

FARM ORCHARD AND GARDEN
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CORRESPONDENCE SOLICITED



A system of crop rotation is not only beneficial to the soil, but is good for the crops raised and serves to greatly hold in check worm and insect pests.

Flowers may be kept fresh for a considerable length of time by clipping the stems every day, and giving them fresh water, to which a little salt has been added.

As a rule, extensive farming means shoddy methods, low yields, a big lot of work, little comfort, worn out lands and dissatisfied owners. The other is the better way.

With lumber of all kinds at the high prices which prevail today improvements built of cement cost but a trifle more than the initial cost of lumber, while they will outlast those made of lumber ten to one.

It is usually the fellow who hasn't any time to fool away testing and sorting his seed corn and getting his planter in tiptop working order who wastes the most time chasing over his fields to husk a thirty-five bushel yield.

Barring the nubbins of corn they pick up, it is questionable whether the nutrient animals get from the bleached and withered husks and leaves compensates them for the energy expended in roaming over the fields in search of such food.

There is something awry in the system of farm management which permits stock to range over the blue grass pasture during the four months from Dec. 1 to April 1. Especially when not covered with snow, such pastures should be relieved from close cropping, which can only expose and weaken the roots of the grass.

If you want your boy to keep up his interest in the farm and remain as your right hand man in your declining years, try to get him interested in the raising of thoroughbred corn, hogs, cattle or sheep and let him keep a good portion of the money which he is able to make from such enterprise. If he once gets really interested in these things, you won't have to tie him up to keep him at home. He will stay there because it is a pleasure to do so.

We once knew a man of the nervous type who claimed it was absolutely impossible for him to go to sleep if there was anybody up in the house. However, he would sleep just as peacefully if he supposed they had gone to bed whether they had really done so or not. A habit of this kind is one that should be broken up early in life, for if it is encouraged by oneself or others it is likely to result in his becoming an all around nuisance.

It will be generations before conditions exist in the rural districts of the United States which will justify road-making of the type which prevails in England, Germany and other European countries. Until that time we shall have to be content with such improvement as can be effected with the aid of the road drag and graders and a surfacing of highways with such sand and gravel as can be obtained from the immediate vicinity. It hardly need be added that a good many now young will be gray headed before the benefits to be derived from even these devices and methods of road building will have been exhausted.

Professor Forbes of the Illinois experiment station has been making some interesting experiments relative to the corn root worm. He has found that the larvae of the worm are placed on the roots of the corn plant by the red ant and, further, that by treating the seed before planting with a solution made by mixing one part of lemon to nine parts of wood alcohol at the rate of three ounces of solution to a gallon of seed the ants will keep away from the hill of corn to a large extent. After six weeks treated rows had one-ninth as many aphids on the roots as the untreated, while at the end of ten weeks the treated corn stood 74 per cent higher than that untreated.

The prudent farmer or townsman will take advantage of flush times and his increased earning capacity to square up accounts and obligations which he already has rather than to contract new indebtedness which in all probability will have to be met when money is scarce and times are hard. In almost every instance it is the fellow who is head over heels in debt and short of cash who gets squeezed the hardest when a financial stringency prevails. The suggestion given is one that should be taken to heart by a good many, for if the word of bankers who reside in many of the small towns is good for anything many of their debtors are doing the very thing mentioned—getting the second foot into the bog instead of planting it on solid ground and trying to pull the other out.

BURNT CLAY ROADS.

An Economical Method of Good Highway Building.

Congress some time ago established an office of public roads, which it instructed to conduct experiments and devise methods for improving the roads of the United States. The office has done a great deal to arouse interest throughout the United States in the necessity of good roads and has originated several means of making good roads economically. The latest discovery is that of burning clay roads in Mississippi.

In large areas in the south, particularly in the valleys of the Mississippi and its tributaries, sedimentary clays are found very generally, says William L. Spoon, a government road expert. In these areas there is little or no sand, and the clays are of a particularly plastic and sticky variety. These sticky clays are locally known as "gumbo."



