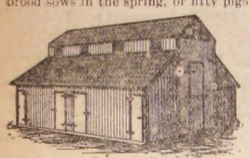
AGRICULTURAL TOPICS.

A FEW SUGGESTIONS FOR OUR RURAL READERS.

How to Keep Sweet Potatoes—The Care of Tulips—Convenient Hoisting Apparatus—Caring for the Corn Crop—A Fur-rower and Marker, Etc.

Substantial House for Swine.

As many farmers have requested a description of my hog-house, I will answer the request through the American Agriculturist, writes A. H. Shelton. The house is built for eight brood sows in the spring, or fifty pigs



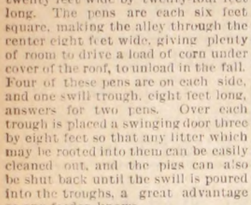
PERSPECTIVE VIEW OF PIGGERY.

in the fall, and furnishes plenty of room for this number. The size is twenty feet wide by twenty-four feet long. The pens are each six feet square, making the alley through the center eight feet wide, giving plenty of room to drive a load of corn under cover of the roof, to unload in the fall. Four of these pens are on each side, and one swill trough, eight feet long, answers for two pens. Over each trough is placed a swinging door three by eight feet, so that any litter which may be rooted into them can be easily cleaned out, and the pigs can also be shut back until the swill is poured into the troughs, a great advantage as any feeder knows.

There are little doors from each pen into the alley also into the yards on the sides of the house. These yards should have a board floor, unless the ground is very sandy and well drained. A small pen near a hog-house becomes a mortar bed, after every rain, and the object of the small yards outside is to give early pigs sunshine and more chance for exercise than a six by six pen affords. Over each pen under the upper roof is a small window to admit air and light. This slides on the scantling which supports the lower roof.

The outside posts are only four feet high, and the center posts eight feet. The roof is boarded and shingled.

The house is inclosed with No. 4 boards, then paper and drop-siding are put on to keep out frost in winter. Large doors at each end can be



GROUND PLAN OF PIGGERY.

opened when occasion requires, but for every day use a small door, thirty by seventy-eight inches, is placed at either end. A well and pump should be placed where most convenient so that no delay will occur when feeding time comes. There is but little trouble to provide places for grain and meal, but a bountiful supply of water is quite as important and often neglected. The cost of the house with lumber at twenty dollars per thousand, and shingles at three and one-half dollars is about one hundred dollars. Several loads of sand or gravel may be profitably dumped into the pigyards each year.

Keeping Sweet Potatoes.

Regard must be had to the proper growing and handling of sweet potatoes in order to insure success in their keeping. They should be grown on soil suited to them, and early enough to fully mature in season, and when harvested handled without bruising. They should be planted early enough to mature before frost for tubers of frost bitten vines are doubtful keepers. Dig them when the ground is dry, if possible, that they may be dry and clean. Then lay them in a dark, cool room, or at once store them away in a frost-proof cellar or storehouse. The best manner to store them here is to put them in broad, shallow boxes (shelves will do). These may be placed one above another with a small space between them to give better ventilation. A light covering of dry sand or earth, will add something to their preservation, as it will serve to keep the potatoes at a more uniform temperature, and absorb the moisture arising from them. The place of storage should be dry and have a uniform temperature, and that at about 35 or 40 degrees. Potatoes which have fully matured are thus stored in shallow layers, and kept fairly above frost and moisture will seldom fail to keep well.

Choice of Breeds.

The man who goes out hunting for the best breeds of live stock without any references whatever to his environments is hardly up to snuff. The best breed is largely such simply because it is best suited to some particular purpose, and whether or not that purpose is well filled depends upon local surroundings. Let the stockman study well his conditions as to grasses, grains, soil, climate, markets, etc., and he is not apt to make a mistake in the choice of breeds.—Nebraska Farmer.

Securing the Corn Crop.

