

Trout, Bees, Fruits, Poultry and Hogs.

The question of farm labor is becoming a matter of the first importance to the California agriculturist. The cost of this labor at present, is out of all proportion to the profit derived from it; whilst the only warrant for the extortion—for it is nothing else—is found in the farmer's actual necessity. The mode of farming in California is peculiarly one in which the proprietor cannot do his own work, even with the help of a half dozen large boys and girls.

He raises more grain than he can harvest alone and to hire the necessary labor costs him too large a proportion of the net proceeds of his crop; and the same occurs with whatever other crop he raises, when he makes that one crop a specialty. We have said much in the columns of the RURAL of the propriety of a greater diversity of crops, by which the farmer would be enabled to keep a steady force of hands the year round, instead of being compelled to hire at exorbitant rates during the emergency of harvest, be the crop what it may, so that it is made a specialty and on a large scale.

We propose to show how the small farmer can manage to carry on a routine of labors, in a diversity of pursuits and yet all legitimate to the farm, without hiring a single day's labor the whole season, and every one of them largely paying enterprises, considering the amount of capital employed, and which need never be large.

First on our list of paying works, is trout growing; assuming, of course, that the farmer can control the water of a large spring, a small, cool mountain rivulet or a part of one, or the water of an artesian well, or finally a portion of a lake or a large body of water, the possibility of a break in the surrounding levee is beyond peradventure, and where ditches can be excavated, to be filled with clear water from the adjacent stream. With any one of these conditions, the farmer can enter upon the culture of fish, doing a large and lucrative business by adding to his small beginnings, year by year, and no outside help required. In proof that we are right in our position, as regards the profits of fish culture we append the following:

Trout Breeding on Long Island.

The trout breeding business is becoming very extensive on the south side of the island, and is proving very profitable. Mention has recently been made of the preparations of Ex-Congressman Roosevelt, Mr. Lorillard, and other well-known New Yorkers, for going into the business on an extensive scale. There is talk of other similar enterprises soon to be started. Among the establishments already in successful operation may be mentioned the following:

Mr. Bishop, of Fire Place, two years ago conceived the idea of having a trout pond. He dug out a swamp, built a hatching-house, and formed two artificial ponds. These he stocked with a few trout, which have increased to nearly 20,000, valued at about \$10,000. The entire capital invested by him does not exceed \$1,500, and his net receipts will be at least \$3,000 per annum. Mr. A. J. Hines, of Palace Brook, near Patchogue, hatched 50,000 trout this spring. He owns three ponds, and 100 yards of canals.

Mr. Nathaniel Miller, of Fire Place, has erected a hatching-house and dug out several small ponds, and now owns about 15,000 trout all obtained by artificial hatching. Messrs. Dayton & Gregory, of Canaan, own a small pond, and half an acre of land ditched out. They devote their whole time to the business, which at present nets them \$5,000 a year. Mr. Nelson C. Hawkins, of Bellport, has constructed a large trout pond this season.

The Messrs. Robins, near the Swan Creek Mill, are constructing a pond and a series of canals, and propose to go extensively into the business. Mr. Robert Bland, of Patchogue, has constructed ponds and canals, and is now engaged in stocking them. Many others are going into business on a smaller scale.—*Shoe and Leather Reporter.*

Cultivation of Fish in Ditches and Ponds.

Experience proves that fish are much more easily cultivated than has been supposed. Much attention is now being paid in Germany to their cultivation in ponds and ditches, and it has been found, contrary to the generally received opinion in reference to such localities, that they are more favorable for the purposes than other large bodies of water, apparently fresh and pure in their character. This is doubtless owing to the great abundance of animal life, as well as to the more decided concentration of vegetable substances in the form of living plants of different kinds, including the algae. This produces a constitution of oxygen, needed for the respiration of the fish, and allows a larger mass of life to be crowded together in a given space. The reproduction of the species is unusually rapid, and the young grow very quickly.

From the above it seems quite clear that there is no great mystery in fish culture and that it can be made largely profitable, if properly managed, as every business ought to be.

Will Bee Keeping Pay?

This question comes to us from an esteemed correspondent, and we would be glad to answer it upon the basis of a California experience of our own; but we have never kept bees in this State. We know of many persons who have, and we know that all of these who went to work with a knowledge of the business have made it profitable. We know further, that they keep very still about the matter of profit, whilst year by year they add to their stock or colonies.

