

LETTERS TO BOYS AND GIRLS.

Jennie E. Jameson, in Rural Press, writes: Does any little girl or boy remember what I promised to write about this week? Perhaps I should not have included a boy when asking this question if there had not been a boy in the house who has always teased for a "rag baby," and who enjoys playing with paper dolls as much as any girl I ever saw.

Perhaps some little girl will say, when her father or brother brings home the newspaper, "You don't want the paper now, do you? Got something else to do 'sides read, haven't you?" I guess they will let you have the paper, and we will go away by ourselves and talk about dolls. I can see, in the city where I am writing, many beautiful dolls—some of them are as heavy as you would want to lift. There are blue eyes and black eyes that never shed tears, and always shut up tight as soon as the head touches the pillow, there are light curls and dark curls, and shining braids of hair; charming dresses of silk and satin, and lace, with long trains. All this finery is very nice, indeed, but, bless you! I believe you can take more real comfort with a rag doll. These wax beauties are a vexation of spirit. If they are laid too near the fire they melt, if they are too cold they crackle and if they tumble down, instead of jumping up and trotting off, they are very likely to have their cute little noses smashed, or holes in their little pink cheeks, or, possibly, a crack away round their curly heads; then where, oh! where, are the beautiful dolls!

But, if you can get some one to cut out a body of stout cloth in two parts, back and front alike (or the upper and lower parts separate so that the doll can sit down better), and the feet and hands are better if made and sewed on, unless one has considerable skill in cutting, and stuff it, it will last years and years. Then one can have a whole family of rag dolls without spending any money.

Wouldn't it be nice to have a good-sized family and a black Dinah or Sally to take care of the children. I saw a black rag doll as tall as a girl of 14, standing at the door of a toy store on Washington street, in Boston, yesterday. Her name was "Aunt Sally." I saw a little girl awhile ago who had had her black Dinah nine years. The black skin, or outside cloth, had worn off from her face, and she was a white woman.

Ah, yes! a jolly family of rag dolls you can have, if you only have some one to help you. But if mamma and aunts are all too busy, do not be discouraged, for there are other ways to make dolls.

When I was a little girl I lived upon a farm. I think that farms are the nicest places ever found for young folks. Well, there was an old house, used only for a shop and store-house, in which we used to play. When we thought we had not enough really, truly, dressed-up dolls, we would make some. Shawls rolled up and pinned together were nice, because they were large enough to wear our own baby clothes. Long, smooth pieces of wood would sometimes answer for babies, even dolls with pieces of print pinned around them, were pressed into service on extra occasions.

Small walnuts, called "shag barks," make comical faces for little old women. The body can be made of cloth, and the head sewed on by means of two holes bored in one side. The pointed end of the nut makes a saucy little nose, and the eyes and mouth may be marked with ink. I have seen them dressed like quiet Quakers, with their large bonnets made of "wiggins" and covered with drab cloth, their plain drab shawls and white neck handkerchiefs. If you cannot get the nuts, or the rag dolls, you can make paper dolls. If you cannot get the fresh slips, take that which has been written over on one side. I was fortunate enough to have a sister who was very skillful in drawing faces, so I had beautiful dolls by the dozen, beside the boughten ones.

If you have no one to help you, you can cut out some pretty people from pictures, and lay them on the white paper and cut around them. Make eyes, nose, mouth and hair with a pencil, using it also for making suits for boys. For the girls and ladies' dresses, lay them down upon the doubled paper, letting the fold come at the neck. (It is better for those who wear dresses to have their arms stretched out on either side.) Then mark around the shoulders, under the arms, and trace out a dress, either long or short as you wish. Cut this out, and, unless it is low in the neck, cut a slit down the back of the neck, shaped like a letter V, through which you can slip the head. You can make shorter ones for polonaise, little ones with straps over the shoulders for aprons, pointed, round, scalloped, and all ways. Hats, too, can be made by taking the paper double and pasting all together, leaving only enough room to let the head slip in a little. Bright colors of paper can be used, or white trimmed with colors or a pencil.

