

FARM, GARDEN AND HOUSEHOLD.

Unhealthy Orchards.

A writer in the *Nineteenth Century* gives an experiment in the treatment of diseased bark on fruit trees, from which we make the following extracts: "When fruit trees are found in a cankered and moss covered condition the reason generally assigned is, that the trees have passed their prime and are decaying from age; or if this theory be contradicted by the known age of the trees, then that their roots have worked down to a cold, dead soil that can afford them no proper nourishment. Neither of these reasons affords a satisfactory explanation, for the great majority of trees said to be past their prime are capable of renovation, and it is well known to every close observer of nature that the instinct of self-preservation, if we may be allowed the expression, is quite as strong in plants as in animals. The roots of plants search out and find the soil that suits them as skillfully as the ferret follows the rat and the American trapper his game. Of course there are soils so thin skinned that they afford no sufficient nourishment for fruit trees, but with trees planted in ordinary good orchard land it is not the roots that are at fault, but the bark. No amount of nourishment supplied to the roots will serve to renovate our decayed fruit trees without some specific remedy applied to the bark. When the bark has been allowed to get into an unhealthy state it fails to supply to the head of the tree what is necessary for growth and fruit bearing. Moss, lichens and other parasites that feed upon the stems and branches consume for their own support the sap as it rises, and in this way deprive all other parts of vitality. This does not occur all at once; for some few years, perhaps, feeble shoots are sent out along the stems and at the extremities of the branches, but these seldom survive a second season, for no sap is forthcoming to support them. While the head of a tree is thus gradually dying, the roots may continue in a perfectly healthy state and perform their proper functions. Let the trial be made with some few trees in the condition described, and I venture to affirm that with most of them the roots will be found healthy. We can no more expect to find a tree healthy and capable of bearing good fruit whose bark is infested with parasites than we can expect to find a human being healthy with a skin foul from leprosy. Trees left to themselves, with their barks preyed upon by mosses, lichens and the innumerable insect blights that feed upon vegetable juices, will sooner or later die after living unhealthy lives. Having stated the wrongs of our orchards it now remains to point out the remedy. This is found in petroleum, or rather that preparation of the natural oil so called which is known in commerce under the name of paraffin—the oil now so commonly used in our domestic lamps—for it is with this particular oil that my experiments on fruit trees have been made. I have never tried crude petroleum, and therefore cannot say whether it would serve the purpose as we'll, but with regard to paraffin I have no hesitation in affirming that it can be used with the most beneficial results. I have tried it upon apples, pears and plums—all the ordinary orchard trees except cherries; some of the trees dressed were so foul with moss and lichens and bore such manifest marks of decay that they seemed fit for nothing but to be cut down for firewood. Such marvelous results have come under my own eyes from the application of paraffin to the bark of fruit trees that I cannot withhold from others the benefit of my experience. It should be stated that the discovery of this invaluable property in paraffin was purely accidental. About five years ago an old apple, as usual, was infested with the American blight, as it is popularly called, *Eriosoma*. The ladybird, which is the natural enemy of this particular blight, had not appeared for a long time, and the blight was on the increase. The tree appeared gradually dying, and from its situation I was reluctant to cut it down. On former occasions I had recourse to the ordinary remedy—the common oil brush; but not having common lamp oil at hand, it occurred to me to try whether paraffin would have the same effect. It was certainly not without some misgivings as to the injury that might occur from the use of so powerful and penetrating an ingredient that I applied this sort of oil. However, the tree was in extremis; it could not from appearances last very long, and the experiment was, I considered, worth the risk with this particular blight, which was showing itself almost in every crevice, and for which the other sort of oil was, at the best, but a doubtful remedy. About a pint of paraffin was put into a wide-necked bottle, and, with a house-painter's brush, the tree received a full dressing wherever the least blight was observed. From the case with which the oil flowed from the brush and the extent of the blight, I had not finished the dressing before the entire surface of the bark of the trunk and the main branches of the tree had been more or less brought under the influence of the paraffin. All traces of American blight were obliterated by the process and in a very few days the moss and large patches of lichens, which were thickly spread in all directions, turned black and died. This dressing was given, as far as I remember, about the end of the summer of 1879. It passed from memory until early the following spring, when it occurred to me to examine the tree and ascertain whether or not any injury had been done. I found the outer bark somewhat discolored, and perhaps a little more crisp or brittle than usual, but the inner tissues seemed in a perfectly healthy state. The sap had not yet begun to rise. I took advantage of the opportunity to have as much dead wood as possible removed, the trunk of the tree scraped clean of all its rusty bark and the branches rubbed

