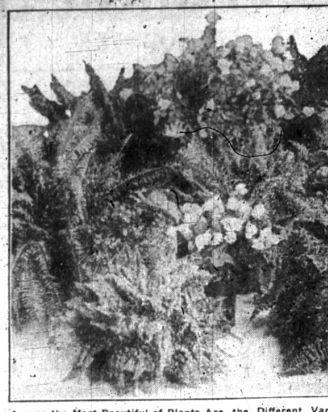
The HOME BEAUTIFUL
Flowers and Shrubbery—Their Care and Cultivation



Among the Most Beautiful of Plants Are the Different Varieties of Ferns. Cool Looking and Luxuriant.

CARE OF THE FERNS

By L. M. BENNINGTON.

The ordinary way to propagate this class of plants is by dividing the plants, by the creeping rhizomes, by the little bulblets that form on the fronds and by the seeds or spores that appear on the under side of the leaves.

The enterprising fern lover will find it most interesting to propagate by spores and perchance produce a really valuable addition to these beautiful and graceful plants.

Procure a seed-pan or box with plenty of drainage holes, and cover the bottom with broken crockery. On this place half-decayed sod and fill with carefully mixed and sifted leaf-mold and sand.

Make the surface of the soil perfectly smooth and level, and then scatter the spores on it and leave them without any covering, that is, of soil. However, they must be inclosed in glass by placing a pane of glass over the seed-box or pan.

Water by placing the seed-pan in water, and keep it there until the water appears on the surface of the soil. Then remove at once, for too much water will destroy the spores. Keep the box in the light, but not the sun, remembering that ferns naturally grow in shady places and that we should try to follow nature's lead.

KEEP LAWN WELL ROLLED

To make a good lawn the soil requires frequent rolling. In the first place a good lawn cannot be produced in one, two or three years, that is, a perfect lawn, without depression and with a soil surface as smooth as a floor.

A lawn roller can be made, without much expense, from cement, using gas pipe for the axle and frame. The form for setting the cement may be of wood; using very narrow slats or galvanized iron. In case the latter is used, the form may be left on the roller, and if it is kept dry and protected from the weather, it will last a long time.

A handy size for a lawn roller is one about 20 inches long by 14 inches in diameter. If one has the proper tools, which consist of a vise and a thread-cutting tool, a roller can be made in a short time, and at very little expense.

HOTBED FOR EARLY FLOWERS

A hotbed enables one to gain a month on the season. They are made and handled like a coldframe, but are built in a three-foot-deep excavation which is filled to the level of the earth with fresh stable manure, which for a few days has been fermented and forked and fermented again. It must be trodden down and, when the soil is at 90 degrees temperature, covered with six inches of rich soil. Bank up the outside. When the sun shines the temperature of the air in the bed may be 70 to 80 and at other times 55 to 60 degrees. A hotbed extends the season of tender annuals by making possible an early start for transplanting in May.

FIGHTING THE FLOWER BUGS

If the leaves of your plants curl up look for insects. If red spider deluge the plant (not the soil) with clear, cold water. If aphis, fumigate with tobacco or wash them with strong soap suds, or with a tea made of quassia chips, as hot as the hand can bear.

For white worms, let the soil get as dry as may be, then set the pot in a vessel containing quite hot water, taking care not to scald the plant. Or, set the dry pot into a vessel containing limewater until thoroughly saturated; or make a strong tea of black pepper, and saturate the soil.

If insects appear on the ferns, apply fir-tree oil soap suds, dipping the plant so that it may be entirely covered. The bath may injure the plant, in inexperienced hands, but the insects will kill it. Try to use judgment.

When you find a plant or plants with lice on them, have ready a large tight box and cover the bottom of it with an inch of cut tobacco stems. On this sprinkle a little boiling water, set the plants at once on the tobacco, cover tightly and leave for twenty-four hours. The lice will be sick if not dead. Repeat if necessary. This is better than smoking or dipping.

HINTS ABOUT FLOWERS

We usually think of pruning only when a plant is asleep. It is true, that the easiest pruning should be done then, but there is much that we can do during the summer to keep a plant in good condition.

The lilac is usually the best pruned shrub we have, for the simple reason that we are apt to pick every bloom. The plant cannot of course then make any seeds and the strength is thrown into new wood where it belongs.

