A WOMAN'S QUESTION.

MRS. BROWNING.

Do you know that you have asked for the
costliest thing
Ever made by the Hand above—
A woman's heart and a woman's life
And a woman's wonderful love?

Do you know you have asked for this priceless thing
As a child might ask for a toy,
Demanding what others have died to win,
With the reckless dash of a boy?

You have written my lesson of duty out,
Manlike you have questioned me;
Now stand at the bar of my woman's soul
Until I shall question thee.

You require your mutton shall always be hot,
Your socks and your shirts shall be whole;
I require your heart to be true as God's stars
And pure as heaven your soul.

You require a cook for your mutton and beef;
I require a far better thing;
A seamstress you're wanting for stockings and shirts—
I look for a man and a king.

A king for a beautiful realm called home
And a man that the maker, God,
Shall look upon as He did the first
And say, "It is very good."

I am fair and young, but the rose will fade
From my soft young cheek some day;
Will you love me then, 'mid the falling leaves,
As you did 'mid the bloom of May?

Is your heart an ocean so strong and deep
I may launch my all on its tide?
A loving woman finds heaven or hell
On the day she is made a bride.

I require all things that are grand and true,
All things that a man should be:
If you give this all I would stake my life
To be all you demand of me.

If you cannot be this, a laundress and cook
You can hire with little to pay;
But a woman's heart and a woman's life
Are not to be won that way.

THE TWO MYSTERIES.

MARY MAPES DODGE.

We know not what it is, dear, this sleep so
deep and still;
The folded hands, the awful calm, the cheek
so pale and chill;
The lips that will not lift again, that we may
call and call;
The strange white solitude of peace that settles over all.

We know not what it means, dear, this desolate heart-pain,
The dread to take our daily way and walk in it again;
We know not to what sphere the loved who
leave us go,
Nor why we're left to wonder still, nor why
we do not know;
But this we know: our loved and lost, if they
should come this day—
Should come and ask us, "What is life?" not
one of us could say.

Life is a mystery, as deep as ever death can
be;
Yet, oh! how sweet it is to us, this life we
live and see!
Then might they say, these vanquished ones
and blessed is the thought—
"So death is sweet to us, beloved, though we
may tell you naught;
We may not tell it to the quick, this mystery
of death;
Ye may not tell us, if ye would, the mystery
of breath."

The child who enters life comes not with
knowledge or intent,
So those who enter death must go as little
children sent;
Nothing is known. But I believe that God is
overhead,
And as life is to the living, so death is to the
dead.

Why I Couldn't Sing.

BY GEO. F. HALL.

It was a beautiful Sunday morning in May. The birds chirped gaily in the treetops, now fully leaved; the flowers in the garden and on the lawn were rich with delicious perfume; and everybody and everything seemed blessed with a kind of heavenly sweetness. I had only recently come to the city in which occurred the event I am about to describe, the greatest event of my life. I'll tell you briefly:—

Fresh from college I had plunged into business with great zeal and was succeeding finely. I lived with an uncle John and his excellent family, in one of the most delightful suburbs of the city. The home was a most pleasant one, and so all went smoothly enough till cousin Violet induced me to go to church with her for the first time—I mean the first time since I had been in the city! Before becoming so absorbed in entering business I had been a constant church-goer, and went too, as all college boys do, with a purpose (?). While in school I had gained some credit as a singer and had "bassed it" two years in our chapel choir. Knowing this, cousin Violet, a splendid contralto by the way, determined that I should sing in her choir.

We were just entering the grand old church that uncle's people had long attended, when Violet first mentioned the astounding fact that she had determined to make my first appearance at church as remarkable as possible, and completely bewildered me by speaking to the usher as follows:

"Seat us with the choir, please," and she boldly stepped ahead, with a glance telling me to follow.

What could I do? In vain did I remonstrate by wild glances and hurried whisperings—the little hoax led me straight down the long aisle, and right up to the awful, majestic, sacred looking choir. I thought I should faint—never before was I so completely taken. But I could only make the best of it, and so with a satisfied air, but vengeful look at my smiling cousin, I calmly took my place.