Of the profits of bee culture in the Atlantic States, here is what five different persons report in the *Bee-Keeper's Journal* in 1870.

Mr. W. H. Watkins, of Henry county, Iowa, says he has kept bees for the last three years, and found them more profitable than any other stock on the farm. He gives figures which show that in 1869, his total expenditures amounted to \$140, and total receipts to \$444, leaving a clear profit of \$300 the first year, or over 300 per cent. on the capital invested.

Mr. D. Bare, of Hubleton, Wis., reports that in 1870, he obtained 850 pounds of surplus honey from twenty stocks, and increased them to 39 stocks. Capital invested, \$250; receipts, \$400.

Mr. C. B. Isham, of Livingston county, N. Y., says that from his apiary of less than fifty stocks, he obtained, in 1870, over 2,600 pounds of good box honey, leaving an abundance of stores in the hives for the bees to winter on.

Mr. James Bray, also of New York, reports that in April, 1870, he bought four stocks of bees for \$25, and obtained from all of them honey which sold for \$150—increasing the four stocks to 16.

Mr. J. W. Hosmer, an eminent apiarian of

Minnesota, puts in his say for this season, which is, that he had taken out over six tons of honey from 150 stocks since the 1st of July, 1871, which, at 25 cents per pound, would bring \$3,000—a very nice income.

Mr. Joseph H. Glaser, of St. Louis county, Mo., gave me authority to say that he had kept bees for the last six years, and found that they paid. His yield of honey averaged him about 7,000 pounds annually, which he dished out every Saturday at Union Market, St. Louis, at an average price of thirty cents per pound.

I might go on and recite facts like these for a week. The bee journals and agricultural press have been full of such instances for the last three or four years. Bees that are allowed to keep themselves, of course, can not be expected to pay; as well might corn be made to pay by simply planting it. A great many people purchase costly, complicated, humberg, patented bee-hives, paying a good price for using the same. They then think they are on the road to fortune, and, finding out their mistake, go grating around that movable comb hives are a humberg, and that keeping bees don't pay, when, in fact, they allowed their industrious little friends to do all the keeping themselves, amid many dangers that surround them. Bees should have the same attention that you would give your chickens, ducks, or turkeys; they should have the movable comb hive of J. S. Harbison, or some other as good as his, if there are such, then they should have proper care, and above all, see that they are in a country where food abounds, for who would expect to succeed with poultry without giving them ample food? If you keep bees, keep them as they ought to be kept, and the profit is certain.

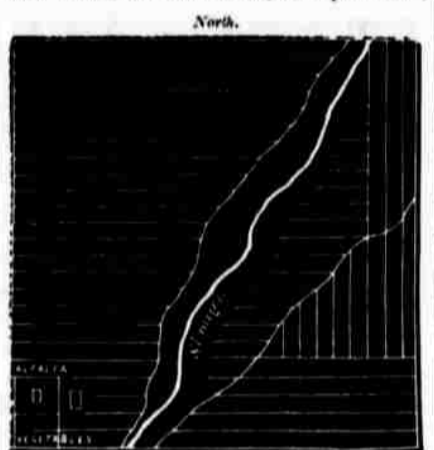
In future numbers we shall endeavor to show, in addition to what we have said on Fish and Bee culture, that Fruits, Poultry and Hogs, can all be grown by the same small farmer on very little capital, and do all the work within his own family of self, wife and children and yet make it, or the different branches united under one management, a pleasing and profitable business.

How They Irrigate in California.

A correspondent of the *Rural Press*, furnishes that journal with the following description of the mode of irrigation pursued in the San Joaquin Valley:

From one tract the whole system can be learned. On this quarter, Mr. Cotton and Mr. H. S. Gest have on shares 150 acres of irrigated wheat. We saw no grain more regularly and thoroughly irrigated, and none more uniform and promising. The accompanying diagram will show more distinctly than words alone, how the water is applied, and how advantage is taken of the natural features of the land.

This place is about a mile east of Los Baños Creek and 8 miles from the San Joaquin at the nearest point, as can be seen on the map. Its soil is rather heavy salt grass land, a grayish loam well mixed with sand, and quite level.