Rose bushes should be treated the same way. A second bloom can be produced on wistaria by following this rule and cutting head of each runner.

Along towards the middle of summer you will notice new, very strong shoots coming upon your plants. When they reach an even height with the rest of the plant nip out the tip and leaves with your thumb and finger and thus make the shoot send out some side branches.

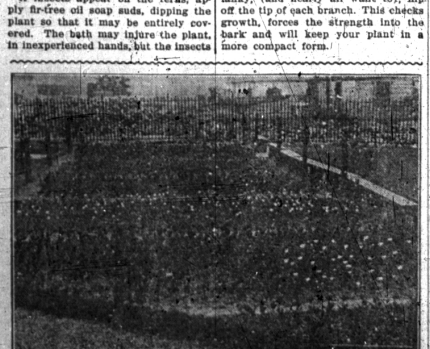
Manure must never be used next the bulbs.

Hardy phlox is very attractive and few perennials equal it in length of bloom. Strong field grown plants set out now will become established before winter and make the border brilliant next summer.

All lilies do best when planted in the autumn. To make the best possible lily bed remove one foot of soil, then cover the soil below with two inches of dried manure. Turn this under with a garden fork, mixing it well with the soil. Cover this with six inches of coarse sand and on the sand place the lily bulbs, setting them twelve inches or more apart. When the bulbs are all in position cover them with six inches of the top soil and next spring you will have a bed of lilies to be proud of.

STOP RAPID TOP GROWTH

If a plant is growing too tall and lanky, and nearly all want to, nip off the tip of each branch. This checks growth, forces the strength into the bark and will keep your plant in a more compact form.



Tulip Bulbs Are Inexpensive and Should Be Ordered by the Hundred.

Loyal, Valiant Towser

By Augusta Goodrich Sherwin

(Copyright, 1915, by W. G. Chapman)

Worthless, wandering Neal Barrett opened a package done up in a newspaper, and smacked his lips in glowing anticipation. Then as the contents were revealed his rugged face broke into a smile.

"A right royal hand-out!" he gloated. "Chicken and cake, and biscuits all buttered, too. Must have had a banquet at that house last night."

Neal sat down on a pile of boards and started in to discuss the tempting viands that lay before him. In his grateful mind was a memory of the pleasant little housewife who had so sumptuously provided for him.

"It's been hard grubbing for a day or two," soliloquized Neal, "but this makes up for it all. It's better than free lunch—and without the temptation. I don't pick up much work, but I'm in a 'dry' district. That's my only safety zone, and I'll stick!"

He was a good-natured and a good-looking fellow. Too good-natured by far he had been in the past. It had led to his grieving a sweet fond girl. It had ended in her father forbidding him the house. That was a good many miles from Neal's present town—of temporary residence. Neal saw the justice of his dismissal, for Mr. Parsons was poor and Neal was spoiling the chances for marriage for his daughter, Florence.

Neal had lost his position through being too easy-going with a reckless, dissipated set. He left town and Florence. Work was not easy to pick up and idleness killed his ambition. He became a wanderer, then a tramp. He was one now, as a matter of fact.

He Looked Invitingly at Neal.

For a month, however, he had bettered in one respect. A drinking bout had got him in with a criminal crowd, and had he not abandoned them he would have landed where they did—in the penitentiary. The experience scared him. He took refuge in a local option district. He had not tasted liquor for a month. With sobriety had come sane addened thoughts of the girl he had left behind him. He had faithfully sought work, but did not find it to do. So, hand-outs had become his portion.

"Hello!" ejaculated Neal in a sudden sprightly way.

There had come a rustling in the bushes behind him and then a big handsome collie dog bounded in front of him, sniffed towards the outspread lunch and then sat up and held out a paw.

"Shake, old fellow!" hailed Neal. "Hungry? I see you are. All right. We'll make it fifty-fifty, and there you are!"

It did Neal good to see the half-famished animal enjoy the toothsome meal, which he divided evenly with him. It was getting on toward dusk. Neal had tramped a good many miles that day. He chose a soft grass plat just off the road and stretched himself out.

The dog made no demur, more than content to stay with his new master as long as the latter smoked and spoke to him. As Neal closed his eyes for a nap, however, the animal got up near to him, pulled his sleeve, pranced about, showed plainly that he did not consider it bedtime, nor the site of the siesta favorable for rest and comfort.