Ah! How many pleasant hours I have passed playing with paper dolls.

A WARNING TO BOYS.—How many times must boys be told the danger of tying halters around their waists when riding horseback! We hope no little boy who reads the Rural Press will ever do it. Let the following from an Oakland paper be a warning to all: John and Joseph Sylvia, aged 11 and 9 years respectively, started out for school yesterday morning at eight o'clock on horseback. It had been their custom for the last three years to thus go to the Fruit Vale school-house. John fastened the rope halter around his body to keep it from trailing on the ground. While they were trotting along the Moraga road, the horse became frightened and started to run, throwing both boys from their seats. Joseph was not hurt much, but the halter rope was tied too well, and John, the elder of the two, was dragged fully two miles. When the horse was stopped at Fruit Vale, the body was a horrible sight, completely broken, mangled and bruised. The younger brother followed the horse, sobbing as if his heart would break.

ENSILAGE, OR FERMENTED CORN.

The Pacific Rural Press of recent date, in speaking of the new European method of preparing corn fodder for dairy cows, says: We have read many accounts of successful experiments with the system in France and Hungary, and it is also being put to the test in the Eastern States. It has been a leading topic in foreign agricultural journals, and certainly it comes to us not as a wild theory, but as a successful practice and therefore worthy of trial under our conditions. The best summary of the methods and rationale of the system, which we have seen is one compiled by Prof. G. C. Caldwell, of Cornell University, for the New York Tribune. From this summary we shall take leading points.

This method is known in France as the "ensilage" of fodder, because the fodder is sometimes packed in "silos," or pits; in Germany the product is called "sour hay," because of the slightly acid taste that it acquires in consequence of the slight fermentation that goes on in the mass.

The process consists simply in packing the green or partially dried fodder very compactly, either in long, narrow piles above ground, or in narrow and shallow trenches that are sometimes lined with masonry, either on the sides alone or on sides and bottom. The closely packed fodder is covered first with a thin layer of straw and then with a layer of earth from 18 to 24 inches in thickness. The conditions essential to success are: First, entire exclusion of extraneous water, whether from the ground, surrounding the pile or from the clouds; second, solid packing of the fodder, so as to leave the smallest possible air spaces within the mass; third, perfect exclusion of the air by an unbroken covering of earth. These simple conditions being fulfilled, the preservation of the fodder for months and even for years, and its good quality, are insured beyond a doubt.

Leconte, editor of the Journal D'Agriculture Pratique, and one of the most enthusiastic advocates of the ensilage or corn fodder, and who practices on his own large estate what he preaches in his paper, sows corn in drills, allows it to stand till the ears are formed, and har-

tration of the fodder with respect to its most valuable ingredient, the nitrogenous substance or the albuminoids, by reason of the conversion of some of the less valuable non-nitrogenous substances, such as starch, sugar and crude fiber, into gaseous products that escape. But not only is the proportion of valuable albuminoids increased by this process of fermentation, but this constituent of the fodder becomes more digestible.

The fermentation of the fodder is generally completed in about eight weeks, although silos have been opened after seven weeks, and their contents have been used for fodder; but it is undoubtedly better to allow the fermentation to run its full course; if the fodder is properly packed there is little, if any, danger of its being spoiled, for the fermentation seems to stop after it has reached a certain stage, and the contents of the silo, if then left undisturbed, remain unchanged for months; in some cases silos have not been opened till after a period of two years, and the contents were found to be in a good state of preservation.

When the silo is opened after the fermentation is completed the covering of straw will be found to have become matted together so that it serves admirably to keep the dirt out of the fodder underneath; the straw, together with a thin layer of corn-fodder, will also be found to be moldy; but beyond that all will be in a good state of preservation. The fragments of the stems will be soft and watery, and the leaves will retain their original appearance, except that their color will be a darker and duller green. But it must be especially noted that the fermented fodder changes readily and becomes spoiled on exposure to the air, so that it must be fed out soon after it is taken from the silo, and the exposed end of the pile where the fodder is taken away for each day's consumption must be left carefully covered with bundles of straw well pressed down.

