

SECRET OF DRY FARMING.

It Lies in Preventing Surface Evaporation From Taking Place.

Most people have heard of dry farming, but very few know exactly what it is and how it is possible to carry it on. Yet it depends upon one of the most common principles of physics. Of course all plants have to have moisture about their roots in order to live, so even in dry farming this has to be the case. The expedient necessary, then, is to retain near the roots what rain does fall on the ground. One good rain—if all the water could be kept on hand—would be sufficient to raise a crop.

In order to understand how the water absorbed by the ground is retained by the dry farmer to a great extent, the subject of capillarity will have to be studied somewhat. If a blotter be placed at one end in an ink well we all know that the ink will rise up into the blotter by what is known as capillary attraction—and the finer the holes in the blotter the farther the ink will rise—that is, to a certain extent. A wick in oil or water will do the same thing. Imagine such a wick in a bottle of water with the end just sticking out of the neck of the bottle and the other end at the bottom of the bottle—what will take place? Why, the top end immediately becomes very wet and the water there is soon evaporated, but just as often as it is evaporated some comes up from the bottom to take its place, so finally the whole bottle of water is lost by evaporation.

This is exactly what happens in a dry country after a rainfall. The water at the surface is evaporated, and the water from beneath comes up to the surface and is evaporated, till finally the ground for several feet down is as dry as a chip, but firm. The whole secret of dry farming is in preventing this top evaporation from taking place. The only way to do it is either to put a waterproof layer on top, which is impracticable because the plants have to have air also, or else cover the surface with a dry mulch of such coarseness that the interstices or passageways are too large for capillary attraction to raise the water from the smaller ones below.

Of course this latter method is the one that is followed, and on looking at a dry farm one would think from the look of the top soil that no rain had ever fallen, but on scraping away the dirt or mulch for a few inches he would find the lower earth moist and all right.—A. L. Hodges in Chicago Herald.

Plant a Tree.
Whether it be a fruit tree, an ornamental tree, or a timber tree, the time devoted to planting it is well and worthily spent. Within the last two decades the whole country has awakened to the importance of the forestry question. All states should be interested in preserving the remnants of our goodly forest heritage and in passing on to future generations a land beautified and glorified by its wealth of trees. It requires years for nature to build a perfect tree, and it requires only a few moments for man to destroy nature's work. The time has come when nature must be assisted in the beneficent task of reforestation.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

The Slavs.
The people known as the Slavs appear in history north of the Black sea about the time of the Emperor Trajan, A. D. 110, and begin to be mentioned with some frequency during the sixth century. Since then they have pushed westward into the Teutonic domain, but have nowhere, save in Russia, retained political independence. Of the fifteen or more Slavonic languages the old Bulgarian and the modern Russian, Polish, Bohemian, Croatian and Serbian are of the most importance.—New York American.

Could Not Fool Gladstone.
"The keenness of Gladstone's collecting eye, even in old age," the London Athenaeum says, "may be inferred from the story told us by a bookseller in Brighton. On one of his last visits Mr. Gladstone paid a visit to our informant and took up a nice book in an old French binding. 'What's this?' he said. 'Oh, it's a book from the library of Catherine de Medici.' 'But there's no fleur-de-lis in the top lozenge,' retorted Mr. Gladstone without a second glance at it."

Not Applicable.
Bleeker—What's the matter, old man? You look like an illustration of a hard luck story.
Meeker—Domestic troubles. Had a scrap with my wife this morning.
Bleeker—Oh, don't let a little thing like that worry you. A thunderstorm clears the atmosphere, you know.

Meeker—Yes, but that doesn't help a man who has been struck by lightning.—Chicago News.

WEIRD HUNGARIAN LEGEND.

Tragic Story of the Heartless Ogress of Castle.

Caejthe (as it is always called) is by no means the most picturesque castle in Hungary, but it is unquestionably the most tragically interesting.