Corn should be cut for fodder as soon as the kernels begin to glaze on most of the larger ears. At this time if no frosts have occurred the leaves are mostly green, and if put in stocks of from thirty-six to forty hills each and well tied at the top, the fodder will cure in good condition. The juices in the stalks will be sufficient to ripen the unmatured ears, so that husking may commence in earnest in about fifteen days. In dry sunny weather it will pay to leave the corn-fodder spread on the ground for a day or so to dry out and harden, more especially if to put away in large bulk. It will also be found a good plan to sort the corn when husking, removing all silk and husks from the best, while the small ears, and that intended for immediate feeding, may be hauled without this precaution. If the best corn is cribbed without removing the litter it will make a fine nesting place for rats and mice. When husking corn-fodder many persons jerk the husks so spitefully as to remove them entirely, and being loose and short they are not bound in the bundle but left in the field to become weather beaten, dirty and useless as fodder; hence, caution should be exercised on this point. The best ears should be selected for seed. As the stalks contain a vast amount of moisture they should not be placed in large stacks or in close barns until late in the season as they will be quite certain to heat and mildew, unless a layer of dry hay, or straw, be placed between each layer of bundles.

Planting and Care of Tulips.

The bulbs of tulips are solid, fleshy, from an inch to an inch and a half in diameter, and rather irregular in shape, as indicated in the accompanying sketch. They should be set

about three inches deep and six inches apart, in rich, well-pulverized and well-drained soil. The best time to prepare the bed is in September or October. At this season the bulbs are entirely dormant and may be obtained from any florist. After planting, a few mixed flower seeds of hardy annuals may be sown over the bed. These will come into bloom after the tulip flowers fade, and will prove interesting and attractive. Those who are fond of bedding plants can plant the bed with Geraniums or Petunias after the bulbous flowers fade, if such a display is preferred. They are of such a character that they will thrive in almost any soil or situation, and bloom satisfactorily if they have but half a chance.—Farm and Fireside.

A Remarkable Apple Tree.

According to a report of the Committee on Fruits at the State Fair meeting of the Ohio Horticultural Society, Mr. Pierce of Miami County, presented an apple grown upon the sole surviving tree of one of the earliest orchards planted in that county, the tree being now about two feet in diameter, and still vigorous and very productive. It is supposed to be upward of eighty years. The specimens were large, of very bright crimson color with numerous small white spots; very smooth and attractive in appearance. It was stated that the first specimens began to ripen in July, at which time there would be many apples not larger than hickery nuts on the tree, which would ripen in succession until picking time, in the fall, when there would be quite a proportion which would keep till January. Some of the specimens shown were fully ripe, while others were quite green. The quality was so poor that the majority of the committee would not recommend it for propagation, but its size and beauty were such that it would doubtless meet a ready sale.

Feeding Corn for the Best Profit.

I am convinced that it pays, especially when steamed, to grind corn and cob for cattle, writes an experienced live stock and dairy man. I am not quite clear whether corn or oats is best for sheep; I know corn is good. For store sheep, two fair feeds of it daily with plenty of good straw are sufficient; for fatters, hay with three feeds of the mixed meals, and dry bran with plenty of water. For cows—not using ensilage—I prefer cut and steamed cornstalks, with corn meal and bran, half of each by weight, liberally sprinkled on. In the absence of the steamer, I put on the cut stalks, slightly moistened, a regular ration of corn meal; some prefer it put on dry. For fattening steers I prefer the scalded fodder plentifully basted with corn and oat meal. The meal will do well enough with hay and no doubt with ensilage. Corn thus fed, with close care, I have found to work wonders. Colts—except fillies—will keep well on coarse fodder with a little corn twice a day.

About Setting Hens.

There will surely be trouble with a setting hen if other fowls are permitted to lay in her nest. There will be objections on the part of the breeding hen for which she is not to be blamed. And in the struggle it is certain that some eggs will be broken, when it is probable that one of the hens will eat the broken eggs. The setting hen will be apt to leave the nest when it is occupied by the intruder, and she may not return, when the eggs may cool and the chicks either die in the shell or soon after they emerge, from weakness. The only satisfactory way is to have a separate place for the brooding hens and to keep each one in a separate pen, from which she cannot get out, and to feed and water her in it. The pen should be three by two feet, giving the hen room to stretch her legs when she comes off to feed. The next box should be low and be well soaked with kerosene when it is prepared for use. This will insure freedom from lice to the hen and save a world of trouble and disappointment and consequent vexation.