"What you trying to tell me, old fellow?" queried Neal whimsically. "Want me to go somewhere? All right—march ahead."

The animal at once adopted the methods of a guide. Down the road he proceeded, then across a lot and darting along a narrow lane arrived at an old barn structure.

He looked invitingly at Neal as he entered its doorway. There was a pair of stairs and a loft with sufficient old hay on its floor to make a very comfortable bed.

"Well, well," laughed Neal—"tit for tat! I share my meal and you pilot me to a first-class bed. Good for you, Towser!"

They became close chums, those two, during the next few days. The constant companionship of the animal pleased and cheered Neal. As to Towser, a grateful example of true fidelity he seemed to be supremely content. One night, however, when they arrived at the barn, they found the doors barred and padlocked, and it was not so dark but that Neal could read scrawled across the new barrier the chalked words: "Trespassers will be prosecuted, according to the law."

It had begun to rain and man and dog had tramped a long distance that afternoon. Neal looked for temporary shelter. He found it at the side of the house in a vine-embowered arbor. A long bench invited him to rest and then unconsciously to slumber.

It must have been three or four hours later when Neal awoke. Towser was pulling at his coat. Neal sat up and then sprang to his feet, as from the inside of the house an echoing scream of terror or pain rang out.

"Something wrong," uttered Neal as his keen senses shrewdly alert in an instant, "and Towser knows it."

The dog, with an eager impatient glance back at his master, had started for the house. Neal followed. The front door was open. Down the hall the dog stole to where a door stood partly ajar. Beyond it Neal peered for the moment, horrified and spellbound. Across a table in his night dress lay the hermitlike occupant of the house—old Jacob Wise. He was tied across it. There was a fire in the stove, and stuck between its red hot bars was a poker. A rough-looking man was standing over the aged Wise.

"Now, then, I've got you safe and sound," he was saying. "You've got a fortune hidden away in some odd corner of this old house and I want it, understand?"

Jacob Wise made no response. The robber drew the poker from the stove. "Tell where that money is," he spoke, "or I'll give you a touch of this."

The intruder waved the red hot poker menacingly. He moved it across the bare soles of his victim's feet.

"I'll tell! It burns! I'll tell!" shrieked the tortured old man.

Just then Neal pushed open the door. The intruder turned quickly. Neal sprang at him. They grappled. Then the robber pressed a revolver against the side of his opponent.

The last thing that Neal Barrett saw as he sank unconscious to the floor was the dog, his teeth at the throat of the wretch who had downed his master.

The waking moment came days later, although Neal did not realize that fact when he first roused up. In amazement he stared. Old Jacob Wise sat at his bedside in a comfortable room. Through an open doorway, moving about engaged in domestic duties, Neal saw Florence Parsons!

"Ah! better!" chuckled the old miser. "Good boy! I've been awfully anxious. Know her?" and he nodded his head towards the tidy, graceful figure in the next apartment.

"Yes," whispered Neal weakly, but his face aglow with tenderness and delight.

"She's true blue," declared the old man fervently.

How "true blue," Neal Barrett knew after a little explanation. The faithful Towser had driven the robber away, terribly lacerated. Jacob Wise, grateful to man and dog who had saved to him a part of his hoarded fortune, had given Neal the best care possible.

Some memoranda found on Neal had advised Wise of the existence of Florence. He had written her. She had come to nurse the unfortunate man she still loved.

"I'll call her in now," advised Wise. "She knows I'm going to start you out on a new life, with plenty of capital. You're a brave man, and that dog shall have a real silver collar. As to the young lady—don't miss your chance to get a good wife."

Which Neal did not, and Towser, loyal, valiant Towser! was not shut out from guestship when the happy wedding took place.

SHE TOURED WORLD AT 85

Elderly Lady Enjoyed Trip, and Lived Two Years to Talk About It.

Mrs. Mary J. Scroggs, who enjoyed the unique distinction of having traveled around the world and enjoyed every mile of the tour when she was eighty-five years old, died at the residence of her son, Dr. G. A. Scroggs, at Los Angeles. Particularly free from illness throughout her life, she was ill but a short time before death. She was eight-seven years old.