clear of all moss and lichen. For scraping the bark upon the trunk of the tree the back of a common spokeshave was used as the best implement at hand, carefully guarding against injury to the inner tissues. The more tender branches were rubbed clean with a thick leathern garden glove. When this was accomplished there was nothing to arrest the progress of the sap; it all went for the nourishment of the tree, for there were no parasites to feed upon it, and the amount of new wood made and the richness of the foliage that first season showed clearly the benefit of the process. It may be well to add that this tree has continued healthy and in good bearing ever since; this last season it had a nice crop of very fine fruit. It was an old tree when it came into my possession about thirty-five years ago, and from its present vigorous state it in all probability will benefit my successors. The paraffin used is the ordinary paraffin of commerce. It is used pure and undiluted. The outer bark of the tree is rapidly but thoroughly painted over with it. Autumn, when the sap is down, is, in my opinion, the best season for applying the remedy, and the early spring just before the sap begins to rise, would seem the fittest time for scraping clean the rusty bark from the stems and brushing off from the branches the dead moss and lichen. If any small patches of these have escaped the dressing they can now be touched with the paraffin brush. The autumn dressing of an orchard will show its effects in the following spring.

Farm and Garden Notes.

Hen roosts painted twice a year with crude petroleum will never be troubled with lice.

If your cabbages were troubled with club foot last season, choose a new piece of ground for them this year or you will have the same difficulty.

The common red clover is better than the large for general purposes. The latter is difficult to cure, makes coarser hay and is more apt to become musty.

An Ohio cultivator says: "As potash is the fertilizer most needed by the onion, the best results are economically obtained by the application of good wood ashes and other material rich in potash."

The Iowa Register says: "One hundred bushels of corn will shrink to ninety in the crib, and to an extent more than that, depending on the openness of the crib and the honesty of the neighbors."

A lamb will begin to eat when it is from ten days to two weeks old. There is nothing better for them than whole oats. Place them in shallow troughs where the lambs can run and the old sheep cannot. Keep them growing and you may command fancy prices.

As the beetles from which the root worms descend lay their eggs in corn fields in autumn, and as these eggs do not hatch until after corn planting in the following spring, a simple change of crops for a single year inevitably starves the entire generation in the ground.—*Professor Forbes.*

In our practice the ordinary approved method is to place a dozen to twenty young chickens in a coop, where they are fed three or four times a day upon cooked vegetables and corn meal—one part of potatoes and turnips to three parts of meal—for two or three weeks just before killing.—*Poultry Yard.*

An Iowa butter maker says that the best butter color is a painful corn meal mush, fed warm once a day, the cow being of the yellow variety. He also adds that it will increase the milk and butter, as well as give a good color. The man's advice may be good, but it is evident he hasn't been "seen" by the butter-color manufacturers.

A member of the Elmira Farmers' club recently expressed the opinion that bad results would always be found with wheat sown on land into which the green growth of any crop had just been turned, although it was believed that buckwheat was the worst green manure. All green growth incorporated with the soil near the time of seeding will in every case be found prejudicial to wheat.

Professor Shelton found that pigs kept outside of the barn required 5.95 pounds of corn in order to produce one pound of pork, while pigs kept under shelter and made comfortable produced one pound of pork from 4.76 pounds of corn. As the difference in the cost may be the difference between profit and loss, some idea of the value of good shelter and warmth may be gathered from his experiments.

The manner of gathering fruit is of the highest importance. We have often seen intelligent men gathering apples as though they were stones and could not be injured; they should be gathered as eggs and handled with as much care; every apple should be picked from the tree by hand and placed carefully in a basket lined with cloth. Every apple that chances to drop to the ground should be kept with those of the third quality, whatever may be its appearance, for when it strikes the ground it receives an injury that in nine cases out of ten will bring on premature decay.—*New England Farmer.*

Household Hints and Recipes.

Kid shoes can be kept soft and free from cracks by rubbing them once a week with pure glycerine or castor oil.

A little salt-water or carbon of soda mixed with the water in which flowers are placed will keep them fresh for two weeks.

To remove egg stains from silver spoons take a little common salt between the thumb and finger and rub the stain briskly. Then wash in hot suds.

Oat-meal wafers are relished by babies and older children, too. Take a pint of oat-meal and a pint of water, with almost a teaspoonful of salt. Mix, and spread

on buttered pans. Make it just as thin as it is possible, and yet have the bottom of the pan covered. Bake slowly.

A good rule for vegetable soup without stock is two tomatoes (canned ones may be used), one onion, two potatoes, and a heaping tablespoonful of rice or barley, a teaspoonful of salt. Boil for an hour in a quart of water. Split some Boston crackers, dip them in water, put them in a baking tin in a hot oven. When brown put them into the soup.

This rule for corn bread must be carefully followed to procure the excellent possible result: Take two tablespoonfuls of Indian meal, two of molasses, one not at all heaping, one of soda, one and a half teacups of buttermilk, a good pinch of salt; thicken this until it is about like a thick paste with rye flour; bake in moderate oven for thirty-five minutes.