One Man Can Do It.

The cut explains a practical method for one man to hoist grain, such as corn, etc., into the corn-house in a bushel basket, says a correspondent of Farm and Home. Two ropes are necessary; one on the bottom of the basket, as well as the hoisting rope.

HOISTING APPARATUS.

The bottom rope will invert the basket every time, inside of the granary, and between the two ropes the basket returns out of the window automatically. This enables one man to stand on the ground and put a large number of baskets of grain out of sight in a very few minutes.

Treatment of the Garden.

If possible all the weeds, grass and other stuff should be burned off the garden, and it should also be plowed late in the fall if possible. If this is done there is very little danger from cut worms and similar pests the following year, and a great many things can be sown in the spring that will have to wait until very late if the ground has to be plowed in the spring. Above all things the garden spot must be rich. The best manure and a great deal of it will be needed if there is to be a good garden, and pay for the work and care needed. A half acre of a good garden is worth ten acres of corn, and requires about the same amount of work.

Sheep Shearings.

V-SHAPED troughs are best for feeding grain.

A LAMB need not be despised, because it is small.

SHEEP may be made the gleaners of the farm; the savers of waste.

TO RAISE early lambs for market the ewes must be of good healthy stock.

IF raising early lambs is to be undertaken select out the breeding ewes in good season.

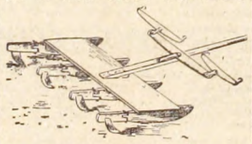
SOME breeders claim that early lambs grow faster, are healthier, and make larger sheep than late ones.

ONE advantage with sheep is that if properly managed they eat their food cleaner than horses or cattle.

GENERALLY with wool shipped to market it requires a larger time to get returns than with almost any other farm product.

A Handy Tool.

The back figure shows a piece of plank with cultivator tooth inserted. When you want furrows made, bolt one of these behind each runner.



FURROW AND MARKER.

Run a board across the rear ends of each runner and bolt it to each attachment to keep them down and in a line. When using it, lay a board from the main plank to the rear board and stand on it. The further back you stand the deeper the marker goes. I have used this for a number of years and pronounce it a regular short cut marker and furrower.—M. Murphy, in Practical Farmer.

Hints to Housekeepers.

TO PREVENT oil from oozing over the top of the burner, turn the wick down after the light is out.

AT night, after a day's traveling, rub the face thoroughly with vaseline or cold cream. The grease will prove a more effective cleaner than soap and water.

THE thimble was first called the "thumb bell," because it was used on the thumb instead of the finger, as at present. The word soon evolved into thumble. The word thimble is comparatively modern.

AN ingenious female has hit upon the idea of a "dress album," in which tiny cuttings of every gown belonging to its owner are to be chronologically arranged under the dates on which they were purchased.

STRAWBERRIES are so called from the fact that they were anciently brought to market strung upon straws. Raspberries are also called from the peculiar rasping roughness of their leaves. Raspis-berry originally.

THERE is nothing more useful about the kitchen than sal soda. It will, dissolved in a little water, remove grease from anything, and there is nothing like it for cleaning hair brushes, which, by the way, should be cleaned more frequently than they are.

IT is comparatively easy to exterminate black ants. The little red ants are, however, very hard to get rid of. A little powdered hellebore sprinkled around at night will as a rule quickly exterminate them. Care must be taken in using the hellebore, and in brushing it away in the morning, as it is poisonous. Powdered sulphur will frequently answer the purpose.

HOW THE PROPERTY IS TAXED.

General Rate Adopted by the State Board of Equalization.

The State Board of Equalization this year assesses ninety-nine railroad corporations, with 9,435 miles of main track, an aggregate of $77,108,390, which is in the neighborhood of $2,500,000 in excess of the assessment of the same class of property last year.

