

AGRICULTURAL NOTES.

Devoted to the Interests of Farmers and Stockmen.

Grafting Figs.

Many of those who have planted fig trees have been disappointed when the fruit appeared by having them turn out to be something different from what was expected. In order to remedy the mistake as cheaply as possible it is evident that resort must be had to grafting, and a correspondent of the *Bural Press* furnishes the following as his method of accomplishing the desired result: Saw off the limb; split it through the center. If the limb is two to four inches in diameter put in two grafts—one next to each side of bark. Cut the wedge-like taper about four inches long and have one or two buds only. The cion should be one-half inch or less in diameter. When the grafts are both forced into the split there will be considerable space unoccupied. Fill the space with hot grafting wax—that is, heat the wax so hot as to flow very readily. Then, with a paddle, cover the end of the limb around the grafts, also the ends of grafts, also the edges of graft and limb, after which take a strip of muslin one inch wide and three or four feet long (must be strong), and wrap the limb and graft, commencing an inch or two below the lowest extremity of the split, wrapping and drawing the muslin very tight, at the same time waxing each turn of the cloth with the hot wax, using the paddle. When wrapped to the top of the stub wrap the muslin between and around each cion, waxing carefully and thoroughly. The whole secret is to keep the air excluded from the cut. Fig bark shrinks very quickly—so quick and so much that the graft has not time to take before the bark is drawn away from it and the sap channels are dry. The hot wax is the only perfect way to protect it from the air, and close and tight wrapping is to prevent shrinking of the bark. In other respects the rules of any other grafting hold good.

Crop reports in the western states are very favorable.

One cattleman in Wasco county, Oregon, lost 4,500 head of cattle.

The loss of stock in Crook county, Oregon, is estimated at 10 per cent.

It is estimated that 30,000 sheep have died in Morrow county, Oregon, this winter.

In Kentucky last year nearly 5,000,000 bushels more of corn was raised than in 1885.

Minnesota is shipping wheat to Europe via the Mississippi river and New Orleans.

At a recent exhibition in England, where prizes were given for walking horses, the speed attained was over five miles an hour.

If swine are to be kept on the farm the best profits will be found in the finest breeds that run into matured meat the first year.

It is said that since the general introduction of alfalfa in Colorado the keeping of bees has become a very profitable business, that plant furnishing an abundance of forage for the little insects.

A Boston commission house handled two tons of cabbages so skillfully that the shipper had 95 cents left after all charges were paid. If he sends another lot his own head will go along with it.

The *Montana Wool Grower* estimates that there will be nearly a million sheep shorn in that Territory this year, producing at least 8,000,000 pounds of wool—a million pounds more than the product in 1886.

Don't put off trimming the vines too late in the season, or it cannot be done at all. If the sap begins to flow, the cutting of the vines will cause them to "bleed," and the consequence will be no fruit. Trim when the weather is cold.

A French correspondent of a London paper states that Hampshire down lambs of his raising at nine months old dressed thirty-seven pounds to the quarter. A yearling wether eighteen-months old weighed, when dressed, 256 pounds.

A hoe for use in a garden requires as much care as a scythe that is used for cutting grass. It should be sharp enough to cut off the roots of all kinds of weeds and should have so good a polish that it can be moved through the soil without much exhibition of strength.

A leading commission house in Milwaukee has received overtures from a representative of the German Government for 200,000 bushels of oats for immediate shipment, and it was learned that inquiries have been made in other markets for large quantities of oats, corn and wheat for German consumption. Straws show which way the wind blows.

A resident of San Francisco is the owner of a hen which has developed a curious freak. She lays nothing but eggs of large size, measuring 7½ inches by 6½, and thereabouts, and each egg contains two yolks fully as large as found in ordinary sized eggs. These double-yolked eggs are laid daily, the enterprising hen not skipping each alternate day, as might be supposed. A breed of hens which would possess this peculiarity always would be a valuable acquisition.

