

Stock.

Raising a Colt.

A colt is regarded as an encumbrance because if it is useless until it arrives at a suitable age for work, but it really costs very little, compared with his value, to raise a colt. When the period arrives at which the colt can do service the balance sheet will show in his favor, for young horses always command good prices if they are sound and well broken. One of the difficulties in the way of the encumbrance placed on the dam, which interferes with her usefulness on the farm, especially if the colt is foaled during the early part of spring. Some farmers have their colts foaled in the fall, but this is open to two objections. In the first place, spring is the natural time, for then the grass is beginning to grow, and nature seems to have provided that most animals should bring forth their young in a season beyond the reach of severe cold and with sufficient time to grow and be prepared for the following winter. Again, when a colt is foaled in the fall it must pass through a period of several months of confinement in the stable, without exercise or else be more or less chilled with cold from time to time. Should this happen, the effect of any bad treatment will be afterward manifested, and no amount of attention can again elevate the colt to that degree of hardiness and soundness of body that naturally belong to a spring colt. Besides, a colt foaled in the spring will outgrow one foaled in the fall. An objection to spring colts may be partially overcome by plowing in the fall, or keeping the brood mares for light work, with the colts at liberty to accompany them always. A colt needs but very little feeding if the pasture is good and there is water running through it. He needs then only a small feed of oats at night—no corn—and if he is given hay it is not necessary to give him a full ration. What he will consume from the barn will not be one-third his value when he is three years old, and if he will breed the gain is greater. When a farmer raises his horses he knows their disposition, constitution and capacity. It is the proper way to get good, sound, serviceable horses on the farm. It should not be overlooked that a colt must be tenderly treated from birth, and must be fondled and handled as much as possible. He should never hear a harsh word, but should be taught to have confidence in everybody he sees or knows. This is an easy matter if his training begins from the time he is a day old. He can be thus gradually broken without difficulty, and will never be troublesome. No such thing as a whip should be allowed in a stable that contains a colt. Colts should be worked until three years old, and then lightly at first, as they do not fully mature until they are six years old, and with some breeds of horses even later. Mares with foals at their side should be fed on the richest and most nourishing food.

Clipping Horses.

The practice of clipping horses is one which under certain circumstances is an excellent one, preventing as it does colds and adding strength to the animal. The class of horses to whom clipping can possibly be of an actual benefit is very small, as it can only be used in case of horses subjected to fast and violent work during the cold winter months. Roadsters, for instance, or coach horses, trotters in training, and hunters, which can be blanketed the moment they are not in motion, when clipped are not nearly so liable to sweat, and if they do dry more readily and keep warmer under their clothing with the hair off than on. But to thrive under the unnatural loss of nature's protector they must be confined only to careful grooms and coachmen, otherwise rheumatism, pneumonia, and coughs will be the inevitable result.

For the lazy groom the invention of the clipping machine was a grand era, and unfortunately for the dumb brute to many owners are influenced to have their animals so treated because the poltrons harp upon the advantages to them, when in truth the greater ease of cleaning, and the improved appearance of the animal's body without hard labor are the motives which prompt the advocacy of the practice. If a horse is to be clipped at all, it should be done as soon after the winter coat has grown out as possible, the growth being kept down afterwards by singeing until the new coat or summer apparel shows signs of being furnished by nature. To clip a horse in March or April is an absurdity, and can only be favored by the stables, who thereby get the benefit of the shedding coat. Clipping at best is a base practice, even in horses of gross coats. If they are expected to do fast road work, to sleigh or on the ice, a careful owner may benefit the animal by the process. Though where the animal is pretty well bred and the coat only of moderate thickness, hard rubbing and wiping will be found to answer all purposes. Coach horses should not be clipped, because in their daily use the clothing cannot be put on and taken off every time they stop, as it should be in such cases, and then the poor beasts suffer. It often happens in cities, as a corroboration of the above, that coachmen harness their horses over their clothing, a habit perhaps more injurious to the animal than exposure after clipping. At any rate, the disadvantages and discomforts to the horse if summed up would show a preponderance of argument against clipping.

Horticultural.

The Borer and Curculio.