The total number of corporations other than railroads assessed is 394, the total capital stock reported $120,580,801; equalized value of capital stock, $15,-933,182. Total local assessments, $11,-287,827; net assessment, $6,549,202. Following are some of the large corporations, with the equalized value of the capital stock and the net assessment after deducting the local assessments:

	Equalized value.	Net assessm't.
Chicago, Wilmington & Vermillion Coal	$165,000	$76,635
Spring Valley Coal	160,000	54,583
Central Union Telephone	600,000	.....
Chicago & S. S. R. T. Railroad	125,000	25,310
Chicago Arc Light & Power	100,000	.....
Chicago City Railway	1,300,000	622,578
Chicago Edison Company	100,000	.....
Chicago Gaslight & Coke	725,000	102,193
Chicago Passenger Railway	150,000	49,531
Chicago Telephone	500,000	314,787
Chi. W. D. Railway	860,000	.....
Consumers' Gas Co., Chicago	250,000	58,689
Corn Exchange Bank, Chicago	200,000	37,500
Merchants' Loan & T., Chicago	340,000	105,625
Miss. R. B. R. & T'll Co., Chicago	160,000	35,000
North Chicago City Railway	450,000	288,941
Pacific Hotel	440,025	.....
People's G. L. & Coke, Chicago	350,000	49,659
Pullman Palace Car Co	1,891,874	851,060
Union St. Y. & T. Co., Chicago	1,540,000	.....
Keokuk & H. Br. Co., Hamilton	140,000	44,000
Mount Olive Coal	15,000	7,756
St. Louis Merchants' Bridge Co	225,000	55,000
St. Louis Nat. St. Yds., E. St. Louis	283,000	152,423
Wiggins' Ferry, E. St. Louis	600,000	272,644

Where no assessment was made the local assessment exceeded the equalized value of the capital stock. The following statement shows the rate per cent. of addition or deduction adopted by the State Board of Equalization for the year 1892:

COUNTIES.	P'S'L PROPTY		LANDS.		LOTS.	
	Add.	Deduct.	Add.	Deduct.	Add.	Deduct.
Adams	1		33		7	29
Alexander			2		25	23
Bond						
Boone			1		2	1
Brown			4		2	
Bureau			15		15	15
Calhoun			32		17	10
Carroll			14		14	15
Cass			14		19	15
Champaign	8		10			
Christian	1		10		6	5
Clark	1		45			5
Clay	25					
Clinton			7		1	
Coles				14		14
Cook	25		24		23	
Crawford	25			2		
Cumberland	2		7			
De Kalb			10		10	9
De Witt			10		6	5
Douglas	8			5		
Du Page				24		24
Edgar			1	10	2	1
Edwards			10	23	5	
Effingham			10	30		5
Fayette			10	20		10
Ford			20	15		13
Franklin	18			25		15
Fulton	7			10		
Gallatin			8	38		10
Greene	3			6		19
Grundy			10			
Hamilton	13		21		15	
Hancock			3		4	
Hardin			33	10		40
Henderson			14	11		
Henry			10		11	11
Iroquois			5		10	5
Jackson	2		11			5
Jasper	9			6		20
Jefferson	15			30		20
Jersey			11			5
Joe Daviess			10		10	9
Johnson			27		18	30
Kane			14		13	14
Kankakee			5		5	10
Kendall					20	
Knox						
Lake			10		19	18
La Salle					15	15
Lawrence	11		11			20
Lee			14		13	15
Livingston			5		5	5
Logan			2		20	
Macon					13	15
Macoupin	10		20			
Madison			12	15		15
Marion	1		2			10
Marshall				12		15
Mason			10		10	10
Massac			27		31	25
McDonough			6		7	10
McHenry			25		21	22
McLean						
Menard			40		25	10
Mercer	15			9		
Monroe					3	
Montgomery			5	10		5
Morgan			40		25	40
Moultrie			10			10
Ogle	11			9	10	
Peoria			5	19	10	10
Perry	14			2		5
Piatt				25		
Pike	1		3		10	
Pope				1		
Pulaski			9		21	22
Putnam			5		5	5
Randolph	2		2		3	
Richland	13		3			
Rock Island	1		19			30
Saline	9		13			10
Sangamon				25		30
Schuyler			5	30		15
Scott			5	12		17
Shelby			16	13		35
Stark				9		
St. Clair				17		
Stephenson			7		24	
Tazewell			10			19
Union			4	11		11
Vermillion			14	12		12
Wabash			3	8		10
Warren			7	5		
Washington						
Wayne			3	45		
White			37	61		20
Whiteside			12	12		12
Will				1		1
Williamson			15			
Winnebago			14	15		15
Woodford			20		20	19