The beekeepers of Colorado recently held a State convention at Denver, in which many valuable points were brought out concerning this industry. Among other things it seems that the most successful apiarists of Colorado are women, and the convention was largely composed of them. There

was a good exhibit of honey and bee-keeping appliances, and much attention was attracted by a display of comb honey made entirely from alfalfa. It was snow white and of remarkably fine flavor.

A large per cent. of Western tree-planters need not be told that we have no other tree equally rapid in growth which has proven as durable for posts, vine stakes and hop poles as the locust. Yet very few seem aware of the fact that grown intermingled with trees with heavier foliage it is not attacked by the borer to any serious extent. Professor Budd has recently lost no opportunity for advising the general planting of this tree for economic use over our great western prairies. But plant it in alternate rows with green ash, box-elder, soft maple, catalpa, or some other dense foliaged tree that will shade the stems of the locust.

Sir John B. Lawes says the German experiments upon cooked and uncooked food for stock do not show any clear evidence in favor of the former, and the process of steaming and other modes of converting dry food into succulent food have never become popular among practical farmers in England, and he is inclined to think that too much value is placed upon succulent food as compared with dry food for stock for meat production; for milk production, especially where quantity rather than quality is the object, he thinks succulent food would certainly have an advantage; but he is doubtful whether one would produce more butter-fat than the other.

Harvesting by night as well as by day, went on in New South Wales in December, lamps being used, as there was no harvest moon. The self-binding machines did their work so perfectly that nothing but a light to keep them in the right track was needed. Experiments in growing wheat in this colony where it has not been commonly cultivated have not proved encouraging, splendid crops, promising forty bushels an acre, having been so badly injured by rust that they had to be cut for hay. Another disadvantage under which the colony has suffered this year was a plague of caterpillars in gardens and vineyards. The unusual spectacle of immense swarms of butterflies is reported from one district, myriads flying past continuously from 3 p. m. till sundown.

Canon Bagot reports that the average cost of making butter at three Irish creameries and placing it in the English markets is proved by exact accounts to be 1½ pence a pound, including all the working expenses of the factories, the casing of the butter, carriage and commission, but, of course, exclusive of the cost of the cream. The net prices paid to the farmers who supplied the cream varied from 7 pence per pound of butter, the lowest price in July, to 1 shilling, the highest price in October. Prices were exceptionally low in July. The canon is of opinion that by the adoption of the cream separator and the use of the separated milk on the farm, the cream being sent to the factory, Irish dairy farmers may take the first rank and beat their foreign competitors in quality and price.

The outlook for the hop growers of the Pacific coast this season seems to be fully as encouraging as last year. Every one is familiar with the almost total loss of the hop crop in Central New York in 1886 owing to the ravages of lice, but it was supposed that the coming season would see a recovery from the depression, as it was thought hardly probable that the scourge would again cause damage. But it seems that not only did the insects kill the foliage of the hop vines, but in many cases the roots of the plants themselves were ruined and it will be necessary in the majority of cases to replant the yards. Should his be generally done, even then the crop would be a light one this season. But it is reported that the hop growers are so discouraged that while they will plow up their ruined yards, they will not again venture in the same direction, but will turn their attention to grain, potatoes and other ordinary farm crops. In any event the hop product of Central New York will cut a very small figure in the market this season, and for that reason hop growers in the Northwest should be chary in making contracts at prices very much less than were obtained last year.

Many orchards are set out in autumn; still more in spring; but whether set in autumn or spring, the ground should be well prepared in autumn. If the soil holds water in wet seasons, it must be well underdrained. Subsoiling in most localities is of much value. This work, it is true, may be imperfectly performed after the trees are set and are growing; but the work is more easily done and in a better manner beforehand. Some persons mistakenly recommend setting trees where nothing else can be raised, as on hillsides or among rocks and stones; but as a good and well-managed orchard is commonly more profitable for the acre it occupies than almost any other crop, the best ground should be chosen for it, so that good cultivation may be given. It was formerly recommended to dig wide holes. This practice answered well for a limited number of trees, where the subsoil was hard and had not been loosened. There are few soils too rich to impart a good healthy growth to young trees in connection with mellow culture for the first five or six years. The test of this is the measured length of the annual shoots. If these shoots are not at least two feet long while the trees are young, manure must be added; and after attaining good size and bearing largely, they should be at least a foot long every summer.

