THE STRIPED CUCUMBER BEETLE.

Various Ways of Protecting Plants from These Troublesome Pests.

There are few injurious insects for which more remedies and preventives have been recommended than the striped cucumber beetle—the everywhere abundant "yellow bug," with black stripes

PROTECTORS AGAINST CUCUMBER BEETLES.

along its back, which attacks squashes, cucumbers, melons and similar plants. A large proportion of these remedies are doubtless worthless, if, indeed, not positively injurious.

Obviously the only safe plan to prevent injury is to force out the insects. Of the various forms of apparatus for this purpose are the ones shown in the accompanying cuts from American Garden. The simplest method, and one largely practiced in some of the great modern gardening sections, is that of laying a piece of thin cloth over the hills before the plants are up, covering the edges of it with loose earth. This works very well while the plants are young, but is liable to cripple them if left on too long. To obviate this difficulty Professor Weed, of the Ohio experiment station, tried various methods of holding the cloth up in the middle. One of the simplest and perhaps most satisfactory methods, according to his experiments, is to take two pieces of wire and put their ends in the ground so as to form a double arch, like the center arch of a croquet ground. Over this the cloth is laid, the edges being held down by loose earth as before, and as shown in Fig. 4. Or the wires may be twisted around each other as shown in Fig. 3; or a single long wire may be used as shown in Fig. 1. A half barrel hoop makes a very good substitute for the wire, as may be seen in Fig. 2.

The best cloth found for the purpose is the lightest grade of plant cloth sold by seedsmen. This can be purchased in quantity for times or four cents a yard, and one set of covers properly cared for ought to last at least three seasons. After they have been used on the early squashes and melons they are ready for the late cucumbers. They require little storage room between seasons.

Professor Weed also tried boxes covered with this cloth (Fig. 5), and found them less desirable than the cloth, because they do not admit sunshine and air as well, so that the plants do not grow as rapidly and vigorously. When the plant reaches the top, also, it cannot lift the cloth with it, while with the cloth alone it can raise it without difficulty.

It is necessary to keep the covers on until the plants have put out five or six leaves, and perhaps in case of cucumbers and melons even longer, for the beetle

MORE PROTECTORS.

sometimes attacks them in great numbers after the covers are removed. These appliances are cheaper than the wire screens now sold by dealers, and which do very effective work for cucumbers and melons.

Ground Bones as a Fertilizer.

In a report on experiments made at the New Jersey station with ground bones as a fertilizer, it is pointed out that ground bone is both a phosphate and a nitrogenous manure, insoluble in water, but when in the soil is decomposed, and yields its constituents to the feeding plant in proportion to the furnace. It varies but little in composition, and is less liable to adulteration than most fertilizers. They, in fact, are usually pure.

Ground bones have a tendency to cake, and to avoid this the manufacturers mix no other substance, which, while aiding mechanically, reduces the chemical value of the mixture. Raw bone is most usually pure, but the fat it contains renders it less easily decomposed. Bones having served the purpose of the glue maker are low in nitrogen and very high in phosphoric acid. The method now employed of steaming the bones under pressure improves their quality without altering the amount of the plant food ingredients.

As the value of ground bones depends upon composition and their fineness, a mechanical as well as chemical analysis is required to determine their value. The farmer must determine by experiments which grade he should buy—whether, for example, pay a dollar for ten pounds of phosphoric acid in one condition, or for eighteen and a half pounds in another form. Average wood ashes are worth nine dollars per ton, but the best very much more.—Rural.

A Serious Mistake.

One of the most serious mistakes made in the management of cows, says Professor Stewart, is milking them while they are feeding. This commonly causes a serious diminution of the milk, various irritative results on the temper of the cow and the consequential permanent injury to the animal.

Necessity of Changing Seed.

Farmers should never forget the great necessity of changing seed once in three years. Seed from an adjoining farm is good, from another county is better. Last year a Michigan farmer got a dozen bushels of potatoes from New York, and planted in the same field with some of his own raising so equally fine appearing tubers of like sort, and the result was shown by a yield more than double of the home seed under identical conditions.—Field and Farm.

OLD SONG REVIVED.

The Cry That Christianity Is a Failure Raised Again Without Reason.

Recently the question has been made in the city of Boston before an audience of highly refined people, by a woman whose reputation for intelligence and culture has extended over two continents, that Christianity is a failure. Similar sentiments have been published in several popular periodicals in England and America within a few months past. These eminent writers would, doubtless, impression on the public mind that the Christian religion has recently been subjected to important practical tests, under which it has broken down so completely that no intelligent person can be other rational in it as a blessing and civilizing force.

