferent success on the Yukon for two years. Luckily he had \$2000 worth of provisions when the news came of Cormac's rich strike, and he added to this another \$1000 worth, which he bought at Forty Mile Post. With this large supply he was enabled to keep alive the 500 or 600 men who were working in the camp until the Alaska Commercial Company was en-

abled to bring in further supplies. No one had any money, so Berry sold his goods on credit, taking in part payment shares in sixteen different mines on the creek. In this way he was enabled to help out his companions and at the same time to acquire interest in these mines, which in another season will make him

### MORE THAN A MILLIONAIRE.

The curious feature of the development of this camp is that it should have remained for six months unvisited except by men already on the Yukon. As early as last January, William Ogilvie's official reports of the extraordinary richness of the pay dirt in these claims reached Ottawa, because Ogilvie was a surveyor and not a miner, all the experts in Canada as well as in this country pronounced his reports wildly exaggerated. Even as late as last March reports also came out to Juneau, brought by William Carr, the regular mail carrier, and these also were discredited by the great majority of mining men in Alaska and in this country. It was not until spring opened and men returned with sacks and cans of gold-dust as practical proof of the richness of this district that the rush actually began. Then every steamer to the north from Seattle and Victoria was crowded, and every one who could leave Juneau or St. Michael took an outfit of provisions and started for the camp.

One returning prospector, J. O. Hestwood, is bold to say that the most remarkable story of all these prospectors. He had mined on the Yukon for three years. The first year he contracted the scurvey from living exclusively on salt pork and beans, and was brought out of the territory almost in a dying condition. With spirit unimpaired, he returned the next season, but his claims panned out only a mesagre living. Then he returned to California and delivered a series of lectures through the State on the resources and the wonders of Alaska, illustrated with stereopticon views. In this way he made enough money to furnish him an outfit, and he was at Glacier Creek near the Klondike when the news of the discovery came. He promptly packed up his belongings, and was among the first to reach the new camp. He took up a claim, but the prospects did not please him, and as others were disappointed in sinking their first shafts, he abandoned the camp and started down the river.

### HIS BOAT BROKE DOWN

and he was compelled to return on foot to the new mining district. By this time pans of dirt ranging from \$500 down to \$125 had been found in several claims, and he at once proceeded to develop his property. He worked throughout the season, hiring a couple of men to help him.

The richness of this pay dirt may be appreciated when it is said that Mrs. Clarence Berry, the wife of the man who made the richest clean-up in the camp, was accustomed to visit the dump of dirt at her husband's claim, every day, and with a sharp stick to disintegrate some of these half-frozen clouds of dirt which showed traces of yellow metal. In this way she actually picked out by hand during three months nearly \$5000 in nuggets. One of these nuggets she obtained from a frozen clod is valued at \$250, and resembles in shape and size a medium-sized potato.

When the spring came, and the water rushed down through the creeks, the miners were all prepared to take advantage of it. They had built sluices of the most primitive style, but although they had no quicksilver, they were enabled to save the greater part of their gold because of its weight. In the sluices, at distances of six inches, they built little riffles of wood, which caught the gold as the water brought through the sluice. Mr. Hestwood estimates that they saved ninety per cent. of all the gold in the earth. Another remarkable feature is that this dirt, although thrown up on the banks of the creek during six months of the hard winter, was all sluiced out within two weeks. The clean-up, as miners call it, of the claims on the Bonanza and El Dorado creeks averaged \$5000 and upwards. It is an equality

### REMARKABLE FACT

that not a single miner of the 300 who staked out claims on Bonanza Creek drew a blank. Every one had at least \$5000 in gold dust at the end of the season.

It would require columns to give any adequate description of the exceptional features of this mining-camp under the arctic circle. Everything is of the crudest description. Material, tools and all supplies are extremely costly, far beyond the cost even in such remote desert camps as Coolgardie in Australia. During the winter flour sold at \$60 a hundred pounds, bacon sold at from 50 cents to a dollar a pound. Dried fruit, which is absolutely indispensable in the miner's dietary, sold at a dollar a pound. Rubber boots were quoted at \$25 a pair. Mackinaw jackets were \$25 each. Board of the rudest kind was \$3 a day. Miners' wages were \$15 a day for ten hour's work, or \$150 an hour, for shorter time. The men live in rude log huts, plastered over the top and chinked between the logs at the sides with moss. They heated these cabins with sheet-iron stoves which are prepared expressly for the Alaskan trade. They dressed in heavy flannels, with outer clothing of bear-skin and wolf-skin. They were enabled to work out-doors throughout the winter, except when the mercury fell below 60 degrees, but they were forced to take great precautions to guard against perspiration, as any moisture on the exposed skin led to dangerous frost-bites.

