AGRICULTURAL.

TOPICS OF INTEREST RELATIVE TO FARM AND GARDEN.

AN IMPROVED FARM DRAG.

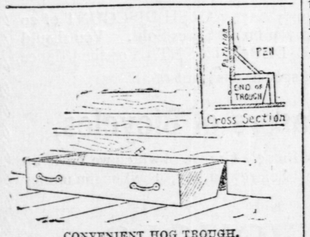
The farm drag, or stone boat, as it is frequently called, is capable of much more convenient and frequent use if it be made in a much lighter fashion than is commonly the case. Thick, hardwood planks, surmounted by heavy pieces of hardwood joist to form a railing around the edges, make an implement far too heavy for use except with a strong team. The stout drag is sometimes needed where heavy stones are to be moved, but for moving farming tools, grain and other seed, etc., in and out of the field, a light structure is needed. The sketch herewith shows a drag made of inch hardwood boards, sawed so as to give a sharp upward incline to the forward end, this platform being surmounted by flat rails of inch-and-a-half stuff. A single horse can walk off with such a drag, and that, too, with considerable of a burden upon it, which can be placed upon the drag more conveniently than upon even a low hung wagon. —American Agriculturist.



IMPROVED STONE BOAT.

A CONVENIENT HOG TROUGH.

One of the most unpleasant features of hog-raising is the unpleasant operation of giving these animals their food. They are in the trough, on top of it, and always under the food when it is turned in to them—that is when the ordinary trough and spout are used. The illustration, however, shows an arrangement whereby the feeder can place the food in the trough unmolested by his pigship, and place the trough before him in an orderly and becoming manner. The trough is made like a draw, and pulls out to be filled. It can then be pushed in under the end guides (shown in the cross-section), with none of the unpleasant features mentioned. These end guides hold the trough in place, as does also the stout button on the outside of the front of the pen.—New York Tribune.



CONVENIENT HOG TROUGH.

HOW TO GROW CUCUMBERS.

Many successful gardeners claim that cucumber seeds retain their vitality for eight or nine years, but I prefer to use seed not over three years old, writes M. P. Keech. Experience has taught me that it does not pay to plant doubtful seeds of any kind. If they fail to germinate, much valuable time of the growing season is lost by replanting, and if they do produce plants they are often so spindling that they are not worth cultivating. I prefer White Spine for both table use and pickling. The vines are vigorous and produce abundantly. The cucumber is of good size, and the flesh tender and crisp. When young it is deep green, and, being well formed, makes nice pickles. When ripe it turns a clear white, the flesh is solid and tender, and makes excellent sweet pickles. Six or seven hills will probably furnish enough for a family of five or six persons. As early in May as the ground becomes warm and dry, dig holes about one foot deep and six feet apart each way. Place a bucketful of poultry manure in the bottom and tamp down firmly, then add five or six inches of mellow soil to the top, on which the seed are planted and covered 1½ inches deep with well pulverized soil. If possible plant in freshly prepared soil, pressing it firmly over the seed with the back of the hoe. Place eight or nine seeds in a hill, and when all danger from bugs is past, thin to three plants. Make the hills level with the surrounding surface. Low hills stand the drouth better than high ones. As soon as the plants are out of the ground they will be attacked by little striped beetles. Lose no time in destroying them. Wood ashes, air-slaked lime and soot are effective remedies. Personally I prefer to sprinkle white hellebore on the plants in the morning while the dew is on. The sprinkling should be repeated after each hoeing and after every rain. A convenient contrivance for applying insect destroyers is made from a large baking-powder can. Select one upon which the cover fits tightly. Punch holes in the cover with a shingle nail, and you have all the apparatus needed for killing vine insects. Give frequent but shallow cultivation. Keep the ground mellow and work the soil around each plant. This work must be thoroughly done the first of the season, as the plants will soon make runners so long that cultivation will be impracticable. If the weather is drouthy, I use soapsuds, dishwater, and all slops from the house to water the vines. I consider slops from the house and laundry valuable stimulants for all kinds of vegetables.—New England Homestead.

SUMMER FLOWERING BULBS.