I was twenty-three, and in all my years had not met the girl whom I deemed worthy of any serious attention on my part. In fact I was called skeptical as regarded the worth of the opposite sex,—regarded women as handy creatures about the house, as a mother, or sister; but the thought of "loving" and "wedding" never entered my mind. But it is little we know today what our minds will be to-morrow, and it is not infrequent that these cool-headed people (I pride myself as one of the coolest) are the more often changed. Yes, "wise men change their minds most often."

In a few moments the organist began, and soon the rich, deep tones of the great organ caused me to forget my embarrassment. The first hymn was announced, and the choir arose. Although unfamiliar with the music, I sang with perfect ease, and saw that I was really attracting attention. In all that vast audience not one disapproving face did I see as I poured forth the best bass I could command.

The minister proceeded to read from the Holy Scriptures, while I began a survey of his auditors. With calm indifference I admired the intelligent faces before me and was proud that I could maintain my composure before such an assembly, and under such circumstances. The good people listened intently, devoutly trying to catch every word as it dropped from their pastor's lips. Everybody seemed most deeply interested—no! There was a young lady who was not! She sat near the center of the congregation, and Oh, my stars! she was looking my way! A blonde, about twenty-one I judged, and very beautiful. My face! Was I blushing? If so it was the first time in my life. But she blushed; her eyes dropped for a moment, and then looked at me again. Oh, such eyes!

I sat spell-bound till the choir arose to render the anthem, and, horrors! I had to look over my neighbor's shoulder to get the page, and then awkwardly fumble my leaves, finding the place just in time to come in on the last strain of the first part.

Where was my voice! And how I trembled! What could have been the matter with me? Well, the anthem was finished, and I had certainly lost my credit, for I did sing shamefully. But those blue eyes in the center of the auditorium were upon me, and I *couldn't* sing.

The minister went on with his sermon, but for my life I did not know what he was talking about, and fear, I cared less.

The same with that little blue-eyed lady—she couldn't keep her eyes on the preacher at all, and what was she to me that I should watch her so closely? But there was a queer feeling in my breast—I determined to meet that girl.

And so I "made eyes" at her and she "made eyes" at me till the last word of the benediction. When we had left the church, Violet presented me to many of her friends as we passed through the vestibule, but not one could I have recognized two minutes afterwards, so far in another direction was my mind. I turned upon her somewhat indignantly—

"Vi, what evil demon possessed you to play such a game on me?"

"Why, Charley, how do you like Miss Mansfield?"

"You are eluding my question, but who is Miss Mansfield?" said I.

"She is a beautiful blue-eyed blonde that sat near the center of the church, and who couldn't tell for a seal skin what was the preacher's text. Yes, the same that completely absorbed the attention of the new member of our choir to day, and made him sing the second verse of the last hymn while neighbors were singing the third. Ah, cousin, you did finely to-day!"

"Vi, I don't understand you. You are talking in riddles," said I.

"Poor fellow, you are to be pitied for your thick-headedness," said Violet, with twinkling eyes.

I said no more, but walked on thoughtfully. Despite my best efforts I could not drive those delicious blue eyes from my mind's vision, and somehow I felt that Providence had a hand in this business, and I began to change by views of life entirely; and yet I had not met her.

The next day I was rushed in business as usual, but to the great amazement of the clerks I gave many discordant orders,—more mischief caused by blue eyes.

Hurrying across the street late in the afternoon I was startled by cries of "Runaway! runaway."

Glancing up the street which led from Paris Drive, I saw a magnificent span of blacks dashing at break-neck speed, the line dangling on the ground; and something in the screams of the occupants of the carriage nerved me to save them, when on most occasions of this kind I would have been the first to clear the track, and let folks attend to their own runaways. Summoning all my courage I pushed through the scampering crowd and sprang for the bits of the runaways as they came tearing along, caught them, and by a most desperate struggling, in which I was dragged a long way and severely bruished, stopped the team. Just then the careless coachman came panting to their charge—

"Sure, sah, I beg de pahdon ob yer, boss, but de onery fools lit out double-quick down dar, while I's gibben some pennies to a poor beggar passin' by, sah. I do, sah, beg pahdon, sah, and Hebben hang dat beggar."