Cattle of all kinds eat this fodder without any urging, except perhaps for a little time at first, and after they have become accustomed to it they will prefer it to most other kinds of fodder. The testimony to this effect is unanimous. When given, as it always is, with some dry fodder, it does not affect the health of the ani-

FUNNY PARAGRAPHS.

A CLEVERMAN says that people do more harm at dances with their tongues than they do with their toes.

A MULE struck a few days ago on the Erie tow path—a cap and suspenders were found of his driver.

It is said that the Russians are preparing a Sedan for the Turks. If they don't Frenchify it too much it may do.

A BILLY Tom has been found who is a first-class farm hand. No one has taken him in hand to give him lessons.

A NEW YORK prison convict, G. E. Gordon, has invented a new propelling power for vessels for which he has been offered \$50,000.

TELEGRAPH lines are to accompany cavalry as a horse cart runs with a fire engine—reeled up and run out as they advance or retreat.

"Don't trouble yourself to stretch your mouth any wider," said a dentist to a patient. "I intend to stand outside to draw your tooth."

"Oh, George! I am ashamed of you—robbing your life after that pretty little girl has kissed you!" "I'm not rubbing it out, mamma. I'm rubbing it in!"

A NEW YORK chemist says he wants nothing more than three pails, a barrel of old water and twenty cents worth of drugs to make six dollars of just such champagne as fools pay a dollar a pint for.

"I say, boy, is there anything to shoot about here?" inquired a sportsman of a boy he met. "Well," was the reply, "nothing just about here; but the school master is down the hill yonder—you can pop him over."

TIPKINS aroused his wife from a sound sleep the other night, saying that he had seen a ghost in the shape of a donkey. "Oh, let me sleep," was the reply of the irate dame, "and don't be frightened at your own shadow."

A REESE River school district has a teacher and no money, but no children. If that teacher is a young woman, let her open school, and there'll be a detail to attend and study grammar at least. Amos, amos, amos!

THE other day the Butler, Pa., Eagle, in a brilliant report of a toy wedding that occurred in that town, announced that "the bride's trowsers were the loveliest we ever saw." He wrote it "ironic," but the intelligent compositor made the fatal faux pas and went West.

PRUSSIAN CARE OF ANIMALS.—The London Farmer makes note of some amended regulations relative to the mode of transmission of live stock from place to place which have been issued by the Prussian authorities. Within certain distances beasts may be either carried, driven, or led. All rough treatment is to be avoided, worrying with dogs, tugging at leading ropes, beating with cutgels, striking with fists, kicking, and various other favorite means of persuasion employed by the profligate class, being expressly forbidden. Lame beasts may be driven or led only when the attendant is furnished with a veterinary certificate that this can be done without causing them pain. When trucks or carriages are so circumstanced that the cattle cannot walk into or out of them, they must be lifted in or out gently, and not "thrown about like sacks." Binding with ropes or chains must be avoided as much as possible, and will only be generally tolerated in the case of bulls. A sufficiency of space must be allowed in trucks and other conveyances. Poultry may only be forwarded in cages or other well ventilated receptacles, and there must be plenty of room for them to stand up or lie down at pleasure. Transport of birds in sacks or nets is absolutely prohibited, as also tying their wings or feet, or tying several birds together, or carrying them by the feet. Any infringement of these regulations is punishable by a fine not exceeding thirty shillings, or by proportionate length of imprisonment.

A CURIOUS AUSTRALIAN TREE.