IRRIGATED QUARTER SECTION.

though by no means as even in surface as much land in our valley. An old and shallow slough, leaving the creek about a mile southwest of this tract, runs through it in a north-easterly direction, as represented. Through this slough, the water is conveyed, which irrigates this and adjoining lands. This water is taken from the canal two miles from Cotton's, near where it empties into Los Baños, is conveyed thence through a small distributing ditch following closely along the creek until it is discharged into the slough. After passing through the slough beyond Cotton's, the waste water is carried off by a ditch on Miller and Lux's land. Now, to apply it, the general principle is to overflow the surface. As is usual in old beds of streams upon our level plains, the banks of this slough are raised above the surrounding land by the constant deposits from water which has flowed through them for ages past, while the channel itself is too much depressed to allow the water, without deep cuts, to be carried immediately upon the general level. To overcome this difficulty, imagine two distributing ditches, one on each side of the slough, leaving it near the southern boundary of the quarter section, and following the general course of the stream, but at some little distance therefrom, as shown in the sketch. Imagine also a slight ridge around the entire quarter section formed by the furrow of a single plow, the dirt being thrown outward, and each ridge made highest in low places. Finally, imagine small ditches called checks, each consisting of two furrows of a single plow, leaving a strip of unplowed land between them about a foot wide, and connecting with the main ditches at intervals of about forty steps. These checks are represented by the straight lines, most of them running east and west; some, north and south. It is to be observed that the dirt from each furrow is thrown on opposite sides to form banks to the checks. This is the whole system by which the quarter section is flooded as equally as possible. The entire space between the slough and ditch on the west side and a narrow strip on the east side of the slough is irrigated by seepage; hence no checks are made over that portion of the ground.

These ditches and furrows are made much more rapidly and cheaply than is generally supposed.

Two men, a single twelve-inch plow, a V scraper ten or twelve feet long and spreading five feet at the base, such as is frequently used on roads, and eight horses, are the only means actually necessary to accomplish the work in a few days.

Two men and four animals to manage the plow; and two men and six or eight animals to manage the scraper, at the same time, will somewhat shorten the work. But the V scraper has to be used in forming only the larger ditches, not the checks.

To make these larger ditches, two or three

furrows are run in one direction as far as it is intended to carry the water, and two or three are run parallel to these in the reverse direction. An unplowed space about a foot wide is left between the two sets of furrows. This is found best, because it prevents the ditch from washing deeper in the middle, and makes it easier to keep the water on and above the level of the land to be irrigated. The scraper is now run first in one direction and then in the opposite, to bank up on the outside of the ditch the soil thus displaced. A fall of from four to six inches a mile has proved best to prevent washing. As many as four or five such tracts between checks are irrigated each day.

In this manner two men thoroughly irrigated the 150 acres, of which we are speaking, in seven days. They irrigated a considerable part of it at night, as their neighbors on the upper portion of the slough used the water only in the day time.

If several neighboring ranches choose to unite their efforts, they can greatly expedite the work of making main ditches, as well as of irrigating.

Each tract is carefully watched to prevent injurious breaks in ridges and embankments, until the water is evidently well distributed over it, without being allowed to run to unnecessary waste.

They have, as yet, no accurate means of learning what quantity of water has been necessary to accomplish such irrigation. While in some places the water will not stand more than two inches deep, in others it will have a depth of two or three feet. But, after the supply has been shut off, it all disappears by absorption in three or four days, if the land has sand enough in it to be sufficiently porous. On heavier soil it may stand rather longer, and unless the land has been well broken, may remain long enough to drown the grain, or cause the ground to bake. But this can be guarded against by having the soil well pulverized, and by not flooding it until the grain is rank enough to shade it properly.

Mr. Cotton's land was broken by a gang of four plows to a depth of about five inches, which has proved to be sufficient.

This gentleman may, by a hasty conclusion, be thought fortunate to have on his land the best of an old stream of which he can avail himself. But a moment's reflection will show that were there no slough, but in its place a single ridge running through the tract with a gradual fall on each side of it, it would be quite an advantage. For one distributing ditch would answer then instead of two, and his land would be more conveniently divided.

In the southwest corner of his quarter-section, as shown in our diagram, Mr. Cotton has set off about ten acres for his house and barn, a patch of corn, potatoes, melons, alfalfa for his stock, an orchard, etc. This "home patch" is arranged for a special and more continuous system of irrigation.

The entire system we have now together examined is seen to be very simple and rather primitive, as yet, and has defects which those using it propose to remedy in future. It certainly has the great recommendation that it is not expensive.