Of course as soon as the carriage stopped its occupants were not long in alighting, and whom should they be but my blue-eyed Miss Mansfield, and her mother! Before I could speak she rushed to me and took my hand—

"Oh, Mr. Allerton, we cannot thank you enough for this! You have saved our lives. Pardon me, sir, but I cannot forbear an expression of my gratitude to you, and hence take your hand."

Then Mrs. Mansfield, a kind-looking noble old lady, pressed my hand also, and I could not but blush in trying to excuse myself and in asking them to regard it simply as an act that any gentleman would have done.

"But, Mr. Allerton, you are hurt. Oh, dear! Jeff assist the gentleman into the carriage, quickly, sir. Come—

That's all I heard her say. I stumbled and fell unconscious to the ground. The struggle had greatly fatigued me, and besides one of the horses had struck me with his hoof in my efforts to check him.

When I recovered from my stupor many hours later, I found myself in a large and elegant chamber in a strange house; a physician was bending over me, and at the foot of the couch stood that glorious blue-eyed girl Miss Mansfield, her lovely face all earnestness.

"Oh, Mr. Allerton, you were badly hurt, but I hope you are feeling better. I'm so sorry—"

"Thank you, Miss Mansfield," said I. "I am not seriously hurt, am I, doctor?"

"You will soon be all right, sir, if you keep quiet and cheerful," said the physician; and then he bade me good-day, and after holding a serious secret consultation with Miss Mansfield, concerning myself I supposed, withdrew. Then the blue-eyed little lady, whom, it appeared, had voluntarily made herself chief nurse, bathed my forehead, and arranged some flowers near me, all the time quietly and earnestly talking to me. I seemed enchanted, and for some time did not speak, but watched her in thoughtful silence. At length I said:

"Miss Mansfield, you have a pleasant home, and you have been very kind to me in caring for me during those unconscious hours. How strange it all seems!"

"It is you, sir, that has been kind. We owe our lives to you. What would papa say if he knew of our narrow escape! Papa is in New York now, but will return soon. But, Oh, Mr. Allerton, we can never thank you ——"

"Pardon me, Miss Mansfield," said I, "but how came you to know my name?"

"I saw you at church yesterday, sir," she replied, blushing, "and I was so bold as to inquire of our pastor this morning who you were. You'll excuse me, sir, for being so prying, but—but—but how came you to speak to me so familiarly?"

"I also saw you at church and asked my cousin, Violet Rowland, your name. You'll excuse me I trust, for I couldn't help it. And now that I must call you nurse, may I know your——"

"Yes, sir, you may call me Annie, and I will—but pardon me if I prescribe sleep to you now, and when you have rested I'll bring you some toast and tea."

And blue-eyed Annie floated out of the room, an angel if my eyes were responsible. I almost felt glad of the accident already, although it meant loss to me by absence from business. But my shock was a severe one and for weeks I lay in a critical condition. In all this time there was no one who could possibly be so kind and so soothing to me as Annie. Of course my relatives and friends from both far and near came to me. But none were so faithful as Annie, and, in fact, I didn't wish them to be. So long as Annie was in the room, so long as I could look into those dear blue eyes, just so long was I contented and happy.

I recovered slowly, and was finally able to sit on the piazza a few hours each day. Annie was always with me, or near at hand when not in my presence. I grew passionately fold of her, and many were the long happy chats we enjoyed. Uncle John's from the first had urged my removal home, but Annie's papa on his arrival soon after the accident refused to give me up until I should fully recover.

It was a beautiful night, and the stars twinkled in the heavens, the half full moon smiled over the tree-tops, and all earth and heaven seemed peaceful as I sat alone in a little arbor in the Mansfield gardens. I was humming one of Schuman's Impromptus, when the familiar and beautiful figure of Annie appeared. She was strolling in the garden, and—well, she strolled as usual to this quiet spot where we had for some time been wont to sit and talk the evening away.

"Well, Mr. Allerton, you seem happy, and I'm glad that it is so."