Two years ago Mrs. Scroggs decided to take a trip around the globe. Many friends had known that she longed to make the tour, but were amazed when she announced that she had completed arrangements. Rugged and with a mind particularly receptive and alert, she traveled through the alien lands with the greatest enjoyment, and gathered an unusually large fund of information.

She was accompanied by her daughter-in-law, Mrs. Doctor Scroggs, and her niece, Miss Elizabeth P. Bailey. The oldest woman ever to make such a trip, according to the records of all transportation companies, she was not ill from ocean travel, and did not miss a day from sightseeing.

Mrs. Scroggs went to Los Angeles 12 years ago from Beverly, Pa., having lived the greater part of her life in that community.

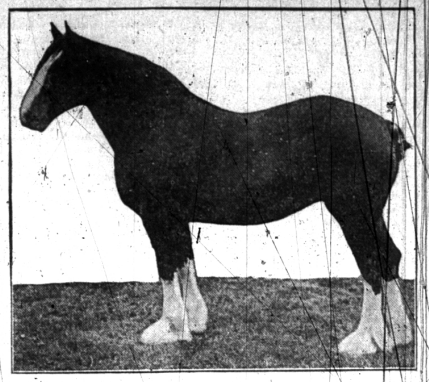
Wanted the Open.

During an automobile trip last summer a San Francisco man stopped one night with a party of teamsters in the mountains. Strolling about the camp, he noted that many of the men had put their blankets under the wagons. One man, however, had taken particular pains to carry his bedding a considerable distance away from the wagons and the rest of the men. Seeing him thus by himself he asked the man why he did not sleep under the wagons the same as the others. "Who—me?" asked the old fellow as he twisted around in his blankets. "Not much. Me for right out in the open. It's too darn confining to sleep under a roof."

Carlyle on Warfare.

Are not all true men that live, or that ever lived, soldiers of the same army, enlisted under heaven's captaincy, to do battle against the same enemy, the empire of darkness and wrong? Why should we miskNow one another, fight not against the enemy, but against ourselves, from mere difference of uniform? All uniforms shall be good, so they hold to them true valiant men.—Carlyle.

SECRET OF USING BROOD MARES ON FARM



Clydesdale Mare "Boquhan Lady Peggy," Champion at the Highland Show, Inverness.

(By J. M. BELL.)

I was on a big stock farm several months ago, and the owner was certainly doing things in the matter of raising mules, that is, he was starting about it in the right way.

Twenty-six fine, heavy draft mares were being bred to a sixteen-hand jack. So far so good.

These mares were doing regular farm work, some of them having been on the place for several years, and out in a large, luxuriant pasture were a thriving herd of mule colts; a credit to their mothers.

It was haying season when I visited that stock farm, and 200 acres of red clover were being cut, wheat was also ripe; 500 acres of that was being harvested. Six mowers in the hay, four binders in the wheat and the mules working to all the machinery, the brood mares working to the wagons hauling the wheat and the hay.

A pair of them to each wagon. A careful driver and a good harness, the mares sleek and fat, working from 12 to 14 hours a day under a hot, southern sun; no time to loiter; a steady rush from rising to the setting of the sun.

But these brood mares were standing it all right and were fat enough for any practical purpose.

In buying these mares, the owner, a young Cornell graduate, had succeeded in getting his money's worth.

Many of the pairs were really matched teams, strong bone, heavy muscles, good limbs, no counterfeits among the twenty-six. No cripples, few blemishes, spavins, ringbones, side bones, even splints hard to find. No mares that could be called aged, so all likely to drop good healthy colts.

I noticed that the brood mares on this farm had on good well-fitting harness, and were invariably handled by careful teamsters, the majority of them negroes.

Here lies the secret of working brood mares on the farm; they must be handled properly and by drivers of experience who understand the difference between a $200 animal that is expected to drop a colt each season and the $50 plug mule or gelding.

Now on this farm where over one hundred head of work stock were kept and used regularly the hours for work were "from sun to sun" at all seasons of the year—no loitering—everything carried on in a businesslike manner but at the same time none of the work animals, either mules or brood mares, were overworked or underfed.

Take these twenty-six mares, figuring twenty of them drop foals each spring, that is six out of the lot will miss—these twenty young colts at weaning time would be worth $40 each, or a total of $800, while as three-year-olds they should, if properly grown, be worth $350 a pair, beside the three crops of colts coming on behind them.

