The Fuel of the World.

Queer Expedients of Man to Make Artificial Heat — Leather, Hay, Corn, Dried Fish, Mummies, and Bones are Some of the Fuels in Use — Man and the Fire-making Animal.

The fuel question is becoming more and more a problem of economy, as one may see by the number of contrivances patented recently for cheapening the cost of this necessary of life. Some of these ideas suggested by ingenious Yankees are very interesting. One of them is for using cobs soaked in petroleum, while another inventor proffers the notion of cutting grasses and weeds while green and pressing them into compact blocks. He says that such blocks might be employed to advantage for building and fencing, and this could be done without impairing their eventual usefulness for burning.

Most of the artificial fuels thus far patented are devices for the utilization of coal dust. Of these there are hundreds. One inventor proposes to mix together clay, molasses and water, adding coal dust and petroleum to the combination. Another idea is for a mixture of sawdust, Irish moss, asbestos fibre, and burnt limestone. These are to be boiled and finally made with coal dust into bricks, the fibre of the asbestos and gluten from the moss helping to keep the stuff compact. There is a patent for bricks without coal dust, composed of ashes and sawdust, saturated with petroleum and covered with rosin. Yet another kind is made of cut straw, chaff and petroleum waste, combined with peat. Some of the more curious ingredients for artificial fuels, are clam shells, charred garbage, corn meal, wheat flour, sugar, sea weeds, broken glass, lard, tar, and leaves. Exclusive rights have been taken out for the manufacture of a compound of powdered charcoal, and finely cut cork. This, it is stated, burns very slowly, and gives off a great deal of heat, being suitable for the sick room.

One of the most interesting of the patented fuels is a brick or a cartridge of highly porous clay which is to be soaked in kerosene and put into the kitchen stove when wanted. The housewife has only to touch a match to it and the fire is ready for cooking. No laborious preliminary process of kindling is required before breakfast can be prepared. At first blush the idea seems to be a delightful one, but after few trials it is discovered that soot is given off in such quantities from the burning bricks as to blacken everybody and everything in the kitchen. In France pressed bricks of tannery waste are used by economical housekeepers to keep up fires at a slow rate of combustion. All over Europe bricks of coal dust are largely employed for running locomotives. In Japan charcoal is ground and made into balls with ashes for cheap fuel.

Some of the materials used for fuel in various parts of the world seem extraordinary. In certain shoemaking towns in Massachusetts, such as Lynn, there are some very poor people who burn nothing else but leather chips from one end of the winter to the other. They get them from the factories by the wheelbarrow load. Such chips, of course, smolder with a great deal of smoke. They form incandescent masses, which have to be broken up from time to time with the poker. Nearly all the sawdust from saw mills everywhere is utilized for fuel. But one must go to Utah in order to find hay put to the same purpose. There the Mormons have peculiar stove ovens constructed for the employment of hay. They twist the hay into tight wisps, and at night they fill the fire-box of the stove with it as full as possible, closing the damper and permitting it to smolder all night. This is for cooking, but they warm their houses also by means of sheet-iron boxes with burning hay.

In the great corn belt, in rural districts of Indiana and Illinois, people who live far from railway and cannot procure coal or wood, often use corn for fuel. This was more commonly done when the land was virgin and produced enormous crops. Maize is a first-rate fuel and makes a rousing hot fire. The employment of corn cobs for the same purpose is very general. Dried manure is utilized for fuel all over the world, and from Peru to Asia Minor and the plateaus of Thibit. It is used in this way to such an extent in India that the authorities are making great efforts to stop the practice. What cattle and other browsing animals take from the soil ought to go back to it, instead of which it is burned and is lost forever. Thus the soil is becoming steadily impoverished. The natives have given up the practice to some extent, but they persist in using manure for cooking, because, they say, that nothing else gives the same flavor to the food. The women gather it, make it into cakes, and dry it. On the great plains of the United States the manure of cattle is utilized for fuel, just as used to be the way with buffalo "chips." The unwisdom of this custom is illustrated by the fact that the manure produced by the domesticated animals of this country is worth $2,000,000,000 annually, according to an estimate made by the Department of Agriculture.

In Egypt mummies, chiefly those of cats, ibies and other animals held sacred by the ancient inhabitants, were employed within recent years for running trains between Cairo and Alexandria. Dried fishes, particularly the salmon, have been, and are perhaps to this day, employed to some extent as fuel by the Indians in parts of British Columbia. They contain enough oil and muscular fibre to burn well. On the coast of Scotland petrels are utilized in an odd way. They are very fat, and are made to serve as candles, wicks being run through them. The employment of the candle fish of Alaska in a similar fashion is familiar. But this is a question of illumination and not of heating. The Esquimo lamp of soapstone, filled with whale oil or seal oil, is a stove.

Speaking of primitive methods of heating, it is undoubtedly a fact that man in early ages used bones to some extent as fuel, mixing them with pieces of wood. Bones contain much fatty matter, and small ones burn readily. In the desert regions of Arizona, where there is no vegetation worth mentioning, the Indians dig up for fuel the enormously developed roots of a kind of a plant. Pine cones make a fine kindling, and are utilized for that purpose all over Europe, particularly in the Black Forest and other parts of Germany. In the Old World such economies of fuel prevail as are unknown in the New. However, in Canada, certain methods are practiced in this direction which are deserving of imitation in the United States. In the warming of houses not a particle of heat is lost. The principal heating stove is in the main hall, and the pipe is not allowed to enter the chimney until it is cold. For this purpose various devices are adopted, chief among which are the "gallows pipe" and the "dumb stove." The hot air is from the escape pipe of the main stove enters the dumb stove on an upper floor and warms it, being compelled to pass through tortuous channels, and being thus retained long enough to heat the dumb stove before it finally escapes. The gallows pipe is constructed on a principle somewhat similar, and serves to warm a room. Even the surplus head from the kitchen range is utilized in the same fashion.