"Now, Annie, how do you know that I am happy?" said I.

"Oh, you wouldn't be humming such an air if you were not."

"Come and sit here, Annie. Do you remember the time I first saw your blue eyes—the time I sang a hymn while the others of the choir were rendering the anthem, or something like that?"

"Yes: what of it?" said she.

"That day I was a changed man. Never till then did I ardently admire woman. Since then, and partly, I suppose, through a power of circumstances. I have learned to love woman. To-morrow, Annie, I return to Uncle John's again. But, oh, what will a home be to me without you. There, there, I mean it—Annie, dear blue-eyed Annie, I love you; aye, I feel that you are all in life to me. But—but, Annie, do I love in vain?"

"No, Charles," and she thoughtfully gave me her hand, while two great tears stood in those happy blue eyes. We sat in silence a long time, for Cupid is dumb as well as "blind" I believe.

At length Annie looked up and said:

"I know now why I couldn't sleep one Sunday night,—the same evening of the day my dear boy couldn't sing!"

I met her merry blue eyes, and as they looked so much sweeter, even than ever before, I couldn't refrain from meeting her lips—Annie is mine to-day.

Good Usage as an Authority.

If a discussion arises or a bet is made in regard to the pronunciation of a word the usual authority consulted is a dictionary, and generally Webster's or Worcester's. But why should they always decide? In matters of etiquette or orthography general usage should be the accepted authority. Taken all in all, there is no guide like good usage, and the man who is most perfect in his choise and use of words, as well as the details of good breeding, is either one "to the manner born," to whom it comes as natural always to do and say the right thing as it does to breathe, or one who has the good sense to observe closely and a ready intellegence that enables him to grasp quickly, the true standard, and to be out of danger of perpetuating solecisms or social blunders. But for those who continually make mistakes, which they know to be mistakes, and yet do not take the trouble to correct them, there is no excuse or hope.

The wages of operators in the Wamsutta woolen mills at Fall River were advanced lately 10 per cent.

Reports from Tonquin say that 10,000 Christians have been massacred in the provinces of Bendinh and Phyyn.

FOR THE OLD LOVE'S SAKE.

DDIE DAY RALSTON.

This way, he said, is smooth and green and
fair;
There are no thorns to wound and bruise
thy feet;
Where summer reigns, and starlike blossoms sweet
Bend to the wind's low call: thy path is
there!
And mine? Alas, no downy mornings break,
Across the valley where my path hath lain.
And yet, though youth be dead and faith
be slain,
I keep this token for the old love's sake.

Above the urn that holds no hidden flame
Of altar fires that long have passed away,
I yet may pause, and in the ashes gray
Read with dim eyes the old familiar name.
And if some shadowy memory should awake,
If once again my eyes with tears grow wet,
If in my heart should spring some vain regret,
Nay, do not scorn me for the old love's sake!

As one who sees in old remembered nooks,
With eyes that have grown sad with ceaseless tears,
The same glad beauty of the long-lost years,
And hears again the song of summer brooks,
So if from troubled dreams I could awake
And feel thy warm, soft kisses on my face,
I think the sweetness of thy winsome grace
Would touch me—only for the old love's sake!

FARM, GARDEN AND HOUSEHOLD.

Breeding Roadsters.

The great essentials of a good roadster are endurance, gameness and speed. Without these qualities he can never be a first-class road horse; though, of course, if you superadd to these qualities beauty, docility and style, you materially increase the value of the animal. Experience, the best of teachers, has shown us that no horse can possess endurance, speed and game without being well bred. Starting, therefore, on this theory, that no horse is fitted to get, and no mare is fitted to bear, a colt intended for a road horse, unless he or she be well bred, let us inquire what are the qualities most to be desired on the part of each. A horse, to be a mover of the right sort, must have his mechanism as perfect as a chronometer watch. A certain style is necessary to go fast and to stay. We all know that those horses which have gone fastest, and been noted stayers, have been possessed of wonderful power across the loins. I have never seen a successful trotting horse in this country without a powerful quarter, and I have seen most of the famous ones. Of course it is necessary to perfection to have with this powerful lever behind, a sloping shoulder, deep chest, a good rib and good legs; but unless you have the powerful quarter, all these good qualities are of no avail. I would, then, endeavor to have both dam and sire provided with this essential, and and if not both, at least one of them. Then the attempt should be to get the sloping shoulder, blood like neck and head. It is true with an upright shoulder a horse may be fast, but there is not the same ease of action which is essential for endurance, as in the sloping shoulder.—[Dr. S. H. Adams, Mechaniesburg, O.