FOREIGN GOSSIP.

—The people of Paris eat 2,000,000 larks every year.

—The cook in an English clergyman's family has just received a legacy of \$1,500,000.

—It is reported that last year more than 100,000 emigrants went to the Argentine Republic, most of them from Italy.

—King Kalakaua of the Hawaiian Islands has gambled away \$74,000 deposited by poor people in the Postal Savings Bank.

—Sir Thomas Gladstone, brother of the ex-Premier, is a strong Conservative, and an unequivocal opponent of home rule in Ireland.

—A French frank's estimate of humanity in 1886 foams up "a lot of fools who spend most of their time and money in making iron balls to go through steel plates and in making steel plates to keep out iron balls."

—The Duke of Devonshire, the Duke of Westminster and the Duke of Bedford have incomes ranging from \$1,500,000 to \$2,500,000 a year. No one thinks of trying to estimate their possessions in any other way.

—The other day at Oxford a man who had insisted on keeping bees was plainly told by a local dignitary that his bees must be sent away because a gentleman commoner had just been stung. He replied instantly: "Mr. Dean, I assure you that you are doing us a great injustice. I know that bee well. He is not mine at all, but belongs to Mr. Bigg, of Merton."

—To show how enormously the cost of a first-class iron clad has increased of late years in England, Lord Brassey states that the propelling machinery of the *Howe* has cost \$515,000, as against the \$316,000 of the *Devastation*; and the latter ship has no hydraulic machinery, which in the *Howe* adds to the expense to the tune of \$375,000.

—At the Lord Mayor's banquet about 400 quarts of turtle soup are provided, 140 dishes of game, 400 chickens and capons, 85 turkeys, 36 hams, 150 lobster salads, 60 meat pies, 120 quarts jollies and 200 dishes of pastry. Two great barons of beef, each 150 pounds in weight, are features of the feast. About four hundred people prepare and wait on the feast.

—According to *L'Electricien*, M. H. Dunville pledged his scientific reputation to the accuracy of the following observation: "If two glasses of water be placed, one upon the north pole of a powerful magnet, and the other upon the south pole, in four or five minutes the former acquires a slight alkaline reaction, while that on the south pole becomes slightly acid."

—Rene Goblet, the new French Premier, is described by the *London Truth* as "a beautifully-built Tom Thumb, with a big head, staring and prominent blue eyes, a long and snubby-ended nose, and an air of splendid self-confidence. He is as aggressive as a gamecock, fond of badgering a Clerical as a dog is of worrying a cat; no Red Radical, but a reduced copy in Republican surroundings of the skeptical, liberal and frondeur bourgeois of Louis Philippe's time. Mne. Goblet is a tall woman. He seems, on entering a drawing-room behind her, like a torpedo-boat in the wake of a large steamer."

SHETLAND ISLANDERS.

Single-Hearted Men and Women. Noted for their Industry and Honesty.

The Shetland and Orkney islands belonged to Norway until 1468, when, as history informs us, "they were implored to James the Third of Scotland as a part of the dowry given with his Queen," for about that time he was married to Princess Margaret of Denmark. It is added that "these islands were never redeemed."

Shetlanders are a small, active and hardy people, very genial, too, and distinguished, whether rich or poor, for very industrious habits. No less are they noted for intense love of country.

Much of the farm-work is carried on by the women of the household. Fields and gardens are their great delight. They are adepts in culinary lore, and spin, weave and make up stores of household linen and flannels. No less successfully do they cut and make all family clothing, and as well pride themselves upon the number of bags of stockings, thick and warm, which they exhibit to neighbors and friends with intense satisfaction. Thrift and thoughtfulness develop many bright touches of ornamentation, but the maiden's own wit must devise the outlining, her own dainty touch accomplish the delicate needle-work. Shops full of beautiful patterns and gay-hued materials are unknown joys in Shetland. The flowers of the field and the trees of the wood must furnish not only patterns, but the coloring needed for their wools and threads. Every maiden must be her own purveyor for every pigment needed.