There is no trouble about working a brood mare on the farm, if she is the right kind of mare and driven by the right sort of man, but you must certainly select, for breeding, mares of the right size and temperament.

High-strung, nervous mares will not do for farm drudgery, whether they are draft bred or not.

You want a quiet animal—not slow or sluggish—but with an equable disposition.

An infusion of draft blood will often insure a patient, willing farm brood mare, just as an infusion of thoroughbred blood will give a more spirited animal.

Perhaps no other animal on the farm is so profitable as the right sort of a mare. The price of horses and mules keeps up well and is likely to do so.

The small farmer and also the larger stock farms will use mules in spite of machine engines and motor cars.

The city trade uses up thousands of both horses and mules; riding and driving horses are always in demand if they are of the right kind, and the brood mare on the farm is the source from which they are sprung, so in the selection of them good judgment should be used.

Work them regularly, feed them regularly and plentifully. Rest them two weeks before and two weeks after the foal arrives, but let them work a month before and after the colt arrives.

Be light. Never handle them roughly and never overload them.

RAISE GOOD CALVES OR PIGS ON WHEY

Fed With Oil Meal and Gluten Feed It Will Give Satisfactory Results.

Whey has a food value well worth saving. Its chemical food analysis compared with skim milk, is as follows:

Skim milk, 2.9 per cent protein; 5.2 per cent carbohydrates; 0.3 per cent fat. Whey, 0.8 per cent protein; 4.7 per cent carbohydrates; 0.2 per cent fat.

It will be seen that whey is not as valuable as skim milk, but that it has a very appreciable value, nevertheless. However, whey has a wider nutritive ratio than skim milk, that of whey being 1.67, while that of skim milk is 1.2. This fact must be taken into consideration in feeding whey if one gets its full food value. Oil meal, gluten feed, etc., food rich in protein should be fed with whey, while corn meal, barley meal, flaxseed meal, etc., should be fed with skim milk. In this way one can balance the ration and get the full food value of such products, while if they are fed alone, satisfactory results cannot be obtained.

You can raise good calves or pigs on whey if you will feed oil meal and gluten meal with it, but if fed alone it does not contain the food nutrients in proper proportion, hence does not give satisfactory results. It is safe to say that whey is worth half as much as skim milk for feed.

Green Feed Essential.

Green feed is essential as a part of the winter ration. When cabbage and beets are not available, sprouted oats can easily be fed. Soak the oats in a bucket for at least twenty-four hours and then place in a pile on top shelf of the sprouter. On the third day spread them out and let them grow to a height of not over two inches, then feed them.

Assurance of Health.

Poultrymen, just as in the case of stockmen and fruit-growers, find that sanitation is the best assurance of health in their flocks. No matter how fine the birds may be or how substantial the house in which they are quartered, if the building is infested with vermin and disease germs, a profitable flock cannot be maintained.

Colors of Eggs.

All heavy layers produce white eggs, while the general-purpose breeds lay a more or less brown egg.

ALFALFA FOR HOG PASTURE IN FAVOR

Furnished Good Grazing From Early Spring Until Autumn at Iowa Station.

Alfalfa pasture produced the cheapest gains on pigs ever secured at the Iowa station. In 1911 alfalfa pasture, with a grain ration of ear corn plus a small amount of meal meal, produced gains at a cost of $2.88 per 100 pounds, considering corn worth 50 cents a bushel.

Alfalfa furnished good grazing from early spring until late autumn. It was pastured from May 7 to November 25 constantly, a period of 198 days. Under average Iowa conditions, alfalfa pasture is available for practically six months of the year.

Being extremely deep rooted, it is not greatly affected by drought. In August and September, when clover pasture is dry and hard, alfalfa growing beside it is green, succulent and palatable.

Heavy pasturing of alfalfa is not advised. The number of animals per acre should be so regulated that two or three small cuttings of hay may be taken from the field. This is necessary to insure tender green growth for grazing.

When little buds begin to shoot at the base of the stalk the alfalfa should be cut. In a very few days a fresh new growth makes its appearance. Over-pasturing, without occasional cutting, also tends to injure the crowns of the plant and eventually destroys the stand.

Direct Road to Eggs.

Warm food and cold mornings go well together. Direct road to eggs, and they are what we are all after.