Vermont Hints on Breeding.

In no country in the world is the keeping of horses for the purpose of pleasure as well as utility, more largely disseminated among persons of all classes, than in the United States: and the desire and ability both to keep bred horses, of a high grade, is daily gaining ground both in town and country. Among all classes the desire to raise valuable stock is on the increase. It was said in former times by a farmer, concerning some miserable, broken-winded, ring-boned and spavined old mare, "Oh, she will do to raise a colt!" But it is now well understood that the breeder had better shoot such a mare at once, than to undertake to raise a colt from her, so far as his own pecuniary benefit is concerned. If you get a colt from a poor old worn-out mare, the foal will be nothing but an abortion and a disgrace.

The mare should have size, symmetry and soundness, as well as beauty and good blood. She should have a heavy frame, and a little more than the average length from hip to shoulder, sloping hips and wide chest. She should be gentle, free from vicious habits, and free from all constitutional diseases and deformities. Never breed from a sulky, balky or vicious mare, unless you wish to perpetuate the evil.

In the choice of a stallion for breeding good horses, the more blood, compatable with the size required, the better. The pure blood and high-bred has greater quickness, strength, health and vigor of constitution, as well as greater courage. The blood should be on the side of the stallion. Breed up, not down. Never put a mare to a stallion of inferior blood. The stallion should also be free from vices of temper and disposition, as he will surely transmit them to his progeny. He will also transmit disease and malformations, and therefore these should be avoided.—[Joseph E. White, Rutland, Vermont.

The Cause of Garget.

Garget may be due to one of several causes, or to a combination of them. These may be divided into causes operating from without the animal—extrinsic causes—and those having within the animal—intrinsic causes. While the foregoing division comprehends all cases or simple inflammation of the udder, we may have to do with what may be considered specific mamitis, i. e., inflammation due to infection, or the transmission from one cow to another; and, again, to garget due to the eruptive diseases, such being the vaccine of the cow, epizootic, eczema, &c.

Extrinsic causes are comprehended under injuries of various kinds, as from kicks, bruises too great draughts of air, too little bedding, cuts, etc., together with sudden weather changes, faulty milking and over-stocking. The intrinsic causes are those set in action by sudden and unwise food changes, as from a spare indoor feed to a flush pasturage, or from a light grain feed to a full ration of oil cake, etc. Tuberculosis often manifests itself in a severe garget, defying all remedial effort. These, together with the predisposition which exists in all deep milkers, may be said to comprise the intrinsic causes of garget.

The symptoms of simple garget are so familiar that little need be said of them. There is every gradation from the case with no general symptom, the slightly increased temperature of the udder, together with a hardly perceptible hardening of it, as the only manifestation of the disease, to the case with well marked general and local symptoms, such as high fever, general rigors, quickening pulse and respiration, loss of appetite, cessation of rumination, together with extremely hot and painful udder, with milk flow stopped or continuing only as a much changed, thin yellowish fluid, or as a half solid and blood-tinged mass.—Dr. F. E. Rice, Hartford, Ct.

How Much Grass Seed Per Acre?

Prof. Beal says some practical farmars sow five times as much seed as others; he doesn't know which is right. Prof. J. W. Sanborn recommends six quarts to six bushels; the poorer the farming and the more dishonest the seed dealer, the more seed will be required. On a rich soil in fine tilth, with seed known to be of good quality, he would use six qts. of timothy and six pounds of clover per acre; on a course, poor soil, with seed thought to be impure or damaged, an unlimited quantity of seed will be required; for general purposes, 12 qts. of timothy and 10 lbs. of clover per acre are desirable. Ex-Commissioner Le Duc figures out that 6 lbs of timothy and 8 lbs of clover will furnish the proper number of spears of grass.