The great luxury of the peasant women is tea-drinking. This article, brought from distant ports, would be beyond their means unless secured by exchange, and is said to be a universal means of payment for little services rendered. An errand involving hours of travel will be cheerfully accomplished for "one drawing" of the yearned-for refreshment, and this may be said of many household services. Skillful spinners will gladly "give many turns to the wheel" for a complement of the delicious beverage.

Sheep are largely a source of trade to farmers of these islands; the mutton is dark in color and of fine flavor, the fleece is soft and of such delicate texture that from it may be spun a thread as dainty as daintiest cambric; one thou-

sand yards are often spun from one ounce of wool, each thread being threefold, thus making three thousand yards in all. Stockings knit from this can be drawn through a finger-ring, and for such delicate hosiery two guineas per pair, or even more, are often paid. Within a few years more and more of this exquisite thread is used in making shawls, pure white or dark gray, which command very high prices; they are like cobwebs for delicacy and lightness.

What the camel is to an Arab, the sure-footed, tough-fibred pony is to the Shetlander. One familiar with their customs has said that though bred wild on the heaths, the "shelties," as the ponies are sometimes called, can be tamed in one night. The hunter, throwing his lasso with skill, secures a frisky colt, and for twenty-four hours keeps him a prisoner. The small creature hears no other voice than his master's; the hunter feeds and caresses him, and gradually the terrible restlessness subsides. Hereafter he becomes a docile, affectionate burden-bearer and companion. He needs no stable, and has a happy faculty of enjoying whatever he finds to eat. A dun-colored "sheltie" of exquisite symmetry, seen by a tourist, could stand under a dining-table, and a little lady could seat herself upon its back without lifting her feet from the ground. They are favorites for the saddle, and many are sent to other countries for the pleasure of ladies and children.

Nearly all Shetlanders can read and write, and are scrupulously attentive to the simple religious services of their church.

As everywhere else in the world, superstitions have crept in among these simple-hearted islanders, and are handed down from one generation to another. Notably is that called "cured by the coin." For the scrofula nothing is regarded as so efficacious as "the touch of a royal hand." As a substitute, a few crowns or half-crowns of the coinage of Charles I, carefully handed down from father to son, are accepted as effectual.—*Harper's Sanar.*

AN AMERICAN TRAIT.

Thackeray's Experience With One of the Once Famous "Bowery Boys."

In the United States the absence of that segregation of the various grades of society which exist in Europe is evinced by the habits and manners of the masses in that country. If the national independence of character be occasionally pushed too far and degenerates into offensive self-assertion, at least it prevents any approach to servility. No inequality of position or circumstances will induce a native of any of the Northern States to submit to being dealt with in the manner or spoken to in the tone which in England the man in broadcloth too often adopts, as a matter of course, toward the man in fustian. The late Sidney Godolphin Osborne used to relate how, once, a respectable artisan said to him: "I like you, my Lord; there is nothing of the gentleman about you." The meaning of the speaker was undoubtedly that Lord Osborne did not treat him in the patronizing manner that members of the higher class usually address those whom they regard as their social inferiors. Now, no one perhaps has a keener appreciation of the advantages of wealth and education than the American; but that the possessor of them should feel himself justified in using toward the man who lacks these advantageous gifts the language of a superior to an inferior is what he can not understand and which he will not for one moment put up with.