The preparation of their soil, and methods applying the water, and keeping it within proper bounds, will no doubt be gradually improved and perfected as the farmers there advance in experience and prosperity.

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Opinions of the Press.

We have received a copy of the ILLUSTRATED PRESS, a new publication just issued by Murray, Dewey & Co., the proprietors of a home magazine, and will compare favorably with very choice and well executed engravings, and is creditable to its proprietors. It will be issued monthly, and cannot fail to become very popular.—[Examiner.]

ILLUSTRATED PRESS.—This publication is certainly a credit to the Proprietors, and its illustrations are from excellent designs, and executed in an admirable manner. This publication should certainly be well patronized.—[Visalia Sun.]

ILLUSTRATED PRESS.—The March number of this publication is filled with choice reading, in addition to which it is profusely illustrated and will compare favorably with any of the illustrated papers of the Eastern States. It is a California enterprise furnished at \$2.00 per annum. So much for so little should secure an immense circulation.—[Sonoma Democrat.]

ILLUSTRATED PRESS.—This little *Adieu* of the Pacific is becoming quite a favorite, and well it may, for it is one of the most choice and beautifully illustrated publications that visit our sanctum. The publishers have spared no pains in trying to make what it signifies and what it is.—[Yolo Mail.]

It is filled with choice reading matter and profusely illustrated—a most excellent combination. Its illustrations being of California scenery.—[Merced Tribune.]

Its contents evince more than average literary taste. The illustrations are in excellent style. It is unexceptionable as a home magazine, and its terms bring it within the reach of all classes.—[Mariposa Gazette.]

This magazine is a credit to our State, and deserves to be a regular visitor in every household. It is the only publication of the kind on the coast. To be appreciated it must be seen.—[Sutter Banner.]

The illustrations show that master artists have been secured and that they will compare favorably with many more pretentious productions in other journals. The publishers have four times increased their issue their first and second editions.—[Amador Ledger.]

The March number of this periodical is at hand, and is fully up to its previous reputation by the number and excellence of its engravings and selections of literary matter.—[Hollister Advance.]

The January number of the ILLUSTRATED PRESS is before us. We have seen in this field was open for just such a magazine, and sure enough here it is. The publishers are both enterprising and cautious, know just what they are about, and, if we mistake not, they will make this publication a first-class success, and first number is gotten up on the right plan and in excellent taste. It is a grade lighter than the *Overland*, and will become more popular—that is, it will be more universally read, because better adapted to the wants of the common people. Being a Pacific Coast production, and dealing chiefly with Pacific Coast subjects, it will undoubtedly command the support of every liberal citizen on the coast. We wish and predict for it abundant success.—[Napa Register.]

We have received the January number of the ILLUSTRATED PRESS, and find it all that its publishers claim for it. Many of the illustrations are really elegant, and the articles are good and pointed. This is the first attempt of the kind on the coast, and it deserves success, for the first number comes out full fledged, prepared with much care and great expense.—[Yolo Democrat.]

The number before us is a good one, containing some fifteen choice illustrations and a large amount of excellent reading matter; so good, indeed, that we can hardly conceive how it can be so cheaply and so promptly for the small sum offered.—[Placer Herald.]

NEW MAGAZINE.—As we go to press we find before us the first number of the ILLUSTRATED PRESS. After a casual and hasty glance at its contents, we feel confident that its publishers will be successful in accomplishing their object.—[Southern Californian.]

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ILLUSTRATED PRESS.—A very neat and attractive monthly. The publishers appreciate the fact that the time has not yet arrived when a first-class journal can be sustained on the coast. They propose, however, to supply what they conceive to be a want on this coast for "pure, light and graceful literature." At present they depend largely for their illustrations and text upon Eastern and foreign issues, intending to increase home and original engravings as far as circumstances and the encouragement they receive will warrant. The publishers are already well known on this coast as among the most enterprising of the San Francisco publishing firms.—[Alameda Gazette.]

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Its literature is peculiar to the Occident, and is of the most choice and elevating kind. Its illustrations are superb, its mechanical skill unsurpassed.—[Albany Democrat (Or.)]

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The ILLUSTRATED PRESS, a new monthly issued from the office of the RURAL PRESS by Murray, Dewey & Co., is received. As a specimen it compares favorably with magazines of established reputation. It is profusely illustrated, and cannot fail to entertain the lover of fine art. Moreover, its low price places it within the reach of every household.—[Visalia Delta.]

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