About the year 1624 the lady of the castle was one Elizabeth Bathory, who lived here alone with two servants, an aged man and woman. Now, Elizabeth was to all outward appearances strikingly handsome—beautiful of form and face. Like most pretty women, she naturally cherished a desire to remain bewitching as long as possible, and the scheme which she adopted to this end was distinctly original.

In one way and another, young girls were lured to the castle, perhaps on the pretext of being engaged as servants, but really to be murdered! These unfortunate creatures were conducted to the cellar of the castle, and here, presumably in a state of nature, were compelled to walk toward the figure of a large doll.

This doll was nothing more than a diabolical machine, in the construction of which a number of knives had been introduced. In approaching this hideous invention the victim all unwittingly released a hidden spring, which set the machine in action.

Like a living fiend the outstretched arms of the doll grasped the poor girl in a death embrace before she had a chance to withdraw, literally cutting her to pieces in a few moments. The blood from the body was conducted by small channels to a bath close by, and in this Elizabeth is said to have bathed, thinking thereby to preserve her beauty.

These atrocities went on for no less than ten years before they were discovered, and some 600 girls are said to have lost their lives in this way. The crimes came to light through one of the girls enticed to the castle managing to get in communication with her sweetheart, who rescued her after surmounting great difficulties.—Wide World Magazine.

London Fog.
A leading scientist has shown by photographs taken from a balloon that London fog extends sometimes to 2,500 feet above ground. Fog extending over an area thirty miles square and having a depth of a mile would require a good deal of mechanical effort to set in motion. The weight of the atmosphere is some fifteen pounds to the square inch. Four hundred cubic miles of it press down with the weight of millions of tons, and all the power sunk by human endeavor in Great Britain's locomotives, automobiles and electric power and lighting works would not be sufficient to give it enough movement to clear it off for half an hour or half a minute.—London Answers.

Sunlight and Health.
In reporting to the Academie des Sciences the results of some observations in southern Algeria on the relation between diet and sunlight Major Miramond de la Roquette of the French army medical corps gave it as his opinion that the tissues of the human body directly utilize the radiant energy of the sunshine. The normal diet of the natives of hot and sunny climes is far lower both in quantity and in nutritive quality than that of inhabitants of less favored regions, the sunlight seeming to make up the difference.

John Wesley's Charity.
The benevolence of John Wesley was certainly not of the kind which cost no self denial. When his income was but \$150 a year he gave away \$30. The next year, receiving \$300, he still spent only \$120 on himself and gave away the remainder. The following year he received \$450, and of this he bestowed \$310 on the poor. In the course of fifty years he gave away more than \$150,000.

Deep Breathing.
We are beginning to learn the value to health and lungs of the habit of "deep breathing." To throw our windows wide open, breathe in fresh air so deeply that not only the lungs, but the whole of the body right down to the hips, is expanded, exercised and bathed with clean air, prevents chest weakness and consumption and helps to cure anaemia and—bad temper.—Exchange.

An Architectural Ace of Clubs.
Midford castle, near Bath, England, was built about 200 years ago. The castle is of singular construction, being triangular and in the form of the ace of clubs, the angles being rounded off and embattled. A Mr. Roebuck, a great gambler, is said to have built the mansion with the proceeds of a night's gambling and by backing the run of luck of the club suit.

ENGLAND'S "BAD BOYS."

Southey and Shelley Among Those Who Were Expelled From School.

A good deal of newspaper comment was aroused lately by the dismissal of a boy from Eton, his mother contending that the circumstance would be a standing disability to him in all his future career. But he is in remarkably good company, for quite a number of men who have left their mark on the world began their careers by being "sacked" from school.

Robert Southey, who became poet laureate of England, was dismissed from Westminster school by the famous Dr. Vincent. The school at that time had a magazine called the Flagellant, and in this the budding poet published an article on flogging which quite failed to please the chief administrator of corporal punishment. In fact, it incensed him to such a degree that Southey was expelled. In consequence he was refused admittance to Christchurch, and had not Balliol given him a home he would possibly have had to forego that university career which he afterward adorned.

