STILL POND FARMERS' CLUB!

STILL POND, FEBRUARY 24. 1897.

The Still Pond Farmers' Club held its regular meeting today at the residence of Mr. W. D. Pennington, commencing at one o'clock as per previous agreement. The ladies held their separate session until 3 o'clock, then in joint session until adjournment. This arrangement worked very well and has many advocates in the club, and I do not doubt it will be made the permanent arrangement for the future as it takes the member from home but half a day instead of all day, and gives about the same time to the business of the club. After being called to order, the minutes were read and corrected in regard to a farmers' market in Philadelphia, it having been ascertained that there was a market house in West Philadelphia owned and occupied by the farmers of Chester county, the minutes were then approved. The host then extended a welcome to all present in lieu of an address, after which questions were declared in order.

Mr. E. B. Pennington said he would like to know if Prof. Robinson was correct when he said the retail dealers in farm produce made fifty per cent. in their business. No exact information was at hand, but in view of the excessive competition between the retailers in the large cities, the perishable nature of much of their stock and the immense supply, made the Professor's statement appear an extreme one, and the case was remanded for a further hearing when other testimony than expert may be heard. In connection with the above subject several members took occasion to denounce the practice of many commission firms of being buyers and shippers of produce sent to them to be sold on commission, as it was deemed by the growers that in such cases the best interests of both parties could not be served at the same time, and they were not willing that the buying side of the commission house should lose anything on their behalf, therefore they had resolved to ship no produce to houses of that description.

The next question was: Is it wise to try to grow potatoes on the same ground two years in succession? Mr. E. B. Pennington said he could not say as to its wisdom but he knew of several good reasons for not doing it. In the first place the ground just vacated by a crop of potatoes was the best prepared piece of ground on the farm for wheat to be followed by grass; secondly, by selecting a good piece of clover sod, much smoother and better potatoes could be raised with fertilizer alone than on a bare piece of ground where manure would have to be used, and then the bugs, too, were not apt to be so bad as on the old patch. He said the first requisite for a crop of potatoes was that the ground should be good and nearly or quite level.

Information was then asked for in regard to several varieties of apples, one of the members stating that he wished to finish planting a plot of ground in that fruit. The Yellow Transparent and Early Ripe, came in for favorable mention. The balance were varieties recommended by the club and published last fall.

Raspberries were the next theme and occupied considerable time. It was asked if Black Residuum was a fertilizer? After some discussion it was concluded that its fertilizing properties were very limited, but it was thought to have some value as an insecticide. One of the leading growers said that the reason raspberries winter-killed was because they lost their foliage in August when they should hold their leaves until frost came. He intended to spray with Bordeaux mixture and see what effect that would have.

The club then took a five minute recess. The ladies came in and the joint session was called to order. Questions were again taken up.

The first was: Are rose bugs destructive to fruit? Answer in the affirmative, especially to grapes. The remedy is a weak Bordeaux mixture.

The following questions were then read and discussed: 1. "Does the old adage, 'where there is a will there is a way' always hold good?" 2. "Why are Armenian outrages allowed to continue without Christian intervention?" 3. "Is the course of events ordered and controlled by an Over-ruling Providence?"

It was then asked, "Can the farmers fix the price of farm labor?" This was discussed for nearly half an hour. I was prevented from hearing all of the discussion, but I gathered enough to learn that under present conditions the farmer is as helpless in this matter as he is in fixing the selling price of his produce. Several of the speakers thought that the price of farm produce demanded a reduction of wages, yet they saw no practicable way in which it could be done, as the refusal of any of them to pay schedule rates would leave him without labor. The laborer would prefer to remain idle rather than bring down upon himself the hatred of his fellows, and then the farmer must have his labor when it is needed. He cannot hold off and wait for it to come to terms. It would be useless for him to plant his corn in July, even if he could get the labor then at half price. This club has several times been accused of setting the price of farm labor and also of setting the selling price of farm produce. I wish the parties having such ideas in their heads could have heard the discussion of this question by practical farmers. I think they would have learned something worthy of their careful consideration.