Following are the assessments of some of the roads:

	Total assess't.		Total assess't.
B. & O. & C.	$ 224,107	T. I. & I.	$ 327,999
B. H. of C.	698,587	T. C.	858,378
C. V. & C.	1,162,405	J. L. & St. L.	576,267
C. & A.	5,577,928	K. & S.	517,672
C. B. & N.	737,402	L. R. & W.	719,654
C. B. & Q.	8,763,693	L. S. & M. S.	996,848
C. & C. T.	144,474	L. E. & St. L.	821,553
C. & E. I.	2,127,658	L. & N.	1,026,167
C. & G. T.	726,631	M. C.	535,736
C. H. & W.	402,936	M. & O.	901,334
C. & I.	667,823	N. O. & St. L.	1,454,009
C. M. & N.	822,871	M. & M.	2,484,917
C. M. & St. P.	2,980,792	P. D. & E.	747,384
C. & N. W.	7,734,521	P. & P.	1,765,760
C. & N. W.	5,269,743	P. & P. U.	880,260
C. P. & St. L.	646,784	P. C. C. & St. L.	1,338,668
C. R. I. & P.	3,600,017	R. W. & O.	1,060,170
C. S. P. & C.	2,598,298	R. I. & P.	864,042
C. St. P. & K. C.	1,065,250	St. L. A. & T. H.	821,461
C. & S. S. & C.	96,803	St. L. K. I. & C.	1,563,963
C. & S.	525,823	T. H. & I.	1,796,559
C. U. T.	139,431	T. H. & I.	462,015
C. & W. I.	1,420,469	T. St. L. & K. C.	129,488
C. C. C. & St. L.	2,554,085	U. S. Y. & T. C.	414,096
E. J. & E.	1,009,401	W. C.	346,998
G. T. J.	471,171	Wabash	5,156,809
I. D. & W.	416,820		

Seamen's Wages Increased by the Union.

At a meeting of the Seamen's Union, held at Chicago, it was decided that the wages of all seamen be increased to $3 per day, an increase of 50 cents. The new order went into effect at once. The reports received at the union headquarters indicated that all of the men were at work. Messrs. Coyle and Neuman, of Homestead, addressed the meeting. The general trend of their addresses was that the strikers at Homestead were in hard straits financially. It was voted that $500 be contributed to the strikers by the union.

ILLINOIS INCIDENTS.

SOBER OR STARTLING, FAITHFULLY RECORDED.

Fat Stock Show Indefinitely Postponed—One Quincy Murderer Sentenced to Death and Another to Life Imprisonment—Medical Men at Jacksonville.

From Far and Near.

J. N. NEDY, postmaster of West York, while watching a torchlight procession dropped dead. Disease, heart failure.

FOR stealing a $20 cow from Daniel Twohig, of Chicago, George Cooper was given two years in the penitentiary by a jury in Judge Baker's court.

SIMON JOHNSON, colored, was found guilty of murder at Quincy and sentenced to life imprisonment. Johnson went home drunk and shot his wife.

TWO MEN, giving their names as Fletcher and Sutherland, were arrested at Grayville Saturday night on the charge of passing counterfeit silver dollars.

TWELVE horses in a stable in the rear of Nos. 74 to 78 Thirty-first street, Chicago, were burned to death. The horses and the stable were owned by John Downey, and he estimates his loss at $2,500. It is not known how the fire originated.

THE Governor pardoned John Bourke, sentenced in 1882 to twenty-one years in Joliet for burglary for robbery, and Maurice, sentenced in 1890 to three years for larceny. Both men are from Cook County and both in the last stages of consumption.