It is a most amazing fact that poets have had quite a penchant for getting "sacked," as they call it at Harrow. Byron was expelled from Harrow three times for being rebellious and defiant. Shelley was "sent down" from Oxford. Today the poet who wrote the great "Ode to a Skylark" is the chief glory of University college. All traveling Americans want to see his room, and if they have seen that they go away contented. Yet he was ignominiously expelled, turned out "bag and baggage," as an unfit associate for the hard drinking, hard swearing young bucks of the regency.

He was charged with writing and privately circulating a fly sheet entitled "The Necessity of Atheism," and the college records show that he was expelled for 'contumacious' refusing to answer questions and for 'repeatedly declining to disavow' the authorship of the offending document.

Clive, the conqueror of India, was expelled from a school at Market Drayton. In fact, he was always changing schools and finished up at Merchant Taylors'. Many things contributed to his expulsion from Market Drayton. He was always in mischief. It is said that he climbed the steeple of the church, sat astride a gargoyles representing a dragon and gazed calmly down upon the gaping and horrified townsfolk, who expected every moment to have the job of picking up his mangled body in pieces.—London Tit-Bits.

Harvard's Crimson.
President Eliot, it appears, was the man who made crimson the Harvard color. The story as to how this came about is told in the "Letters and Recollections of Alexander Agassiz." Eliot was a member of the college crew, and this crew bought with their own money the first racing shell ever seen at Harvard, it is said. "In order that the crew might be more easily recognized one of its members, Charles W. Eliot, the future president of the university, bought some crimson handkerchiefs in Boston. These the oarsmen bound on their heads, thus establishing the college color."—Exchange.

What Beethoven Is.
"Now," said the brown eyed woman, "I will always know how to talk when I hear a symphony or grand opera. I never could make what seemed to me to be suitable comment, but coming out of a concert the other night two highbrows walking next to me gave me a tip. 'Well,' said he, with a long drawn sigh, 'Beethoven is always Beethoven.' 'Yes,' she responded soulfully, 'Beethoven is always Beethoven.' 'Isn't that lovely? It works both ways and can be applied to anybody.'—New York Press.

Ambassadorial Humor.
Following the proclamation of the commune in Paris, General Brackenbury attached himself to the government troops at Versailles, where Lord Lyons, the British ambassador, also was. One day Lord Lyons was persuaded to visit Meudon. He was looking from the window of an empty house when a shell fell and burst in the garden below. Then he said quietly: "Perhaps I had better retire. It would be a diplomatic blunder if her majesty's ambassador were to be killed."

The Cheerful Errand Runners.
"It is really a pleasure, ma'am, to observe how readily your little boy runs your errands!"
"Oh, he's the boy that lives next door. I get him to do my errands because my own boy won't!"
"Ah! What is your boy doing now?"
"There he is, rushing on an errand for the lady next door!"—Lippincott's.

SOME TINY BOOKS.

Some of Miniature Volumes in the Congressional Library.

What is said to be the smallest book in the world is a tiny volume of the "Rubaiyat" of Omar Khayyam, a copy of which is among the most curious of all the printed things in Uncle Sam's great congressional library at Washington. It was issued at Cleveland the first year of the present century and was brought down by photographic reduction to a volume one-third of an inch square.

This tiny "Rubaiyat" is only one of a considerable collection of books of illiputian size in the big library, the largest of which is about two inches in length. These miniature volumes are not catalogued separately and their exact number is not ascertainable, but the collection, which is said to rival one of similar character in the British museum, never fails to excite the liveliest interest at the rare intervals at which it is exposed to public view.

One of the most interesting and remarkable of all these doll size books is an exquisitely illuminated copy of the Koran in Arabic. Bound in soft red leather, over which an iridescent golden glaze has been laid by some process of the far east, its tiny octagonal pages measure only 45 by 42 by 10 millimeters. The last dimension—less than a third of an inch—represents the thickness, and when it is remembered that the Koran is about as long as the New Testament and contains 114 chapters, the painstaking skill which has produced this miniature copy may be appreciated. One of the tiniest and oldest of these books, published in Padua in 1615, is a volume of letters from the astronomer Galileo. Measuring less than three-fourths by one-fourth of an inch, it is printed in brilliant, a type corresponding to the three point now in use. Another is an inch and a half copy of Goethe's "Die Leiden des Jungen Werthers," beautifully bound in red and gold. Its 700 pages are less than three-fourths of an inch thick, and the type cannot be read without the strongest magnifying glasses.