WOOD AND CLAY READY FOR FIRING.

and "buckshot." In such localities traffic is absolutely impossible during the wet season, as the wheels of heavy vehicles will sink to the hub. In order to overcome this difficulty the office of public roads undertook an investigation of the matter. Special experiments were carried on in the laboratory to see what could be done in the way of burning or clinking these clays so as not only to destroy their plastic qualities, but also so far as possible to form hard, bricklike lumps which should be capable of sustaining traffic. Samples of the material were sent from the Yazoo district in Mississippi to the laboratory, and the clinking point of the clay was found to be sufficiently low to indicate that simple burning of the lumpy clays upon the road surface by means of open wood fires would accomplish the desired result. Following these laboratory experiments it was decided to make experiments on a road, and it can be stated that this experimental road is proving highly satisfactory.

Gumbo clay is black owing to the high percentage of organic or vegetable matter it contains. It is particularly sticky in its nature and is almost wholly free from sand and grit. After it has been burned, however, the plasticity is entirely destroyed and a light clinker is formed which, though not particularly hard, when pulverized forms a smooth surface and seems to wear well. It should be understood that not all of the clay out of which the road is to be constructed is to be clinkered, but only a sufficient amount should be rendered nonplastic to neutralize the too sticky character of the native clay. Fortunately the gumbo district is plentifully covered with heavy timber, thus affording an abundance of fuel.

While the only experimental burnt clay road constructed by the office was in Mississippi, the same methods might be applied with equally good results in the sections of the prairie states that have no other material available for road building.

Good sound wood, as dry and well seasoned as it is possible to procure, should be provided before beginning the work and stacked at convenient intervals along the side of the road. About one cord of wood has been found necessary for eight linear feet of roadbed twelve feet wide. The wood may be cut either to four, eight or twelve foot lengths. Brushwood, if it is dry, as well as chips, bark, old fence rails and railroad ties, coal slack—in fact, any sort of fuel that can be easily and economically obtained—may be used to advantage with the cord wood.

Rural Delivery Notes

Morristown, Ind., boasts of one of the very few women rural route carriers in Indiana. She is Miss Pearl Lane, daughter of John Lane.

One rural free delivery carrier in Littlestown, Pa., recently found in the mail boxes on his route 126 pennies to pay for unstamped letters deposited with them. When the weather is cold and the street bears in, the coins freeze to the bottom of the boxes. The weary carriers now want Uncle Sam to prohibit this method of paying postage.

George Frock, carrier for route No. 6 at Hale, Mo., has purchased an automobile, which he will use for delivering his daily mail. This is in keeping with the great progressive age in which we are living all right, but it still remains a question whether an automobile can be used successfully on the winter roads in the section of Hale.

The artistic whittler living along a rural delivery route who may construct a letter box of wood with the use of his jackknife and a cigar box will have his pains for his trouble, says a Washington dispatch. Postmaster General Cortelyou recently issued an order permitting patrons of rural routes to make their own boxes, subject to the approval of the department. It was specified that the boxes should be of iron or steel. The impression, however, has got abroad that any old box will do.

THE SHEPHERD AND HIS FLOCK

Truly sheep raising is a branch of farming in which comparatively few farmers are engaged. Yet there are many good reasons why sheep should be raised on farms. In the first place, it is well known to all farmers that there are many untillable spots on the farm that form seed beds for the innumerable injurious weeds the farmer has to contend with. As sheep are the best foragers of all farm animals, it is for the purpose of keeping down the weeds that we raise sheep. Then, too, there is also a revenue derived from the wool and mutton produced.

In starting to develop a flock of wool and mutton producers the ewes need not be pure bred. They must, however, all be of the low set, compact, blocky type and of uniform quality. They should not be bred until the second year, by which time they are strongly developed and will throw strong, healthy lambs.

The selection of the ram is the most important thing connected with sheep raising. He is half the flock, and on him rests its destiny. Under no consideration should a grade ram be used. He must be pure bred. The difference in price will be money well invested. He should be typical of the breed one wishes to develop and should have the breed characteristics.

Severely culling and breeding only to strong, healthy sires are the two essentials for developing a profitable flock of breeding sheep. In culling a flock all ewes not of the proper type should be disposed of, thus bringing the flock as near to a uniform type as possible.

The management of the ewes from breeding time until lambing time is of considerable importance. They require proper shelter, food and care to keep in good condition and also bring strong, healthy lambs. A shed or outbuilding protected from the cold north winds, will be sufficient for shelter, provided it can be closed during stormy weather. Roots, either turnips or mangels, clover hay and oats form an excellent ration for breeding ewes. These fed in judicious quantities will bring the flock successfully through the breeding and lambing season. Salt and water should be within easy access at all times of the year.