To make potato pie pare and grate one large white potato into a deep dish; add the grated rind and juice of one lemon, the white of one egg well beaten, one teacup of cold water, one teacup of white sugar. Pour this into a plate lined with a nice crust and bake. When done have ready the whites of three eggs well beaten, with one-half cup of powdered sugar and a few drops of lemon extract. Pour this over the pie and return to the oven till of a rich brown color.

Story of a Colored Couple.

That there are romances as touching in negro life as were ever told, is proved, says a Rome (Ga.) paper, by the story of a colored couple named Uncle Levi and Aunt Aggie, who lived in Cedartown Valley. This is the story:

In 1840 Levi belonged to Mr. Sparks, who then resided in Morgan county. In the same county lived Dr. E. E. Jones. Among Dr. Jones's slaves was a fine-looking mulatto girl whose smile was courted by every young male slave in the community. She was named Aggie. Levi and Aggie met often at corn-shucking frolics. They were partners in dance and play, and nearly every Saturday night he would obtain a pass to visit her. They were married in 1843, and "I was so happy when I went every Saturday night to see my young wife," said Uncle Levi. They had only been married a year when Mr. Sparks moved from Morgan to Polk county, carrying the broken-hearted husband with him. After five or six years of separation, believing they would never again see each other, Levi married one of his master's women. "But, boss, I never loved her like Aggie," was the old man's exclamation. Aggie, too, married, and both raised large families. Neither knew whether the other was living. At last came the downfall of the Confederacy and the freedom of the slaves. Upon inquiry Uncle Levi found that his old love was still living and married. He went nobly to work for his second wife. Ten years ago Aunt Aggie's husband died and left her without a provider. News reached Uncle Levi and he sent word to his old love to come and live with him and his wife. This Aunt Aggie refused to do. Years flew fast, and the two grew old. Two years ago Uncle Levi's wife died, and after a few months of mourning he sent for Aunt Aggie. She came, and after a separation of forty years they were united. Everybody in the neighborhood has heard the story, and they are recipients of many kindnesses. Aunt Aggie is now sixty and Uncle Levi is seventy.

A Pension Office Romance.

In a recent Washington letter to the *Boston Traveler*, we find this romantic story: It frequently happens that the pension office furnishes a romance, which reads more like the flights of fiction than the stern reality of truth. Congressman Cassidy, of Nevada, relates an incident which happened under his personal observation only a short time ago, which shows this to a marked degree. About two weeks since he received a letter from a man signing himself as Eli Johnson, of one of the small towns in his State, saying that months and months ago he made an application for a pension, and as his papers were complete and without a flaw, he wished to ascertain where the hitch was and how much longer he would have to wait. He furthermore stated that he served during the war in Company F, First California cavalry, and that the record of the war department would show such to be the fact. Mr. Cassidy went to Commissioner Dudley and looked up the papers in the case, when, judge of his surprise, he found that the records showed that Johnson was killed in battle, and that his widow had received back pay, some time previous to 1879, of a sum amounting to over \$2,000. She, however, believed that Johnson was dead, and married a Mr. Still, and was residing in Florida. Mr. Cassidy, communicated these facts to Mr. Johnson, and the latter answered, saying that he had heard that his wife had died while he was away to the war. He came East and went down South and claimed his wife, and the couple only a day or two ago started for his home in Nevada. The only party who is not entirely satisfied with the denouement is Mr. Still, who finds himself minus a wife.

Wagon Weights.

The range of weights of vehicles of our best builders are: Light road wagons, 110 to 145 pounds; two passenger wagons, half spring, 150 to 180 pounds; two passenger wagons, elliptic springs, 225 to 280 pounds; doctor's phaetons, 350 to 400 pounds; pony phaetons, 225 to 350 pounds; four passenger rockaway, curtain quarters, 800 to 1,100 pounds; with glass or panel quarters, 850 to 1,250 pounds; six passenger rockaway, open quarters, 950 to 1,200 pounds; paneled or glass quarters, 1,000 to 1,300 pounds; phaetons, four passengers, on side springs, 350 to 420 pounds.—*Coach, Harness and Saddlery.*

The Iowa legislature contains fifty-eight Union war veterans.

Spring Medicine

Spring medicine is a necessity. Being "honed up" through the winter, and breathing impurities in the air of rooms heated by wood or coal, and contaminated by the gases they throw off, the vitality of the blood is so reduced as to be unable to stand the debilitating influences of spring weather, hence the need of a reliable medicine like Hood's Sarsaparilla.

"I consider your Sarsaparilla the best blood purifier in the market. I tried a dozen different articles 'warranted' to cleanse the blood, but never found anything that did me any good till I commenced using Hood's Sarsaparilla."—W. H. PERK, Rochester, N. Y.

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