TOM'S LETTER.

Now Mollie lay your knitting down, 'tis
after set 'o sun,
And soon the stars, like angel's eyes, will
peep out one by one,
From where they hide the whole day long,
deep hidden in the blue,
And look upon the evil and the good that
people do.

I've got a letter here from Tom—nay, wife
you need not start—
The boy is well, there's nothing here to
pain a mother's heart.
He says he's gathered in the grain, a good-
ly golden store;
He says he's paid the mortgage off and
laid up something more.

Well wife, tain't quite two years ago, one
sultry summer day,
When I was working in the fields and get-
ting in the hay,
A carriage drove up to the door, and
there alit a chap,
With laughing eyes, like yours, that look-
ed from underneath his cap.

He helped a little maiden out, with sunny,
gleaming hair,
And deep blue eyes that looking in you
seemed to read a prayer;
I tried to make out who they were, but
wife, I didn't know;
I couldn't make the team stand still, and
kept a hollerin' "Whoa."

I saw him pint across to me, and heard
him something say.
I couldn't make the words out, their heads
were turned away;
But then an idea struck me quick, just like
a ray 'o dawn,
Although I didn't know the girl, I knew
the boy was Tom—

My boy who ran away from home so many
years before,
Our Tom, whom we had mourned as dead
a dozen years or more.
I left the team a standing still, and threw
the whip away—
The hull they might ha' gone to smash, I
wouldn't ha' cared that day.

I reached the house before 'em wife, but
naught to you I said;
Somehow, harsh words I'd said to Tom,
kept poppin' thro' my head;
I couldn't help but think perhaps, I'd been
too quick to strike—
*I'd learned that men like horses, wife, is sel-
dom two alike.*

They never stopped to knock at all, but
open flung the door.
"Well, father, I've come back," Tom said,
"to see you all once more."
I threw my arms around his neck, broke
over all my rules,
You did the same, we laughed and cried
together—both like fools.

When all was still we found the girl with
blue eyes was Tom's wife,
A little daisy he had won to brighten all
his life,
How well we learned to love the bride; and
when they went back West,
They wanted the old birds to come and
see them in their nest.

"Go and read the letter!" why I've read
the letter thro',
Hold on, now, here's a postscript, with
perhaps a word for you,
Good gracious! what a funny thing, it
takes my breath away—
"Tell mother,"—say wife, look at me; is
my hair turning gray?

And grandma call me grandpa, just to see
how it will seem,
Oh, wife, I think I feel as big as Sheba's
famous queen.
"Tell mother"—kiss me quick and lay
your head upon my arm—
*"God sent a little baby down to visit at the
farm."*

WHEN TO CUT WHEAT.

As we annually draw near to harvest time our agricultural journals begin to urge upon farmers the propriety of cutting wheat early—while it is in the dough, or when the straw has turned yellow at the neck and is still green at the joints—before the straw is fully dry. It is often stated that cut in this condition the yield will be greater, and that the wheat will give a greater percentage of flour with less of bran. I have for two years tried the following experiment, which, if not conclusive, let some one show the error:

While the wheat was as green as it would possibly do to harvest, I have cut small bundles, and, at intervals of three or four days, have cut others, so that the fourth bundle was cut when the wheat was dead ripe. I have dried the green wheat in the shade, and, after being thoroughly cured, have threshed them all, and then counted out a definite number of kernels from each—say 200—and have weighed them. In every case I have found that the fully ripe wheat was from two to ten per cent. heavier than that cut green. I tried it two years on different varieties of both spring and winter wheat. It was not unusual for persons knowing nothing of the history of samples to pick out some of the earlier cuts as the fairest wheat, but there was no difference recognized which would secure a higher price in the market.

If the earlier cut should prove to yield a greater percentage of flour, the advantage would not acrue to the western farmer but to the miller, and I infer that the articles urging early harvesting are either written ignorantly, or else written in the interest of millers. I conclude that the proper time to cut wheat is when the last particle of matter has passed into the kernel, and circulation has ceased. If a man has a large harvest it may be best for him to strike a balance between possible waste at either end, and cut some too green, rather than risk the waste of shelling at last, but this is entirely another matter, of which each one must judge for himself. —J. W. Wood, Stark County, Wisconsin, in *New York Tribune.*

When a rider is thrown over a horse's head the horse becomes the power behind the throne.

OVER-BEARING GRAPE-VINES.

Many varieties of grape-vines are liable to over bear, especially when the soil is not rich, giving the roots a poor chance to extend, owing to its hardness; and in such cases, if a very large quantity of fruit sets, it is best te remove a portion of it when very small. Take a pair of scissors in June, and clip out from one third to one half of the smallest clusters, and what is left will ripen well and be worth double what the entire crop would be left upon the vines.

There are many places where grape-growing is not considered profitable, solely owing to an improper management of the vines. The soil being naturally not very fertile, and perhaps otherwise not well adapted to grape-growing in a careless way, the vines are generally set where the root can not easily expand, perhaps by the side of a walk, in the grass, or near a building, where they are quite as badly situated, if the soil be stiff and clayey, and the result is, that the vines set more fruit than the roots can sustain.