The ewes require some attention at lambing time. They should be removed from the rest of the flock until the young lambs are strong enough to help themselves. As soon as the flock is put to pasture they require practically no other feed. The lambs should be separated from the ewes early in the fall and fed grain of some kind to keep them growing. The early fall rains are detrimental to the young lambs, and they should therefore be protected from them as much as possible. The chief aim during the first year is to keep them in a healthy growing condition.

Hampshire Sheep in America.

The accompanying illustration shows a splendid Hampshire sheep owned by a Michigan breeder and exhibited at fairs during the past year. This sheep has won a number of prizes at fairs.



A FINE HAMPSHIRE.

and is a very fine specimen of the breed. The Hampshire is steadily gaining recognition in America. This is because he is large, heavily quartered, with face, head, neck and chest denoting constitution and hardiness.

These sheep produce a heavy, fine fibered fleece, are remarkably prepotent, mature early and produce a delicately flavored, deeply colored flesh. They are remarkably docile and are easily managed. Hampshire lambs are easily produced for the early spring markets, often averaging a pound of growth per day for the first sixty to ninety days. The Hampshire ewes are very prolific, great milkers and good mothers. For crossing on the Merino for mutton purposes the Hampshire probably has no superior and is equal to any of the breeds for crossing on any of the long wool varieties. They are good growers, take on flesh rapidly and are a splendid sheep for American conditions.—Orange Judd Farmer.

Thumps in Pigs.

Thumps is a disease of swine that is most manifest in young and rapidly growing pigs. It is easily recognized by the spasmodic contraction and expansion of the sides of the pig so affected. Thumps is an ailment for which there is no cure, although many pigs subject to thumps grow to maturity seemingly well. It can largely be prevented by proper care of the sow during her period of pregnancy. Thumps is caused by abnormal heats or by an impoverished blood supply. The latter condition may be prevented by providing the pregnant sow with plenty of range and an abundance of good feed. The former condition is less likely to occur if the sow has been properly cared for during pregnancy, says Farmers Advocate.

A Feeding Floor For Swine.

A feeding floor that can be kept clean and one that is protected from wind and storm should be provided for the swine.

THE HOG HOUSE.

Ample Overhead Ventilation Needed to Avoid Swine Fever.

Too many men who keep hogs pay no attention to the ventilation of their winter quarters, or if they attempt to ventilate at all they do little more than leave a few cracks around the bottom through which the cold air can get in, but provide no way for it to get out. Experience has shown that drafts are the prime promoters of colds, which develop into pneumonia and what is generally known as swine fever, says the American Farm World. It is important that the bottom boards of the hog house should be thoroughly well battened, and the divisions between the pens should be treated in the same way.

Ample ventilation should be provided from the top of the house and not by underneath drafts. Who has not seen hogs piled upon each other in cold weather, shivering, fighting to get into a warm place? Under such conditions it is impossible for a hog to put on flesh, and there are nine chances in ten that he will take cold, which may develop into serious lung trouble.

Overhead ventilation is easily secured by leaving an open space of, say, six inches between the top of the outside wall and the roof. An English farmer who has had great success with hogs builds his houses with a section of the wall hung on a swivel pin in the middle which can be swung open whenever sunlight and air are needed. When the section is released it swings back into an upright position by gravitation.

In order to let the rays of the sun into every part of the building the houses have been laid out north and south, so that by opening the wall shutters on the east side the morning sun is let in and by opening those on the west side the rays of the afternoon sun can penetrate to every part of the house, keeping it sweet and clean.

Honesty in Selling Stock.

There is no business in the world where reliability and absolute truth is so essential as with a breeder of blooded stock. He knows all about his stock, their strong points and their weak ones. In his sales he can advance the breed or injure it and can help a customer or be his ruin, for his customers are entirely at his mercy. He can be a man or a jockey. A breeder should be so honest and upright that a stranger might write him for an animal, telling him the weak points in his own breeding and rest assured that what he received would remedy the defects. A breeder should feel that interest in the success of his favorite breed that would not allow him to ever sell an animal to a customer unless he honestly believed it would be a benefit to him.—C. M. Winslow, Yorkshire Breeders' Association.