That dreadful pest the curculio has not yet made its appearance in Oregon, but we may as well get a sort of acquaintance with its habits, as we are sure to have it in time. The borer we have this spring. In planting some prune trees we found quite a number in examining the roots before planting, which we carefully destroyed. The coddling moth was brought here from California, and disseminated by the dealers in fruit throwing damaged apples out on the ground, while such should be buried or be disposed of so that the worm should not be able to form a chrysalis to breed a generation for this country. The advice given in the following article that hogs and chickens should have the run of orchards, is an excellent way to keep down these pests, for they cannot be entirely exterminated. When the ground begins to warm and plants spring up, the insects immediately get to work to deprive the grower of his harvest. We should bear in mind that the strongest instincts of insects is the perpetuation of their species, and it is mainly from this desire that they work mischief. Our duty, then, if we cannot destroy the parent, is to wage war on the offspring. The most formidable two of the insect tribe are the borer and curculio. The potato beetle is simply troublesome. The borer comes from an insect

about the size of a wasp, which usually deposits its eggs in June. These eggs very soon hatch, and the grubs enter the bark of the tree at the surface of the ground. The grub is very voracious, and it feeds until the fall, when it enters into its chrysalis state, coming forth in the spring. The work of the borer can be easily detected by his chips, which he throws to the rear of him as he works forward. He is easily killed with a piece of bent wire, or even a long-bladed pocket-knife, if he has not passed far in an upward direction. A careful examination once or twice a week of the orchard will prevent him doing much mischief before being caught. It is a good plan to keep poultry in the orchard. Grubs are dainty morsels to them, and so are the eggs of the insects, but fowls will not always eat the perfect fly. Banking up the earth around trees early in the spring affords protection if the dirt is removed in the fall. Lime is destructive to the eggs and grub, and a profuse application of lime or unleached ashes often keeps them away, as instinct prompts the mother not to deposit her eggs where there is any danger.

The curculio works at the top among the branches. It is hard to get at, owing to the danger of injuring the trees. The insects cannot endure a sudden jar, though shaking the tree has no effect upon them. The curculio must be captured and killed, and to do this easily a large nail should be driven into the tree—which does the tree no injury—and a heavy blow struck upon it sufficient to give the tree a quick, sudden jar. This causes the curculio to fall to the ground. Most fruit growers spread sheets underneath the tree to receive the insects when they fall, and finally puts an end to them. As fowls cannot reach the curculio, we have another resort, and one of the most effective of all—that is, to encourage wrens to remain in the orchard. If boxes are placed in the orchards with holes small enough to keep out the blue birds and our pugnacious sparrows, the wrens will build in them, but not unless the holes are small enough for them to barely enter. Being very small in size, the wren will seek such boxes for protection, and they will wage relentless war on all insects.

Prunes and Prune Making.

Prunes are made and not grown. Plums are grown, and some sorts of them, when treated in a certain way, become the prunes of commerce. It is not every plum that can be dried into a prune, as many are inclined to think. Prunes are produced in the various countries of continental Europe, France, Spain, Germany taking the lead. The plums that are suited for prunes form a distinct group, the most noted variety being the St. Catharine. The plums that are to be made into prunes are left on the trees until they are fully ripe, in fact, until they drop of their own weight. To prevent injury by the fall the ground underneath the trees is either made soft by working it with the plow and harrow, or is covered with straw. The fallen fruit is picked up each day, or every alternate day, washed, if soiled, and then spread out separately on frames of wicker-work, where it is exposed to the rays of the sun. Later on in the drying the plums are put in to ovens similar to a baker's oven, when they are subjected to a heat of about 170 deg. Fahr. At the end of twenty-four hours the fruit is removed from the oven, and when cold is turned upon the trays. The oven is heated again, in the meantime, to about 220 deg., and the fruit placed in again, when it remains another day. After another cooling and turning, the oven is heated to 258 deg. and a third drying given, which usually completes the process. The drying is known to be properly done if there is a certain elasticity to the prunes when pressed with the fingers. The object of all the different parts of the process of drying is to dry the fruit as far as possible without breaking the skin, which, in the well-dried prune, should shine as if it had been given a coat of varnish.