To obtain the largest possible quantity of well-ripened grapes everywhere, the vines should grow where the soil is naturally rich, or has been made rich by manures, and spaded from twelve to fifteen inches deep, and kept free of weeds and grass. In such a soil the roots of the vines will extend in all directions from eight to fifteen feet, and they will sustain a much larger crop of fruit than they will where the soil is poor and almost impenertrable.

The summer pruning of grapevines consist in removing all small shoots that will never become good bearing canes, easily distinguished by any person at all acquainted with the nature of the vines. A certain number of the most thrifty canes of this season's growth must be left entire, to produce next years' crop of fruit, or to afford the buds from which the shoots grow that produce the grapes. After six or eight good canes are thus selected, the other canes may, or may not, be cut back to within two or three leaves of the fruit.—*N. Y. Observer.*

HOW TO DESTROY THE TOBACCO FLY.

As we have the best soil and climate in the State for growing fine tobacco, and as I am a pioneer in the tobacco culture in this section, I will give my modus operandi of destroying the tobacco fly. *Destroy all the Jamestown weeds about the plantation*—leaving about *twenty* stalks about the lot or fence corners. Take a long neck bottle; put in about one-fourth teaspoonful of strychnine; fill up with water. See that the cork fits tightly. Make a small hole through the centre of cork—put in a goose quill tightly; let the small end of the quill project out about two inches. Make a small hole in the end of the quill, so that the water will not drop or run out, then your poisonous machine is ready for operation.

When the tobacco fly makes its appearance, take the bottle, hold it perpendicular, with the end of the quill in the mouth of the bloom of the Jamestown weed and with the other hand tap the end of the bottle twice, suddenly, which will force from three to four small drops of the poisonous liquid down to the bloom. Go from one bloom to another and finish up the job by sunset. The operation should not be trusted to careless boys. The operation should be repeated three times a week.—S. M. Thomas, Lauinburg, Richmond Co., in *Torch-Light.*

WHERE TO SET MILK.

There is no doubt that immense quantities of poor butter are made from the milk being set in imporper places. The kitchen pantry, the living room, and the cellar used to store vegetables and other family supplies, will impart peculiar taints to the milk and cream, in such a degree as to be destructive to flavor, even though the butter in other respects be skillfully handled. Dairy rooms so situated as to catch the odor from the pig sty, the cess pool, or other decomposing filth, cannot be used for making good butter. There should be a freedom from filth and impurities of every description about the milk-house, and the milk should be delivered by the milkers in an ante-room, or some point outside the milk-room, and from thence conveyed to the place where it is to be set for cream. In this way the fumes and the litter from the stables may be kept from the milk-room.—*Practical Farmer.*

Don't Mow too Close.

Now that the haying season is at hand farmers should be advised not to try to economize by mowing too close. An old farmer of our acquaintance used to say that he thought "it was better to leave the lower joint for the old brindle cow than to save it for her;" and we wonder that all sensible farmers do not heed his advice.

Harness in Stables.

Harness should never be kept in the stables where manure is constantly generating large quantities of ammonia. This ammonia is rapidly absorbed by the leather, and the effect upon the leather is about the same as would result from saturating it with strong lye. In a word, ammonia rots leather, and hence keeping harness in the stable is sure to result in its damage, more or less.

Receipt for Hog Cholera.

Take one teacupful pulverized copperas and mix with one gallon of salt; and salt the hogs twice a week regularly. This is said to be a sure preventative, and has been known to cure in many instances after the disease has commenced.—*Scientific American.*

PUBLISHED WEEKLY—J. J. BRUNER, Ed. and Prop
T. K. BRUNER, Associate Ed.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

Per Year, payable in advance,..... $2 00
Six months..... 1 25

ADVERTISING RATES:

One inch, one publication,..... $1 00
" " two publications,..... 1 50
Contract rates for months or a year.

TIME TABLE WESTERN N. C. RAILROAD.

In effect Friday, May the 10th, 1878.

GOING WEST.

STATIONS.	ARRIVE.	LEAVE.
Salisbury		7 35 A M
Third Creek	8 27 A. M.	
Statesville	9 15 "	
Catawba	10 07 "	
Newton	10 55 "	
Canova	11 07 "	
Hickory	11 35 P. M.	
Icard	12 15 "	
Morganton	12 59 "	
Bridgewater	1 43 "	
Marion	2 27 "	
Old Fort	3 07 "	
Henry	3 28 "	

GOING EAST.

STATIONS.	ARRIVE.	LEAVE.
Henry		7 00 A. M.
Old Fort	7 12 A. M.	
Marion	7 52 "	
Bridgewater	8 32 "	
Morganton	9 16 "	
Icard	9 56 "	
Hickory	10 36 "	
Canova	11 04 "	
Newton	11 16 "	
Catawba	12 04 P. M.	
Statesville	12 56 "	
Third Creek	1 44 "	
Salisbury	2 30 "	