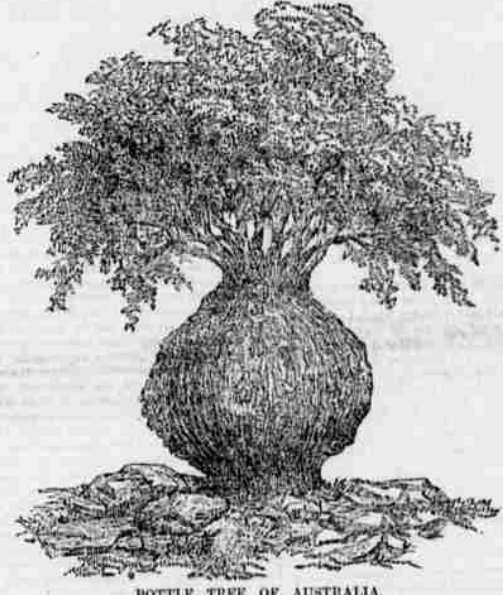
The "bottle tree" is an Australian tree of the family Sterculiaceae. It has the calyx five-cleft, usually colored; no petals; column of stamens with 15 or rarely 10 anthers; stigma pedicelate, carpels five distinct, with two or more ovules, narrow digitate leaves; pinnulate auxiliary inflorescence; flowers unisexual or polygamous, the female flowers expanding first.

The tree has a greatly expanded trunk which is swollen to a disproportioned size. Where the ground is rocky this expansion is greatest just below the branches, but in favorable soils the foot of the tree is largest, forming a uniform cylindrical column from whose summit the branches issue as from the neck of a bottle.

The family of which the bottle tree is a member, embraces many trees valuable for their wood and for their nutritious seeds, the most famous of which is Cocoa, from which chocolate is derived.

ORONS FROM FOUNTAINS.—That fountains are ornamental no one disputes, but according to a paper read by Mr. Hixson before the Manchester (Eng.) Literary and Philosophical Society, they have also an important sanitary utility. He contends that the atmosphere of towns may be "sensitively ozonized and improved in quality" by their action. He says: "A water fountain may be regarded as a hydro-electric machine, the friction of the water issuing through the jets developing electric action, materially assisted by the conversion of the spray into aqueous vapor. I would suggest that this fact should be prominently brought before municipal bodies, to induce them to erect fountains in all available places in large cities as sanitary agents. They might prove highly beneficial in crowded localities." The subject of ozone, in its various phases, is engaging the attention of many scientific inquirers.

AT YOUR OWN RISK ON THE TRACKS.—The Supreme Court of Michigan decides that railroad companies are not responsible in damages for injury to persons voluntarily exposing themselves to danger by walking on the track. In such a case the negligence of the person injured contributes to the injury, and the court should instruct the jury that the plaintiff is not entitled to recover.



BOTTLE TREE OF AUSTRALIA.

imals in any other way than favorably. A fair ordinary ration consists in the usual practice of about 35 pounds of the fermented fodder with eight of dry hay for 1,000 pounds of live weight. It was generally preferred to give it in milk cows and fattening animals, and it is stated that 20 pounds for 1,000 pounds of live weight may be given to a cow without affecting the taste of the milk. In Hungary, where they have practiced this method of preserving fodder for more than 20 years, they think that the yield of milk is increased by its use. As the result of one careful experiment that was tried in France, it was found that the quantity of milk was not increased, but it became much richer in fat, and if richer in fat, then, according to the most generally accepted view, richer in other solids also.

When the pile is quite completed the covering of earth must be carefully watched, especially for the first two weeks, in order to repair any fissures that may result from the settling of the mass of fodder within, or any deep channels that may be washed out by heavy rains. When the pile is built upon the surface of the ground it is made about ten feet wide at the base; the length will vary, of course, with the amount of fodder to be packed in it; if trenches are used they are usually made from seven to ten feet wide, and three to four feet deep. In dry ground where the standing water does not come near the surface it is doubtless more economical to use trenches, for a larger quantity of fodder can be covered with the same quantity of earth.

The most prominent change the fodder undergoes consists in the loss of from 30% to 40% of water, or a partial drying of the fodder. A process of fermentation sets in, the most important result of which is the concen-

tration of the solids. The process of fermentation is completed in about eight weeks, although silos have been opened after seven weeks, and their contents have been used for fodder; but it is undoubtedly better to allow the fermentation to run its full course; if the fodder is properly packed there is little, if any, danger of its being spoiled, for the fermentation seems to stop after it has reached a certain stage, and the contents of the silo, if then left undisturbed, remain unchanged for months; in some cases silos have not been opened till after a period of two years, and the contents were found to be in a good state of preservation.

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