In France it is the custom for the growers and drivers to sell the prunes in three grades, founded upon the number of prunes required to weigh 500 grammes (a trifle over one and one-quarter pounds). If seventy or less weigh this they are fine; if they require eighty they are of medium quality, and if ninety or more are required. The method of drying varies somewhat in different localities. In Provence the fruit is scalded before being dried. Some of the finer kinds are "rounded," an operation by which the stone is turned within, and the ends of the skins flattened down without breaking the skin. In the case of common prunes, such as are imported in casks, the fruit is shaken from the trees and dried without any special care. Mr. Felker, in his Manual, says: "All the prunes received in this country are comparatively of poor quality, as the best are retained for home use." This may account for the low estimate which many persons place upon prunes. If they had the best sorts of prunes for their sauces, etc., the reputation which this dried fruit has in the United States would be much higher than at present. But when our imports of this single article are among the millions of dollars, it is evident that there are a great many prunes consumed, even though they are of the poorer qualities.—St Louis Grocer.

WESTERN OREGON AND ITS INDUCEMENTS TO IMMIGRANTS.

DALLAS, Polk Co., March 1, 1882.

DEAR SIR:—Yours of February 12th at hand. I am quite willing to give you all the information I can about the State of Oregon. Washington Territory I know little or nothing about except that when here it is worth a visit. I have one friend settled there, and he speaks highly of it as a stock raising country, with plenty of free range, and the bunch grass not eaten out as I find to be in the Willamette Valley district where I have been.

I was an English farmer of some 20 years practice, and selected this State for its moderate climate and future prospects. I came here in June, 1880, and after looking about for twelve months bought this land. I tell you this that you may not suppose I know all of this vast State in detail and shall only tell you of what I know from my own observation, and give you my opinion which you will be able to take for what it is worth. You desire a farm in a settled part with church and school convenient. This can be obtained in Western Oregon, but then the land being divided and fenced up, it is not there that one looks for a free range of large extent to support numbers of cattle and sheep. No, near settlements there is little or no original pasturage left, and at any time a man is liable to have a range fenced away from his home place by incoming settlers. Prairie farms are mostly farmed for grain and stock except in cases where English methods of keeping cattle on small areas is adopted. To get a free range it is necessary to go further from settlement, say some ten miles in this country. This applies to this country, Benton, Lyon, Marion and Yamhill. I am told that in Southern Oregon

large grazing grounds and free range can be obtained, but this further from settlement and life of the State. This is a good poor man's country, no style to keep up, everybody works his own land; taxes are low and good roads, making it not a very attractive place, I think, behind other States in respect of schools, but an energetic man can always get up a school near his place as I intend to try for this summer, my nearest school, at present, being four miles off. Whether I can make a lot of coin has yet to be proved, but things look very well as it is possible keep expenses very low when no display is needed.

This is a splendid fruit country for all but peaches and apricots. Fruit drying is carried on for market and many men make a good thing out of it, and when a man has an orchard it has created a market for fruit that did not exist before the dryer was started. The dryer men give, I believe, ten cents for apples, but plums and prunes are becoming a great industry in some counties with small men; large farmers in cattle or grain (unless they have a family who can run a dryer) are too busy personally to work a dryer, but there is a certain market for raw fruit if picked and kept in suitable houses till spring, no frost to matter, not so much as in England.

The Willamette Valley lands were, of course, at first more fertile than the foothills, but the long course of scouring grain crops and the foul farming of the older settled valley has begun to be felt, and considerable renovation is needed to restore the farmer great fertility; but wherever good farming is carried on the yield is satisfactory. Again the valley lands are not in all cases naturally draining and so give a preference to the newer farms, in an undulating feature of the foothill farms is common, which is a trouble and expense at present prices, but at one dollar per bushel men can do exceedingly well, in fact, lay by money. Just now oats pay more than wheat. Straw farming is also practiced, the renter pays all expenses and gives one-third at the machine as his rent, owner maintains fences. Another arrangement is—owner finds land, fences, teams, implements, seed and horse feed—renter all the rest, and the two divide the yield equally at the machine.