THE SWINEHERD

Hogs will not thrive in damp, dirty, drafty quarters, and the man who attempts to raise them for market under these conditions is simply working against himself. He not only loses the greater portion of his feed, but his time and labor as well.

Condiments at All Times.

Condiments must be provided for the hogs at all times. These are not costly. They consist of wood ashes, soft coal broken into small bits, mortar, rotten wood or anything of that character. Hogs eat these readily, and they are great aids in keeping them in health and consequently in growing rapidly and fattening quickly. The animals must have some salt, the same as other live stock on the farm.

Dipping Very Essential.

Dipping hogs is very essential to the health of the animals. It keeps them free of mites and scab diseases, makes them more thrifty and consequently more profitable. Dipping should be done twice each year. It is not a difficult operation after the dipping plant is established.

Swine Notes.

You can't get the best results by breeding immature animals.

A good sow in perfect health will lose flesh while suckling her pigs.

Even the best bred hogs will put their feet in the trough if they can.

Burn some cobs to a charcoal and give the hogs some now and then. It helps to keep them healthy.

Avoid drafts in the hog house. A hog is susceptible to colds and rheumatism as well as people.

Look out for holes in the bottom of the pen. Hogs are great on the gnawing business. First you know there may be a hole and a broken leg.

A good hog without a pedigree is better than a fair one with it.

The boar at the head of the herd should be changed often. The good brood sows should be retained as long as their usefulness continues.

Breed the sows so they will farrow in groups of, say, five. The pigs may be divided at pleasure then, and fewer sows will be suckling pigs than if the pigs come at different times. Besides, it is almost as easy to look after five sows as one.

Convenience in feeding and watering stock is a thing to be sought for by all. Especially is this true of swine, where there is so much feeding and watering to be done. It is quite a chore to keep the watering troughs free from ice in freezing weather.

Every fine day give the brood sows exercise in the open air. Scatter a little shelled corn on the ground to encourage them to move around.

Fresh clean water should be given to the hogs every day to drink; also a good allowance of roots should be given them daily.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

LESSON VIII, FIRST QUARTER, INTERNATIONAL SERIES, FEB. 24.

Text of the Lesson, Gen. xv, 1-10. Memory Verses, 5, 6—Golden Text, Gen. xv, 6—Commentary Prepared by Rev. D. M. Stearns.

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As God, the faithful Creator (I Pet. iv, 19), saw His friend Abram returning from his victory over the four kings and saw the temptation that Satan was planning for him through the king of Sodom He forestalled the adversary by sending Melchizedek, His servant, king of Salem and priest of the most high God, to bless Abram and to meet him with bread and wine, so that when the king of Sodom offered Abram the goods he had captured he was able to say: "No; I thank you. Having the blessing of Him who possesses heaven and earth, I prefer to receive no favors from you. How the church has fallen from this high standard, for it would be a rare thing today to see her turn her back upon any one who would send some earthly possessions her way to help her carry on what she calls the Lord's work! She is evidently not intimate with the possessor of heaven and earth.

It seems probable that the great adversary was making it lively for Abram after his victory over the four kings and over the offer of Sodom's king and was saying to him something like this: Those kings will gather their forces and come upon you and take you and yours off the earth, and what a fool you were to refuse those goods you captured! So Abram doubtless had some fears and also some thoughts of the reward he might have had. Then the word of the Lord came unto him in a vision, saying: "Fear not, Abram. I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward." Thus the Lord delivered His friend from his fears and comforted him by the revelation of Himself. Lay to heart this first precious "Fear not" and look up and eat all the others you can find, and may the Lord God be to you personally a sun and shield (Ps. lxxiv, 11), and may you be satisfied with Himself as your reward.

The years are passing with Abram, and the heir has not been given, and he inquires of the Lord about it and is brought forth and told to look toward heaven and number the stars if he can (verse 5), and he is assured that so shall his seed be. This was a higher look than that of xiii, 14, even a look to the Lord Himself, and in the direction of His dwelling places.

In reply to his question, "Whereby shall I know?" he is referred to the sacrifices, which all point to the one great Sacrifice, by whom alone all things are made sure, for "All the promises of God in Him are yea and in Him amen" (II Cor. i, 20). He who spared not His own Son will with Him also freely give us all things (Rom. viii, 32), and it is our privilege to keep the birds (the evil one, Matt. xiii, 4, 19) away from the promises by our steadfastly believing them.