When the spring came they suffered even greater hardships than in the winter, for the sudden heat was terribly enervating. The clouds of mosquitoes and gnats made life a burden. No portion of the face could be exposed without attacks from these pests. It is the humid heat of the Mississippi Valley which comes suddenly upon this arctic region as soon as the snow melts. This humidity is due mainly to the large bodies of water which lie in every direction. Every creek, river, and lake is filled with muddy water from the melting snow, and the powerful rays of a torrid sun fill the air with vapor, which is deadly to all except the strongest persons. From the talks that I have had with the returned miners, I think a recent statement of Dr. Willis Everett, of Seattle, is not exaggerated. He made a topographical survey of the Klondike district for the government, and he says, "I have yet to see a man who has remained in that country for two years and retained his health."

## ROUND THE WHOLE WORLD.

### WHAT IS GOING ON IN THE FOUR CORNERS OF THE GLOBE.

Old and New World Events of Interest Chronicled Briefly—Interesting Happenings of Recent Date.

French railroads earned \$10,850 per mile last year of which 51.06 per cent. was used for working expenses.

Mr. Harry McCalmont, M.P., the millionaire owner of Isinglass, has just married a widow daughter of Gen. de Bathe.

Stevenson's "Dr. KJekyll and Mr. Hyde" is being printed in a French translation by the Paris Temps as the original work of a French author.

Bristol, which for many years was consolidated with Gloucester, has been officially declared a separate bishopric, money enough to pay a Bishop's salary having been raised.

In Puerto Rico recently a candidate who had reached the age of 55 years without taking his bachelor's degree, dropped dead when the examiners told him he had passed the first part of the examination.

Lord Justice of Appeal Macnaghten had his watch snatched from his pocket by a thief in London recently. Though nearly 70 years of age, he sprang, caught him within a couple of blocks and got his watch back.

As the English upper classes do not object to their boys being birched, it is only princes and the sons of noblemen who receive corporal punishment in the great English schools. So at least says the headmaster of Harrow.

Brummagen French is dangerous. A Birmingham citizen passing two policemen on the street in the evening said Bon jour, monsieur, to them. They at once arrested him, charging him with being drunk and swearing at them in a foreign language.

Larrikin, a famous Australian steeplechaser, fell in the Grand National Hurdle race, near Melbourne, breaking his neck. As soon as the race was over the crowd broke in and began to cut up the dead horse for relics. One man took his tail, another his ears, and others the teeth and hoofs.

British enthusiasts who wished to celebrate what they call the thousandth anniversary of the foundation of England's navy by King Alfred have been snubbed by young Mr. Chamberlain who is Civil Lord of the Admiralty, with the statement that the Navy Department has had enough celebration for this year.

London suburban travel is made attractive by the presence in the stations of young women who beg for all kinds of charitable objects. One man in a hurry after running the gantlet in the street, was stopped five times between the station door and the train by respectable beggars, and asks the press to have the nuisance put down.

Matelotes and other stews of which rabbit is supposed to form a part are being shunned by Parisians since the rabbit inoculated with miscellaneous disease germ, were stolen from the Aubervilliers laboratory. The police say that they have traced the lost rabbits, and that all were eaten by Aubervilliers people, who, as yet, have shown no bad effects.

Prince Damrong, the Siamese Minister of the Interior, who accompanies King Chulalongorn on his European tour, is described as being taciturn and distant in his manners, while Prince Dewawongse, the Prime Minister, is very talkative and affable. The whole Siamese party is exciting astonishment by the extent and accuracy of its knowledge of European matters.

Queen Victoria has paid \$800 for the walking stick Prince Charlie forgot by his bedside at Culloden Castle when he went out to fight the battle. It has a handle with two heads carved on it representing Folly and Wisdom. The bed on which the last of the Stuarts slept for three nights brought \$3,750, and a lieutenant's commission for a Macintosh, signed and sealed by the Prince, \$475.

Grand Duke Adolf of Luxemburg, who is now 80 years of age, is the oldest temporal sovereign in Europe. He was formerly Duke of Nassau, and after a reign of twenty-seven years was turned out by the Prussians in 1866. Seven years ago he found another throne on the death of King William III. of Holland, whose next male heir he was as the Luxemburg law of inheritance does not admit women.

Russia will have a new labor law after Apr. 1, in consequence of the recent strikes in St. Petersburg and the large manufacturing towns. The working day is fixed at a maximum of eleven and a half hours; for Saturdays and the days preceding holidays it is ten hours and on Sundays and holidays there is to be no work. Workmen who are not Christians will not be compelled to work on the days held sacred by their sects. For night work eight hours' will constitute a day's work.

England is bragging over the Uleship Majestic in getting 600 tons performance of the battleship Majestic in getting 600 tons of coal on board at Portsmouth in less than six hours. The rate was 116 tons an hour, 138 tons being shipped in one hour. The performance is unprecedented for the Channel fleet, and has been only surpassed once in the service, when the Trafalgar in the Mediterranean, took in half the quantity at the rate of 141 tons an hour. Meanwhile merchant steamers often call at Port Said at the rate of 400 tons an hour.