Too Many Shoats.

If the shoats pile up in the pen at night, the pen is too cold, and there are too many shoats in the pen.

Sewage as Fertilizer.

It is safe to use sewage as fertilizer if the plant roots are unbroken, but a very slight injury to the roots permits disease germs to enter.

Bad Combination.

Heavy birds and high roosts are a bad combination. Large breeds especially need low roosts.

Advantage of Concrete Post.

The concrete fence post has the advantage of being the most permanent and sightly.

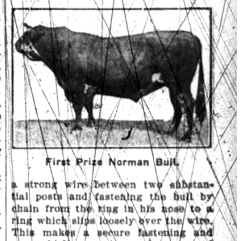
DAIRY

MANAGING THE DAIRY BULL

Allowing Animal to Run With Cows Is Not Good Practice—Plenty of Exercise Is Urged.

(By W. W. BARNES, Arizona Experiment Station.)

The practice of permitting a bull to run with the dairy cows cannot possibly be recommended. Especially is this true during the breeding season, and with the dairyman who is milking a large number of cows and has a constant demand for milk, it means practically the entire time. A bull kept in a small paddock where he gets plenty of exercise, pure water and food rich in bone and muscle-forming material such as alfalfa, oats and wheat bran, will be more vigorous and give better service than a bull permitted to run with the cows. It is very essential that the bull should have plenty of exercise, which he cannot get if confined in a stall. Where it is impossible for the owner to fence securely about one acre for the bull, he can very easily provide the necessary exercise, by stretching



First Prize Norman Bull.

a strong wire between two substantial posts and fastening the bull by chain from the ring in his nose to a ring which slips loosely over the wire. This makes a secure fastening and one which experience has proved practicable.

When kept in this way the bull is also more easily managed. A dairy bull makes a dangerous pet, and should never be so far trusted as to be in a position where he can get the advantage of his attendant. Those unfortunate accidents which sometimes occurred have usually been due to overconfidence on the part of the attendant.

CONVENIENCE OF MILK CANS

"Shotgun" Can Is Easily Covered, Set in Water and Not Difficult to Handle.

Milk and cream from even a few cows can be much more conveniently handled in regular milk cans than in the shallow pans and wide-mouthed buckets commonly used.

These cans may be bought in various sizes. For handling cream and skim milk where separators are used, or even where cream is set to sour for butter making, the "shotgun can," is very convenient. It can be easily covered and set in water and is convenient to handle.

Where even a few cows are kept, a separate room for handling the milk should be provided to relieve the otherwise overcrowded kitchen. Well houses, frequently have a room which, with the addition of a concrete floor, shelves and windows, makes a very convenient milk room.

EFFICIENT RATIONS FOR COW

Where Silage Is Not Obtainable Mixture of Alfalfa, Corn and Gluten Meal Is Good.

A ration of 12 pounds alfalfa, 35 pounds corn silage, four pounds ground corn and three pounds bran proved most efficient for a 1,200-pound cow producing 30 pounds milk daily at the Nebraska station.

Where silage is not available, the next best combination is 15 pounds alfalfa, six pounds ground corn, eight pounds corn stover and two pounds gluten meal.

Where neither silage nor alfalfa are at hand, feed 12 pounds millet hay, 12 pounds sorghum hay, two pounds ground corn and three pounds oil meal.

KEEPING DAIRY COWS CLEAN

Piece of Plank, Arranged in Sloping Manner, Will Cure Animal of Stepping Into Gutter.

Some cows have a disagreeable habit of backing into the gutter and getting their feet full of manure. A piece of plank set about an inch below the top of the gutter next to the cow and sloped to the bottom of the gutter in the rear will remedy this trouble. On stepping on this sloping plank, the cow will slip backwards, causing her to step up. She will forget the habit in a few days, and then the device is no longer necessary.

The plank should not be longer than the length of one stall so it can be removed for cleaning the gutter.

Feeding Cow Too Much.

If at any time during the period that you are harvesting the cow's grain ration you notice that she falls down in her flow of milk it can be taken as a pretty sure indication that you are feeding her too much, therefore it will be essential to cut down her ration until she responds to it.

Dairyman's Curiosity.

The wise dairyman's curiosity doesn't extend to seeing what the foot and mouth disease looks like in his neighbor's herd.