AT Jacksonville a wedding in high life took place Friday evening, the contracting parties being A. L. French, cashier of the State Bank of Chapin, and Miss Ruth Joy, daughter of a wealthy stock owner in the neighborhood of Jacksonville.

AT Quincy, Ill., William J. Jamison alias Smith (colored) was sentenced to be hanged for the murder last April of ex-Supervisor Charles Aaron. Jamison was a bogus Indian doctor, and killed Aaron because the latter refused to pay for services rendered his mother for cancer.

JACKSONVILLE was visited by a large number of the medical fraternity, members of the Capital City Medical Society, who met to discuss matters pertaining to their profession. Among the topics under consideration were sanitation in small cities, typhoid fever and fractured limbs.

FRIDAY was the closing day of the Illinois Synod of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, at Petersburg. Considerable business of a miscellaneous character was disposed of and trustees of Lincoln University were elected as follows: J. E. Miller, H. E. Starkey, and Frank Hoblit, all of Lincoln. The next synod will be held at Danville in October, 1893.

AT Mount Vernon, burglars effected an entrance into William Milton's grocery store and blew open the safe, but secured no money. They took the cash register to an adjoining alley and demolished it, getting $1.50 for their trouble. Milton had taken his money to his bedroom. The work was done by experts, as the doors of the safe were blown off and no noise made. A horse and buggy is missing from the farm of John Thompson, and it is thought the thieves took them.

THE State Board of Agriculture, at its meeting at Chicago, faced the issue of the scarcity of structural iron necessary to complete the building at the Union Stock Yards, in which it was designed to hold the fat stock show. It was shown that the Carnegie strike had not only increased the price of iron to 2½ cents but had made it practically impossible to secure on any terms the material necessary for the structure. In view of this a resolution was adopted declaring the holding of the fat stock show indefinitely postponed, and extending the thanks of the board to former exhibitors, friends, and patrons of the show, through whose efforts a measure of usefulness has been attained which has placed this annual event in the front rank of American economic enterprises.

THE four mill at New Athens was burned. Loss, $40,000; insurance, $15,-000.

WILLIAM ROBINSON, a bachelor farmer of Clinton County, accidentally shot himself in the abdomen with a revolver that he did not know was loaded. He cannot recover.

T. T. FOUNTAIN, of Duquoin, is dead. In 1880 he was elected by the Republicans as a member of the Legislature. He was lieutenant in the Thirteenth Illinois Cavalry during the late war.

A SAND scow belonging to the Chicago Dredging and Dock Company ran amuck at Chicago. It brought up first against the schooner Levi Grant, nearly sinking her as the Progress was sunk at State street bridge by a scow. It then fetched up against the schooner Delos Dewolf, which was sent crashing into the schooner A. Mosher, near by. All the boats were badly damaged.

DR. REILLY, Secretary of the State Board of Health, went to Harvey, Cook County, to take steps to check an alarming epidemic of diptheria in that village. According to a letter received by Dr. Reilly from Dr. G. L. B. Rounseville, of Chicago, a rather peculiar state of affairs exists at Harlem. The letter says: In conversation with him (A. W. Kistenbroker, President of the Village Board), he informed me that he would take no notice, and that it was out of the province of the board to do anything in the matter; that the State Board of Health had sums of money appropriated for sanitary purposes, and that if they wanted to do anything they could go ahead and do it; that the present state of affairs was a blessing to the town, for then they would be anxious for the sewerage which he had tried to obtain for the town; that the very people whose families were sick and dying had opposed him in the matter, and that such sacrifices were necessary to obtain what he wanted. The schools are all closed on account of the prevailing disease. The people are sending their families out of town for fear of epidemic.

THE body of John Koerber, a youth of 15, who has been missing from his home near Freeburg for several days, was found in Richland Creek by a searching party. The boy, it is thought, fell into the stream in an epileptic fit.

THOMAS DAVIS was fatally shot at Duquoin. He went to a disreputable house accompanied by Frank Erskins, of Harrisburg. Soon after they entered the house some parties commenced stoning it and fired three shots. Tilla Leigh went to the door and fired two shots in return, when the parties on the outside fired another shot, which whizzed by her ear and struck Davis in the neck

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