The next question was, "Is it wise to sell stock and produce and accept in payment checks from strangers?" This question more particularly referred to those parties who were buying stock and giving checks for same on some distant bank, thus enabling them to sell the stock and deposit the money before the checks would be presented for payment. They were simply doing business on the farmer's capital, and if through some untoward circumstance disaster were met with, why the farmer in most cases would be the sufferer. This practice was condemned as unbusiness-like, and it was advised that in lieu of money the farmer should accept nothing but certified checks. The custom of furnishing canneries with free capital in the shape of tomatoes, corn and fruit, was also condemned, and the numerous heavy losses incurred by the farmers of the county in recent years, were object lessons for those who seemed only too willing to trust comparative strangers for large amounts and for longer terms than they would their own neighbors. The practice, too, of shipping produce to unknown commission men who often quote high prices, was included in the unwise things farmers are continually doing.

The regular question, "What advantage is to be derived from the farmers' institute?" was then taken up and discussed. The institute met with general approval, and it was thought that much good would be derived from the instruction of men trained in the different branches of agriculture. It was admitted that its usefulness depended altogether upon the support given it by the farmers themselves. The club then selected the question, "Can we grow peaches again on the same ground that has been affected by yellows?" for discussion at its next meeting, which will be held at the residence of Mr J. R. Jarrell, on the first Thursday in April, at ten o'clock A. M The club then adjourned. ANNIE ROONEY.

FARM TALKS IN SEASON.

Turning Cows to Grass—June Borers—Stable Manure.

It is a mistake to turn cows on rye or early grass before sufficient growth has been made by the green food to permit of its being used with but little liability of causing scouts. Cows that are in full flow of milk will quickly diminish the quantity if there is a sudden change of food. It is a temptation to the farmer to allow his cows on the pasture or rye field on the first opportunity, but in so doing caution must be exercised. The first day only a few minutes should suffice, the time to be extended every day until the animals become accustomed to the change from dry to green food. To turn a herd of cows on young rye and permit the animals to eat as much as they may prefer, is to incur a risk of loss of milk, as well as bowel disease in the stock.

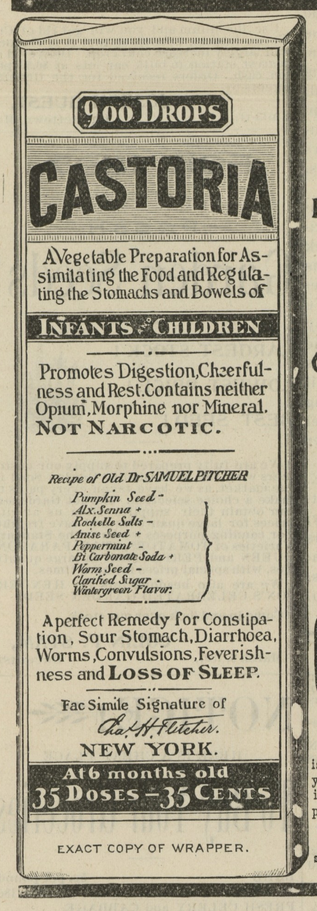
The borers will begin to attack peach trees in May and the apples trees in June. One remedy is to apply coal tar around the trunk of each tree, digging away the earth six or eight inches, and after the application returning the earth to the tree, extending the tar a foot or more above the level of the ground. This should be done as soon as the condition of the ground permits, repeating the application so as to cover every portion of the tree. Do not use kerosene on peach trees. If preferred, the trees may be wrapped with tarred paper, which will be held in position by the earth or may be fastened with a string.

All stable manures will be improved if potash, in some form, is added, especially of the potash salts. Kainit has been found useful for this purose. It is crude sulphate of potash, and contains a large proportion of salt. It will arrest the escape of ammonia and prove valuble of itself when applied on the land. It is also excellent on land infested with grubs, though not a complete remedy for such pests. It is cheap and should be used more extensively where manure is being saved.

New novelties are being offered every year in fruits and vegetables, but some of them are old varieties under other names. In procuring seeds purchase only from reliable houses.—*Philadelphia Record.*

A BRAN MASH, composed of bran and linseed meal, scalded, should be given occasionally to cows and horses that have been fed principally on hay and fodder, in order to regulate the bowels.

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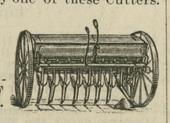
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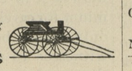
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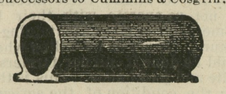
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By order of the Board of Commissioners.

n28-3t. W. H. LAMBERT, JR., CLERK.

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