The 400 years' bondage of Abram's posterity and then their deliverance are here plainly foretold and also prefigured by the smoking furnace and the burning lamp (verses 12-17). The literal fulfillment is seen in Ex. xii, 35-41, even to their coming out with great substance.

The reason why Abram could not at once possess the land is given in verse 16, and we see in the same words the reason why the Lord does not now at once take the kingdom. Not till the church is completed and taken away shall the mystery of iniquity be fully developed (II Thess. ii, 7-9). In verses 18-21 we see that the land which God gave to Abram by unconditional covenant will reach from the river of Egypt to the Euphrates, a very much larger portion than that which we now know as Palestine.

This is in some respects the most remarkable chapter we have yet taken up since the creation and restoration of chapters 1 and 2. There are so many words used in it for the first time, such as the word of God, vision, fear not, shield, reward, believed, righteousness, etc., and, inasmuch as the first use of a word is the place to get light upon its significance, one can readily see by taking up these words what a field for study and meditation is here opened up. We have already suggested the "fear nots," but what about the words "believe" and "righteousness?" See how the Holy Spirit has Himself repeated verse 6 in Rom. iv, 3; Gal. iii, 6; Jas. ii, 23, and in the context in each place enlarged upon them and made plain that God's only way of righteousness is by faith in Jesus Christ apart from any works of ours (Rom. iii, 24; Eph. ii, 8, 9; Tit. iii, 5). Up to chapter xiv we have had but two names of our great Creator and Redeemer—viz, God (Elohim) and Lord (Jehovah), or combinations of these—the first revealing to us God as the Creator, and the second (a name used perhaps 7,000 times in Scripture) revealing to us God as our Redeemer bringing to us righteousness by sacrifice.

Then in chapter xiv, 18-20, we have for the first time from the lips of Melchizedek "the most high God" (Eloiyon), the possessor of heaven and earth, whom we so need to know if we would do His work in His way. Now in this lesson we have another revelation of God in the name "Lord" spelled with a capital "L" and "ad" in small letters. This is the word "Adonai," which the Jews use instead of Jehovah, believing the latter to be too holy to utter. It suggests our Creator Redeemer as our possessor or proprietor. The word "GOD" in capitals (verses 2, 8) is the same as "LORD" in capitals, Jehovah.

TURKEY GROWING.

Wise Hints From Willet Randall In Farm Journal of Philadelphia.

The turkey business is one of the foremost branches of the poultry industry, and the prices paid for first class stock this year are better and demand is greater than for some years.

The problem that confronts the beginner is that turkeys are hard to raise. 'Tis true there are obstacles to overcome, but such is the case in all branches of poultry culture.

A start can be made with a few birds and the flock increased as means and experience will permit. Secure a time to buy. Do not wait until spring, the chances for good birds are better now than they will be next April.

The holiday trade in all the leading cities was large, larger than ever before, and it was hard work to get enough birds to supply the demand. In consequence very few birds went into cold storage.

Some are asking why high prices prevail more of late than was the custom in past years, to which I can give but one reason—increased consumption.

In many localities turkeys are not raised so extensively as they were three or four years ago. Some gave up the work on account of a season's failure. Disease in the flock drove others out of business.

Before you sell your stock pick out the best for your own breeding, then get rid of the rest. Don't be like Peter Tumbledown. He always gets rid of his choicest fowls and keeps the scrubs for his own breeding.

The Beautiful Ancona.

For some unexplained reason the Ancona (with the exceptions of the White Faced Black Spanish and the Blue Andalusian) is the least popular of the family of fowls known as the Mediterranean. There has been a good deal of discussion as to the origin of the Ancona, but it is generally conceded now that the best of the breed have been made by crosses between White Minorcas and Black Leghorns.



ANCONA COCK AND HEN.

although most breeders have reversed this, crossing the Black Minorcas with the White Leghorn. By the latter plan it is certain that better established blood lines and breed characteristics are obtained. The Ancona is a noted fowl of larger size than the Leghorn. It is a veritable egg machine and should be more popular than it is. In the early days of the breed the coloring was anything but uniform, but now this fowl has been bred to such an extent that its feather characteristics are as well defined as those of many breeds which are much older.

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