The collection of miniature books also includes an exquisitely tooled green volume of "Horace," published in France in 1825, and a little red and gold copy of the "Divine Comedy," which has for its frontispiece a well known picture of Dante.—Gas Logic.

Iceberg Designs.
All the architecture of the world is represented in nature's iceberg designs. Sometimes a little berg will have the appearance of an Arab's white tent as it rides on a desert looking sea; another, its sharp outlines softened in the vaporous atmosphere, will appear like a domed mosque in green marble. A cluster of Chinese pagodas comes drifting slowly down the current, followed by a stately gothic cathedral, early style. Then comes a coliseum, and beyond a huge man-of-war floats down the current, its stem submerged, with foam grandly breaking over it, the stern seventy-five feet aloft.—London Chronicle.

The Nervy Beggar.
J. Stanley Todd, the portrait painter, was talking about the beggars of different lands. "I have met," he said, "beggars of every description—shy beggars, blustering ones, old beggars, robust ones—but the most remarkable beggar of the lot was a man whom I never met, yet whom I never assuredly will forget. All I saw of this beggar was his hat and chair. The chair stood on a corner of the Rue St. Lazare, in Paris. The hat lay on the chair with a few coppers in it, and behind the hat was a placard reading: 'Please don't forget the beggar, who is now taking his luncheon.'"

Legends of Wallenstein.
It is told of Wallenstein, duke of Friedland, the celebrated Austrian general, that he had ordered an officer to be put to death for appearing at his levee with the clank of spurs and that he had hung a valet de chambre for presuming to wake him without orders. It was said that his palace was built on the ruins of a hundred houses, that his stables were of the most sumptuous description, that each horse had a rack and manger of polished steel and that the stalls were divided by intercolumniations of Bohemian marble.

That Is the Difference.
"Now, then, boys, if you had to address a large box of tea on the one hand and a schoolmaster on the other, what would be the difference in your form of salutation? Of course you will reply 'We don't know.' Well, we will tell you. A large box of tea you would address as 'thou teachest,' and a schoolmaster you would salute with 'thou that teachest.' This is the difference, you see."—London Caps.

State Rooms and Portholes.

An experienced traveler warns the uninitiated against paying from \$5 to \$20 extra for an outside state-room on ocean liners. The inside rooms she has found to be perfectly comfortable and perfectly ventilated, and the portholes in the outside ones she considers a doubtful advantage. "They are kept locked," she says, "most of the time unless the weather is very pleasant, and even in calm weather they sometimes ship a deluge of salt water. Dirty water, too, swept from a deck above by the cleaners, may pour into a porthole of a room below. Why, then, should one pay extra for a porthole?"—New York Tribune.

How He Won Her.

Mrs. Hanson—I understand, sir, that you have secretly been making love to my daughter, and I must forbid an acquaintance begun in that way. You should have seen me first.

Shrewd Suitor—Madam, had I seen you first I should have forgotten your daughter and fallen in love with you.

Mrs. Hanson—Um! The informality of the proceedings was all I objected to. Come with me, and I will introduce you to my husband.

An Indo-Chinese Venice.

The royal palaces of Bangkok form a city in themselves. They consist of several hundred individual palaces, surrounded by magnificent gardens and pagodas. Bangkok is really a city of waters. It is an Indo-Chinese Venice. More people live in floating homes on the Menam, "the Nile of Siam," and on many canals than in permanent buildings.

Hopelens.

Mr. Bloombumper—My dear, you have an irritating habit of asking "Why?" after every statement I make. Now, won't you try to break yourself of the habit?

Mrs. Bloombumper—Why, certainly, my love, I'm sure I didn't know I did. I'll certainly try to break myself of the habit, as you suggest. But why?

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