Major Alvord: If a mixture is desired for hay, tall meadow oat grass and clover are the best for maturing with the orchard grass. If for pasturage, use one bushel each to the acre of orchard grass and Kentucky Blue, to which six or eight quarts of medium red clover may well be added. Sow half a bushel per acre of timothy in August, with no other seed. A late crop can be obtained from mixing red-top and Kentucky bluegrass, a bushel of each, and if the land is somewhat light and moist, alsike clover (say four quarts) may be added. But alsike varies so with locality that it seems necessary for every farmer to be guided by a trial of it. Of all the clovers, the medium red is the most satisfactory, but on account of its early blossoming and drying, I would not use it with any of the grasses except orchard and tall meadow oats. Clover, like timothy, is most profitable unmixed, and may be sown on fall or spring grain, 25 or 30 lbs to the acre. Then cut only one year and turn under for corn or some grain crop. We succeed well in sowing clover with oats, but prefer to cut off the oats and cure as hay, while early in the milk.

Phil M. Shniger, Illinois: Nine lbs each of clover and timothy. Prof. William Brown, Ontario: 15 lbs of grass seed and 8 lbs clover. Other contributors to the Rural New Yorker express equally varying views. The fact is, every farmer must use his own practical judgment in this matter, based on his experience with his own soil, and his knowledge of its capacity, and of the variety of seed sown. Thorough preparation of the seed-bed is a most important matter.

Stacking Corn Fodder.

Farm and Fireside.

I long ridiculed the idea of stacking corn-fodder, believing that the advantage gained would fail to compensate the extra labor involved. I had been in the habit of cutting into 12x12 shocks, on the ground in a sharp, conical pile, and stack one or two others around it, securing the tops with twine or stalks. When properly put up, I found the fodder kept well, except the outside layer of stalks, which would, of course be bleached. Of course there came a storm occasionally, which tore open many of the shocks and filled the tops with snow; and I have found no part of my farming work more disagreeable than wading through mud and slush, ankle deep, to get a shock of fodder thus torn about, with the result of having the wet snow soak my hands and arms and crawl down my neck, laying the foundations for a permanent catarrh; or even worse, after the thaw had been followed by a hard freeze, to have the stalks to tear loose from the frozen ground in the face of a biting blast, spending time and labor enough upon one shock to have handled three or four in good condition. All this I bore with equanimity for years, as well as the still greater vexation of occasionally being compelled, during a long continued "soft spell," to go upon my growing wheat with team and wagon and witness the ruin wrought by hoofs and wheels.

Fortunately, a few years ago, I was compelled to remove the crop from a certain field before winter set in. I had it bound with twine—and found the expense much lighter than I expected—and then set two men to hauling it off and stacking it. The fodder was laid in two courses, with the tops inward, and the middle kept high enough, with bundles laid lengthwise, to give sufficient pitch to turn the water. The stack or rack, was built in sections, each about twelve feet long, and the whole was carefully topped out with bundles, set quite steep, and then covered with straw and weighted down. In feeding, but a single section was opened at a time, thus reducing the exposure to a minimum.

The expense of stacking was found to be much less than was anticipated. The work was done when both ground and fodder were dry, consequently the growing grain was not injured by the team, and the fodder was comparatively easy to handle. The bundles had been made of medium size, and were easily handled with a two-tined fork. The stacking being done so early, the fodder had not been damaged by the the weather, beyond the necessary bleaching that occurred before husking, and when once in the stack, only the butts were exposed. This first stack was fed out during an exceptionally "soft spell," and every bundle came out bright and fresh—a joy both to feeder and fed.

It would be impossible to say that stacking will pay, in a pecuniary sense, in every case; but my experience in this and subsequent years has been such that I should be very sorry to be caught at the setting in of winter with my corn-fodder still in shock.

Franklin county, O. F. M.

Mulching Wheat.

