

Calendar for December with days of the week and dates.

WHAT IS THE USE?

After giving the result of the election in Greenville, Spartanburg and Winnsboro, and quoting from the Carolina Spectator to the effect that 1,500 people from the country came into town on the day of election to help the dry ticket, the Greenville News triumphantly exclaims: "What is the use of trying to argue against facts like these?"

Farm, Garden & Household.

SHALL WE PRUNE IN WINTER.

There has been a vast amount of discussion as to the proper time for pruning; some insisting that it should not be done in winter, while others hold that the proper time is "when your knife is sharp." There is one season especially in which pruning should not be done, viz: during the period of active growth, from the time the buds start in spring, until buds for the next year are formed. Winter is preferred by many, as more time can be devoted to the work; and with the apple and pear, it probably does not make any difference at what period it is done between the fall of the leaf and the swelling of the buds in spring. It is not well to prune when the wood is frozen, as bad wounds and cracks may result. If young trees are taken in hand from the start, and proper attention given to forming the heads, there would be little need of severe pruning in the orchard. The too common method is, to plant an orchard and let it grow unpruned. The trees, after they begin to bear, yield fair crops for a few years, and then, when they decline and fall, pruning is suggested as a remedy. Too often the pruning is done by ignorant persons, and as a result, nearly as much wood is cut out as there is left. This great waste should be avoided. The labor of the tree, so to speak, expended to produce these numerous branches, should have been directed to the production of fruit, as it might have been had proper and timely care been given to the orchard when young. The principles of pruning are readily understood, and one should never remove a branch, large or small, without having some definite object in view.—Dr. Trimmer, in American Agriculturist for Dec.

CORN CULTURE.

To the Editor of The News and Courier:

In your issue of Saturday appears a slip expressing the opinion that deep ploughing (or working) of corn, after it is well grown, is injurious to its development and productivity. I had thought that farmers were well agreed on this point. My own opinion was formed by this experiment: In 1868 I planted a field of some five acres with corn worked in the old way with the plow. At the same time, and tending with a hoe about two tasks, was my garden. The ground here had been well turned with the plough previously to planting. No plough was again used, my light steel hoe simply kept the grass down and the surface loose. Both crops grew well. After the last ploughing the field corn shot out innumerable second-roots from the joint above ground—a necessity since the lower roots had been cut—my garden corn shot none of these. In a week or two there came up a severe wind storm. The field corn was prostrated and suffered badly; not a stalk of the garden corn, though equally exposed, was blown down. In the former the second-roots had not yet taken a good hold; in the latter the first set of roots, never having been disturbed, were too firmly set to be torn up. No one, I presume, will deny that the productivity of corn is largely dependent on its ability to stand on its feet, but is it not an abnormal act to force a plant like the Indian corn into the formation of new supports just when it is bending all its energies in the production of fruit? If this does not limit, does it not certainly curtail its productivity? A RETIRED FARMER.

PREPARING FOR SPRING IN THE GARDEN.—Wherever a crop is taken off, it will be a great gain to manure and plow or spade the land, leaving it rough during the winter. All such work as making paths, laying drains, etc., is more advantageously done now than when the press of spring work is at hand. If new frames are needed, or straw mats, or crates for marketing produce, or garden labels required; if implements are to be made, repaired or bought—whatever can be done in the present months—will save much valuable time in spring. Now, and all through the winter, add everything to the manure pile that will decompose and increase its bulk and value. Among the preparations for spring is the picking out into cold frames, the cabbage, cauliflower and lettuce plants from seeds. It is important to set the plants of cabbage and cauliflower down to the first leaf, so that the stem, the portion most readily injured by freezing, may be covered. The cabbages should not be put over the plants until there is danger of severe freezing weather. Other frames should be made ready for very early lettuce. The soil is to be spaded and enriched and made ready for planting, and the frames are filled up with leaves. If there are shutters at hand to cover them, all the better. Earth is often wanted for hot-beds, seed-boxes, etc., at a time when the ground is still frozen. Lay in a good supply of fine, rich soil, and a shed, or where it can be laid when needed.—Dr. Thayer, in American Agriculturist for Dec.

Some of the Independent papers are boasting about Ben Butler's versatility. That reminds one of the boy who boasted of his father's accomplishments. He said: "My father can do almost anything. He is a lawyer, a public man, he is an apothecary, and can pull teeth; and he is a horse doctor, and can play on the fiddle; he is a jackass at all trades."

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