Cattle farming in the west part of the State differs entirely from Eastern Oregon cattle farming, where there are vast tracts of bunch grass, remote from settlements and conveniences of civilization. A hard winter may result in heavy losses, unless feed can be put up, which is not usually done. To farm largely in cattle here (Western Oregon) some feed, hay or straw, should be put together, as cows, calves and yearlings must be winter fed, that is not taken off the grass, but have hay or straw supplied to them during storm and in the months of January and February. Older cattle will winter on the range with help during snow and very wet weather. I reckon I can, when started, run 200 head of all ages, and I have 600 acres of land, but only 40 arable and 200 fenced pasture for winter keep. It is a good plan here to fence large parts of the range to be shut off in summer and serve as a winter pasture for cattle. I have 200 acres thus fenced, and am sowing it down again with Timothy and Meaquite. I do not see how, from my knowledge of the five counties I am acquainted with, so many as 500 cattle can be kept on one ranch, but of course with two or three it can be done. Calves are now scarce and dear—\$5 and \$6 in the fall—and men are asking \$10 for yearlings. At present I am holding off for yearlings, these prices are unusually high, and owing, I consider, to heavy losses in East Oregon last winter. If a man raised or bought fifty calves each year, he would have when full an open twenty-three of these same fifty for sale each year as beef cattle or milk cows at three years old. They would probably average about \$24 or more, depending on quality. Sheep are dear, \$2.50 a head, but after shearing can usually be bought at \$1.50. Wool is high just now (see Boston market). They have considerable Merino in them, and clear about six pounds all round. I gave \$2 a head for my 150 in July last, and for two bucks \$20 and \$8. Sheep on pasture pay more than cattle, but they eat out a range so that cattle don't do so well, and they should be kept separate if possible. The increase appears very small to an English farmer; it is pretty good to get seventy lambs to one hundred ewes. Mutton sheep are worth when fat in winter \$3 to \$4 for good ones; in summer much less, as folks here don't like mutton. Beef, by the quarter, five cents for and six cents hind. You know how reliable most estimates are, but I will try, as you wish it, to put the sheep business on paper: say 200 ewes, at \$2 each, \$400; 5 bucks, at \$12, \$60; total \$460. First year's return: 195 fleeces of 5 pounds, at 30 cents, \$292; 140 lambs at \$1, \$140, and old stock \$285, total \$717. I really think this can be done, or more, as you'll observe I have allowed for a fall in value on old stock as a margin. From these figures you can calculate your second year's value in sheep. The wool is a great item in sheep culture, and when a sheep dies or is killed the wool is stripped off and the loss reduced. But I must tell you that vermin are troublesome at odd times; coyotes weed out now and then a lamb, dogs sometimes worry a few, the bear will occasionally get an odd sheep, and if a severe winter in the hills is experienced, the large grey wolf will claim a meat; but all these causes combined are amply made up for by the healthy class of sheep in the State, so that losses from rot are scarce, and I always lost more in England from this than folks here lose by all that the vermin can do.

It takes some time to start a cattle ranch here, as you have to go long distances to purchase. The other day I had 100 yearlings offered to me for \$1,050, and 100 cows for \$2,000. Pure bred short horns can be bought in the State, and pure Merino and Cotswolds also. This county of Polk is, to my thinking, the best of the name. The large counties of Jackson, Lane and others in Southwestern Oregon are reported to be very suitable for stock raising, but are too much out of the way to suit me, but I am not acquainted with them by actual inspection. I rode some thousand miles last year, and took much pains, and am satisfied with my selection. You don't ask the price of land, so I presume you know all about that. Hill ranches from \$4 to \$8 an acre; or valley farms from \$14 to \$30. I will tell you anything more you want to know in future letters. To come here is well worth the journey, and I strongly advise you to come with a companion before settling, look well around; arrange to be away six months, and arrive in April; buy horses and travel the State over as I did, and you will not regret it. Yours truly, FRANK BUTLER.

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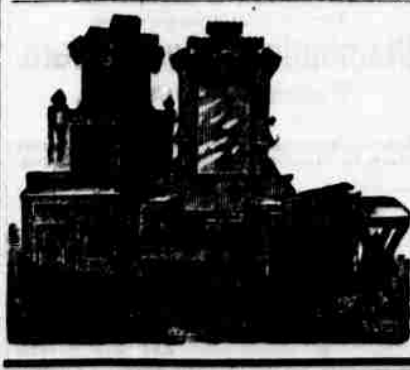
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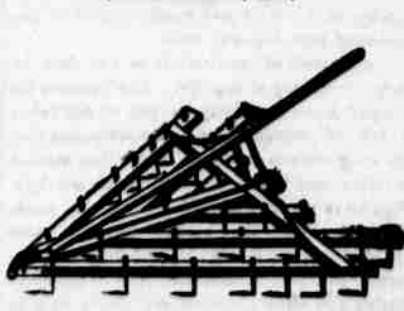
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