The gladiolus has become one of the most popular of summer flowers. It has many commendable qualities, and requires but little of what may be called skill in its management. The bulbs may be planted as soon as the frost leaves the ground in spring, and if a succession of flowers is desired planting may be made weekly until the middle or end of June. The bulbs for late planting must be kept in a very cool cellar to prevent them from growing prematurely. Like most other bulbs, gladioluses thrive best in sandy or at least a light soil, and if the finest flowers are to be obtained the soil must be well enriched. In dry seasons the blooms will be short lived, but this can be materially counteracted by mulching around the stems. This is preferable to watering, which sometimes injures the bulbs. They ripen seed very freely, but it is at the expense of the young bulbs, and where it is not proposed to save seed the future flowering bulbs will be greatly helped in growing by removing the flower stem as soon as the flowers fade. Each bulb will form two bulbs for future planting, and, in addition to these, numerous small bulblets will be found clustering at the base of the larger bulbs. These small bulbs will vary in size from a marble to a pea. These should be carefully gathered and sown in rows like peas, when they will soon reach the size of flowering bulbs. The bulbs should be lifted in the fall and, after being well dried in the sun, stored in a dry place, where no frost can enter. In dry soils, even in the Middle States, they can be planted deep enough to escape injury from freezing, but it is the safer plan to lift the bulbs after the stems decay and keep them dry during the winter.

The tigrida, or tiger flower, is a Mexican bulb which produces tulip-shaped flowers of a scarlet color, spotted with yellow. The flowers are very beautiful, but of short duration, lasting only one day, but it continues flowering for some time, several flowers being produced from the same stock. The bulbs are small and appear almost worthless, but if they are planted in a deep, light, rich soil they will flower satisfactorily. They are very tender and will not stand any frost, consequently they should be lifted and kept in a dry place, where there is no frost. They should not be planted until the ground becomes warmed in spring, otherwise the bulbs will be apt to decay.—The Silver Knight.

ASPARAGUS GROWING IN A COMMERCIAL WAY

The asparagus crop is probably the most sensitive as to weather conditions of any grown. If the weather is cold and dry, it will make but a feeble, slow growth; on the contrary, if warm, with frequent showers, the plant will come on rapidly. Last year the latter conditions on Long Island prevailed very early in the season, some two weeks before the canners were ready to commence packing. The result was that nearly a third of the crop had to be shipped to New York and other markets, causing such a glut that in many cases it did not pay expense of shipment. When the canners were ready to take it, the cold, dry weather set in, so that not much, if any, more than half an average crop was put up.

The same condition prevails this year, only much earlier, so the growth commenced before the beds were ridged up. The two factories, the one at Riverhead and the other at Mattituck, take nearly all grown in this famous asparagus section, which extends from Calverton to Peconic, a distance of about twenty miles, although a large proportion of it is grown within a radius of five miles from Mattituck, in which district there are probably about 200 acres old enough for cutting (three or more years), and many acres coming on. The price paid the grower this year is $9 per 100 bunches for No. 1 and $5 for culls. The latter is cut short and put up as "tips," which retail at about one-third less than the first quality, which is put up in square boxes. The tips are packed in round cans, and are sold as second quality, when, in reality, the asparagus is much better than the first quality.

The question is often asked, Is asparagus a profitable crop? That depends upon circumstances. At the present price which the canners pay, $9 per 100 bunches, it is a good crop, much better than potatoes at sixty cents per bushel. With good cultivation, the average yield is 2500 bunches per acre, and the cost for labor is no more than for an acre of potatoes. The best growers apply a ton of high-grade fertilizer annually, per acre, one-half early in the spring and one-half after plowing the ridge down in July. If the cost of labor is the same as for an acre of potatoes, the relative cost of production can be easily determined. Some growers say it is three times as much work to take care of a given acreage of asparagus, as of potatoes; admitting it, the relative cost is easily ascertained.

While at the present price the crop is a profitable one, this is by no means certain. The growers are in the hands of the canners, and must take just what they are disposed to give, as there is no other market. Without the canner the plants might as well be plowed up, from the fact that the production, being so great could not be disposed of. Asparagus, like strawberries, must be sold as soon as cut, because of its perishable nature, and there is so much grown now that it is not possible to consume it when fresh. This was shown plainly last year, when, during the ten days it was being cut before the canners commenced operations, a portion of the time it did not pay the expense of shipping. Canners contract only for what they can handle between May 1 and July 1, packing about 6000 cans per day.—American Agriculturist.

There are 19,146,420 acres of timber lands in the Southern States, and the average yield of these forrests is 2000 feet per acre.

An Industrious Yellow-Hammer.

William R. O'Neil, of the Pacific vinegar factory, noticed a yellow-hammer industriously at work one day recently on the siding of the factory building. Mr. O'Neil watched the bird for some time, and inside of an hour it had cut a round hole two or three inches in diameter through the inch planking. Mr. O'Neil is not a mean man, and, if the bird cared to make its home in his vinegar factory, why, it was all right. Next day, however, he noticed that the yellow-hammer was engaged on another hole. "It's for a back door," thought the owner of the building. But after it had finished the back door it cheerfully went to work on other holes, probably for windows. By the time there were fifteen holes in the side of the factory Mr. O'Neil concluded that the yellow-hammer was taking liberties with his property. So he obtained permission from the Chief of Police to shoot it. For a whole day the office boy and Mr. O'Neil's brother banged away without feazing the little bird, and it was finally necessary to employ an expert marksman to bring it down. The marksman charged fifty cents for his services, and Mr. O'Neil also lost the best part of a day nailing boards over the holes in the planking.—Portland Oregonian.