The attention of many scientific men has long been engaged in trying to devise some sort of apparatus for employing the sun's rays as fuel. One of the most noted of experimenters in this line is Prof. Edward Sylvester Morse. Mirrors are most commonly used to concentrate the rays of the solar orb for this purpose. In one instance not long ago success was obtained in an attempt to cook a goose by a sun stove. Unfortunately, at the conclusion of the operation, it was found that the bird was spoiled, being rendered unfit for food by the chemical action of the sun's rays. This, of course, might be avoided by shutting up the articles to be cooked in closed ovens. But the objection to the sun stove thus far found insuperable is its necessary elaborateness and consequent great cost.

Alcohol is an ideal fuel. It gives great heat, and its combustion is perfect, without smoke or other solid residuum. In burning it resolves itself into water and carbonic acid gas. Of course it is too expensive for common use, but chemistry may yet discover a way of producing it at a small fraction of its present cost. Some machinery is already run by chemicals without fire. Nature understands this. The human body is a machine run by chemical energy. Sulphate of magnesia has been employed for running engines, Cans are filled with this compound and heated. In cooling and crystalizing it gives off heat.

The average householder this winter does not pause to consider the fact that he is keeping his dwelliong warm by the sun's rays which fell upon the earth millions of years ago. Says Dr. Homer Greene: "The solar of that vanished epoch, bigger than it is to-day and hotter, brought forth even in this latitude a tropical vegetation of wonderful luxuriance. Plants of strange kinds—mosses as big as forest trees and ferns thirty feet in height—grow up richly from the clayey soil and formed dense jungles in the vast marshes which covered large areas of the surface of this planet."

"Well, Inswim, you know I'm going to be married next week?"

"So I hear. Let me congratulate you, old man."

"That's all right. Now, what I want is a little advice."

"What is it?"

"You see, you've been married quite a while, and I want to know what to call my mother-in-law."

"Don't call her. Just keep right on bluffing."

"You know what I mean. I have to address my conversation to her some times and attract her attention. I know her very well and maybe she wouldn't like to have me call her 'mother,' and I sort of hate to call her Mrs. De Pimlico. How'd you work it?"

"Oh, easy enough. Let me see, the first year I called her "Say," principally but after that I got along all right Things sorter shaped themselves."

"What did you call her after that?"

"Grandmother."

SEND to Mr. Kendall, Fairlee, and get a Good Farm Gate for $1.35.

Self a Poor Standard of Ethical Judgment.

Judging others involves judging ourselves. It is true we ought to be slow to condemn another for that which we are doing ourselves. But this does not signify that we should excuse wrong in another because we are guilty of the same wrong. It rather signifies that we should correct our own course first. Yet we are very prone to take pride in a kind of supposed charity which exclaims "I can't blame him for that, for I know I should do the same thing myself!" But the question is not whether you would do the same thing yourself, as whether you would be justified in so doing. If one man can prove another's wrong to be right on the ground that he would do the same thing himself, the one-half of mankind could exonerate the other half and prove all wrongs to be right. He who passes moral judgments, must begin with a standard apart from and above himself. Otherwise—standards, judgments, morals, and all—will decline. If one finds his neighbor in the right or in the wrong, he must see him wrong or right, not because of any likeness to or difference from himself, but because of his relation to a standard above all.

FACTS FOR FARMERS.

Bear down hard on the food crops, and raise all possible that will save buying or exchange.

Warm stabling saves hay, grain and flesh of animals. It is the difference between profit and loss.

No one thing adds so much to the profitableness and selling advantage of a farm as fruit and shade trees.

It is an indespensable duty we owe to ourselves and to our prosperity to beautify, adorn and make attractive the farm.

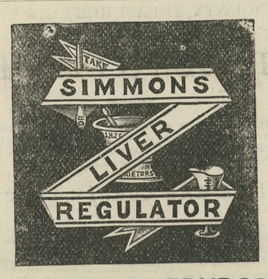
Cows pay in proportion as they are selected with care, fed with judgment, and their product of milk worked up with skill and nicety.

Clean up the premises about the buildings. It is no honor or credit to have the yards littered up with old wagons, sleds, broken farming tools, wood, etc., with thistles, brambles, and briers growing up among them.

A poor farmer cannot conceal the fact that he is a poor farmer. His crops tell it to the world. His fences bespeak it; his stock show it. It cannot be hidden or covered up. It sticks out as plain as an old hat in a broken pane of glass.

One great cause of failure among the farmers of this country lies in suddenly rushing from one business to another, without giving any branch of farm economy a fair trial.

"I FELL INTO the habit years ago," says Horace Bushnell, "of talking with God, and it becomes so natural that in all my open spaces I do it without much thought. I talk myself often to sleep at night and open the morning, as it were. It is not supplication, ejaculation or adoration, but a friendly way of contemplation and personal intercourse.'



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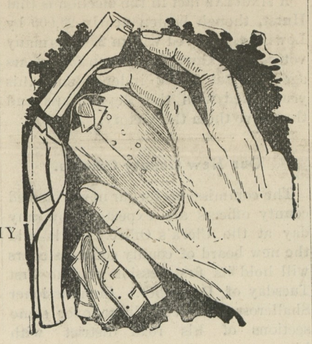
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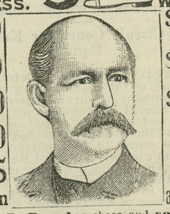
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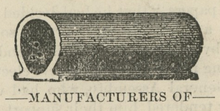
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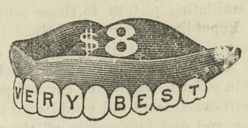
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