This is an old cry. The Christian system has frequently been launched by its author and his first disciples when its enemies predicted its early failure. At every stage of its progress difficulties have insisted that its race was run and its end at hand. Now the declaration is made, as though it were something new, that Christianity has failed. One writer tells us that its dogma can never furnish a safe basis of ethics; another says the gospel is losing its power and influence; that intelligent people cannot subscribe to the doctrines of miracles, of hell, heaven and inspiration; that the masses are breaking with the churches, and scholarly ministers are drifting away from the bible; another still, grossly asserts that as a remedy for poverty, vice and crime Christianity is a failure.

When and where was our Gospel tried and found wanting? It did not fail to make its way through overwhelming opposition at the beginning, when the disciples were a mere handful and their foes were cruel, mighty and numerous. It did not fail to show divine vitality when tortured, corrupted and prostituted by worldly men to purposes of selfishness, ambition, tyranny and oppression. One of the strangest evidences that the Gospel is what it claims to be is found in the fact that, after lying buried for centuries under mountains of sensational rubbish and worthless, it came forth as fresh and vigorous as when it was first delivered to men.

Christianity has not failed to take a deep hold on the thoughts of the race, to influence and control the march of civilization. There are more Christian churches today than ever before, and they are rapidly multiplying every year. There are more Bibles in the world now than ever before, and they are studied by more people, while the foremost scholars of the world are found among the students and admirers of this book. There are more Christian homes and schools now than ever before, and Christianity is the most potent factor in modern thought, modern civilization and modern progress.—Christian Advocate.

Go Reverently.

Who can remember that while normal human conditions stimulate spiritual life, morbid human conditions may simulate supernatural visitations. In connection with all movements which touch the emotions of the soul, there is danger of excessive enthusiasm, which sometimes runs into a delusive and dangerous fanaticism. Who can try to gain the good, and avoid the excess, in which is the evil. They remember that God is wisdom as well as love; that he seeks to win and possess the whole being—physical, intellectual, aesthetic, moral, emotional, volitional, conscious; that a true revival is the restoring of the whole nature to its normal condition; that salvation is health; that a good conscience is worth more than good feeling; that good common sense must never be ignored, since it is always a wholesome element in all religious action; that one duty cannot displace or nullify another; that the steady operation of the church are not to be laid aside for special agencies; that to do the everyday service of school room, shop and kitchen is the first duty, to be crowded by no new revelation, and that by such obedience of conformity to the order of everyday life, in things secular and religious, we are best preparing our souls for all divine surprises, disclosures, illuminations and inspirations.

Who can understand that under the economy of grace all secular things are made sacred; all good and regular habits of eating, sleeping, working, studying, praying and living to be maintained in all kinds of spiritual weather; that all wholesome and common sense methods of life and work are to be employed, and that all morbid sensationalism is to be repudiated.

There are the lines in which wisdom and love work in the restoring of the dead and dying, and in the building up of the church of the redemption and the changeable bride.—Bishop J. H. Vincent in Epworth Herald.

The Power of Suffering.

The trials and afflictions of life may have a ministry for others as well as for those who are called to endure them. The sufferer in a household may lead all its members to more gentleness and sympathy with the afflicted. Or one who is called to bear a weight of trial may be so patient and brave that he may lead all who know him to perceive the sustaining power of divine grace as otherwise they would never have done. Or one may be laid aside from the work, and prayers and intercessions, which in the vigor of health he might never have thought to offer may bring down the richest blessings.—Christian Inquirer.

Perhaps.

Perhaps your Master knows what a capital physician you are, and he never means to let you become a proper be cause you do his pruning so well.—Spurgeon.

Blessed Are Those That Have Not Seen.

Our Lord said to Thomas, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed," and Peter thus testifies to his faith in the unseen saints: "Whom having not seen ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." Apes have passed since our Lord left the earth, and the history of these ages affords no excuse for lacking of confidence and devotedness.

Piety Practiced in Solitude.

Piety practiced in solitude, like the flower that blooms in the desert, may give fragrance to the winds of heaven, and delight the unbodied spirits that survey the works of God and the actions of men; but it becomes an ordination upon earthly tenets, and however free from the taints of impurity, yet wants the sacred embellishment of benevolence.—Ex.

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