Farm and Fireside,

The great injury done to the wheat crop of this year, by the drying winds of March and April, lends a new interest to the question whether this injury may not be largely obviated by covering the grain during the winter with a light mulch of straw or light manure. This question is one well worthy of investigation, and one which might quite as well be settled by the ordinary farmer as to be referred to the experiment station; but it is one which cannot be decided by a single season's test, for the reason that during the majority of our winters no such protection seems to be necessary. It is only in exceptional seasons, like the present, that its use seems apparent.

The following test is recorded in the report of the Ohio Experiment Station for 1884:

"The winter of 1882-3 was very severe on the wheat plant. In December one plot of one thirty-second acre was covered with a light coating of straw. This seemed to protect the plants from further injury, and the experiment resulted so favorably that it was thought best to test the matter more thoroughly the next season.

"Accordingly three plots were set apart to be treated with straw mulch. One plot was covered very slightly; another was covered about twice as heavy, and upon the third three times as much was used as on the first.

"The yield for the uncovered wheat was at the rate of 38.9 bushels per acre; for that lightly covered, 45.5 bushels; for the medium covered, 32.9 bushels; and under the heavy covering there was a total failure, the mulch and snow together evidently smothering the plants.

"The winter of 1883-4 was quite different from the preceding one. Instead of the ground being bare most of the time, and the temperature exceedingly variable, there was an unusual amount of snow, and the weather was quite uniformly cold. Under these conditions, the straw mulch, except where sparingly used, proved an injury instead of a benefit."

This experiment, it will be seen, is very defective, in that the actual quantity of straw used is not given, and that in the use of such small plots the errors arising from accidental variations of soil are liable to be so multiplied in reducing the results to acreage ratios that they may wholly obscure the results obtained. Moreover, the plots for experiments of this character should always be duplicated, in order that the errors arising from variations of soil may be corrected by comparison of duplicate results. Nevertheless, the results of the experiment encourage further investigation in this line.

During the similar winter of 1874-5, the writer spread a load of coarse manure, fresh from the stable, on a portion of a wheat field peculiarly exposed to the west wind. At the harvest there was a very wide difference between the yield on the mulched and unmulched ground, that where the manure was spread being apparently double the other. This experiment was still more defective than the one just quoted, and is only mentioned here to introduce the suggestion that a portion of the coarsest of the manure which may have been intended for top dressing, be left until immediately after the wheat is sown, and then applied as a mulch over the more exposed portions of the fields.

This work might be done in January with still greater advantage to the wheat, if the manure could be so preserved as to be accessible at that time. Where the manure is kept under the shelter there will be no trouble on this point, the only care needed being to prevent it from freezing in large lumps on the field. We hope this matter will receive more attention than it has yet had, and that those who may have acquired any experimental knowledge on this subject will communicate it for the benefit of others.

Romanization in Japan.

Japan offers perhaps the only historical instance of a nation voluntarily abandoning its manners, customs, beliefs and learning, within the short space of a generation, in order to adopt a foreign civilization, of which it recognizes the overwhelming superiority. Japan has just made another great stride in progress: she has adopted the Roman alphabet. The old ideographic characters have been a serious obstacle to study, ever since their adaption to cast type. As each new word required new signs, and as the number of these were enormously increased by the expansion of learning in Japan, the strain entailed upon the student's memory became something indescribable. An ordinary public school student was obliged to commence his task by loading his memory with at least 4,000 ideographic characters. But if he wished to graduate in a higher college, he had to learn, not 4,000, but at the least 8,000 characters—to familiarize himself with which required six years of constant application.

The reform has begun—not so rapidly, perhaps, as could be wished, but upon a very solid basis. A society has been formed called the "Society of Romanization," with a membership of more than 1,000 persons, many of whom are princes and government officials, and the government warmly supports this reform.

No Hotel Clerks in Persia.

You travel in Persia on horses, donkeys and camels. There are no railroads and no hotels, excepting a small one at Teheran and one good one at Casbus. In traveling one takes his cook along, and puts up at vacant public houses built for the purpose and called "chappah hane." They are very dirty and full of vermin, and your servants have to clean them out before they are inhabitable.