A Fitting Monument to a Famous Mother of Trotters.

Green Mountain Maid, writes Hamilton Busbey, in Scribner, had sixteen colts and died in 1888. On a hill at Stony Ford, overlooking the Wallkill Valley, and matching in grandeur the bold front of the Shawangunk range in the distance, she was buried, and the spot is marked by a tall shaft of red granite with this inscription at the base:

IN REMEMBRANCE
OF
GREEN MOUNTAIN MAID,
The Great Mother of Trotters and Producer of Trotters.
BORN, 1862; DIED, 1888,
AT
STONY FORD,
The Birthplace of all her Children
DAM OF
(1887) ELECTIONEER.

Prospero	2.20	Elaine	2.20
Dame Trot	2.22	Mansfield	2.23
Storm	2.26¾	Antonio	2.28¾
Miranda	2.32	Elista	2.20¾
Elite	—	Elise	—
Elsa	2.28	Paul	—

(1887) Lancelot, 2.23.
Also Grandam of Norlaine, one-year-old record 2.31½.
This stone was erected, A. D. 1889,
BY CHARLES BACKMAN,
On the spot dedicated to her worth and honored by her dust.

Who Are Hustlers Here?

"I used to think New York life was one fitful fever forever," said a man whose business has brought him here to live. "I believed every one hustled and hurried and never had time for anything. In those days I was coming to New York once in a while on business, and I caught the fever and rushed from place to place, as the old woman said, 'like a hen with her head cut off.' Then I'd go back to my Peaceful Valley, worn out with my wrestle with the metropolis.

"But now I see I was wrong. I was the only hustler, unless other visitors to town be excepted. The real New Yorker doesn't rush. I observe. He is the one who suddenly stands stock still in a moving crowd, who bears to the left, and by dint of firmly-set shoulders and as firmly-set nerve is able to keep the wrong side. Old New Yorkers may say this is a libel, but I can't help it. I insist that I and my fellow callers were the only original hustlers."—New York Press.

A Novel Street Sweeper.

Indianapolis is operating a pneumatic street sweeper with great success. It consists of an engine mounted on wheels and drawn by horses. The engine works a blower and a funnel-shaped hood hangs down under the wagon, with its mouth near the street surface. The current of air made by the blower sucks the dust and dirt up into the wagon, where it is carried to the furnace and there destroyed.

One of these machines (four of them are in operation and more being built) will sweep 136 squares of 10,000 square feet each in twelve hours. This means about ten miles of travel. The machine is operated by three horses and two men. Two two-horse wagons haul away the sweepage of three machines. The gutters are swept by the machine also. The weight of the machine, with men, coal and water, is 6500 pounds.—New York Journal.

Importance of the Celery Crop.

It is now nearly twenty years since celery was first shipped from Michigan, but it is only ten years since the business assumed mammoth proportions. Within a radius of four miles of Kalamazoo 3000 acres of marsh land are adapted to this crop. Seed for the first crop is sown either in hotbeds or in greenhouses early in March, the plants are set out in May and the crop harvested in July. A second crop is set out in June to be harvested in August, while plants for winter use are set during the last of July or the 1st of August. The crops for summer use are bleached with either boards or paper, while that for winter use is hilled up with earth. In Kalamazoo County alone the celery industry gives employment to fully 2000 persons, and the daily shipments in the height of the season aggregate between forty and fifty tons.—Chicago Record.

Paid $5000 Rent Each Week.

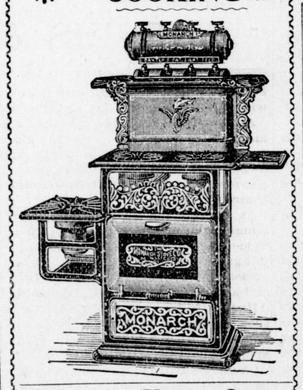
The late Baron Hirsch once rented Lord Walsingham's historic place in Suffolk, England, for eight weeks, paying $20,000 for that period. As he remained there but one month, his rent was equal to $5000 a week for the time the palace was occupied.

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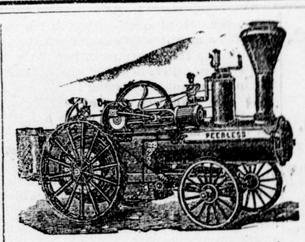


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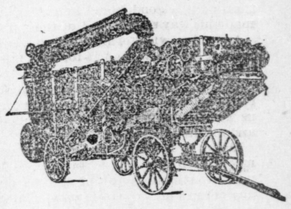
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