An anecdote Thackeray used to relate of an experience of his when in the United States well illustrates the trait of the people. While in New York he expressed to a friend a desire to see some of the "Bowery b'hoys," who, he had heard, were a class of the community peculiar to that city. So one evening he was taken to the Bowery and he was shown a "b'hoys." The young man, the business of the day being over, had changed his attire. He wore a dress coat, black trousers and a satin waistcoat, while a tall hat rested on the back of his head, which was adorned with a long, well-greased hair—known as "soap-locks"—a style which the rowdies of that day affected. The youth was leaning against a lamp-post, smoking an enormous cigar, and his whole aspect was one of ineffable self-satisfaction. The eminent novelist, after contemplating him for a few moments with silent admiration, said to the gentleman by whom he was accompanied: "This is a great and gorgeous creature!" adding: "Can I speak to him without his taking offense?"

Receiving an answer in the affirmative, Thackeray went up to the fellow, on the pretext of asking his way, and said: "My good man, I want to go to Broome street."

But the unlucky phrase, "My good man," roused the gall of the individual spoken to. Instead, therefore, of affording the information sought, the "b'hoys"—a diminutive specimen of humanity, scarcely over five feet in height—eyeing the tall form of his interlocutor askance, answered the query in the sense that his permission had been asked for the speaker to visit the locality in question, and he said, patronizingly: "Well, sonny, yer kin go thar."

When Thackeray subsequently related the incident he laughingly declared that he was so disconcerted by the unexpected response that he had not the courage to continue the dialogue.—*Chambers' Journal.*

—Intellectual Boston chews more spruce gum than any other city in the country, but intellectual Chicago comes next on the list.—*Chicago Times.*

CHINESE FARMING.

The Comfortable Condition of the Celestial Empire's Agricultural Population.

In passing through the silk-growing district which begins very near to Shanghai and extends all round to the city of Hangchow, I could but be struck indeed with the comfort which prevailed every where. The farm houses of China, or at any rate in that part of China, were models of what farm houses should be. I had expected to see squalor and wretchedness, and was all prepared for what I really beheld. Exceedingly good gardening I was of course prepared for, for Chinese gardening is synonymous with everything that is neat and productive. But the orchards and mulberry trees all beautifully trimmed, with the brick-built and excellent houses half-hidden away in them, certainly astonished me. I chanced to land from my house-boat frequently in order to shoot woodcock, for it was in winter time when I passed through the district. To get these birds it was necessary to scramble over the fields and through the mulberry orchards of the districts, and I was simply amazed to see how beautifully the trees were kept. Underneath great quantities of vegetables were grown, not a foot of earth appeared to be wasted, and every inch was in the most superb order. Had the whole country been a vast garden, it could not have been better tended and cared for. There were not hereabouts any hedges or walls, the fields were divided from each other by deep dykes, which served the double purpose of marking out the land and irrigating or draining, as the case might be, the adjacent soil. The trees, of which there were myriads, were all planted with mathematical exactness and in the greatest order, unlike the trees in many English orchards, which seem to have been stuck into the ground with a view of wasting as much space as possible. And as for the tops of the trees, they had all been carefully trimmed to the same pattern, every little bough having been inspected and cut as circumstances chanced to require. I never saw anything half so orderly in any country in the world; for these were no ornamental gardens which I was going through, but mulberry orchards, extending over hundreds of square miles of country, and owned by thousands of different husbandmen. Inside the house, again I was surprised at the comfort which prevailed. In each one there were at least two rooms set apart especially for the silk-worms, and these were kept scrupulously clean. The other rooms of the house were well furnished, comfortable and warm—in every case very clean also; and I did not see in any country house any of the squalor or misery one sees in many English, Scotch, and especially Irish districts.

At the time when I was in this country, too, there was a very general feeling of increased contentment springing up, owing to the opening of some large silk-winding factories at Shanghai by American and English firms. Hitherto the winding of the silk from the cocoons had been done in most cases by the silk growers themselves, and the demand for the silk thus differently wound and the prices paid for it were alike small. But with the establishment of silk-winding factories, filled with steam and machinery, at Shanghai, it was hoped and expected by the silk growers that the price of cocoons would go up, and that consequently silk growing would improve as an industry. In any case the entire population seemed to be prosperous and well contented. It does not always do to take the dress of any Chinaman as an index to the wealth he may possess. He may have many reasons—among them being the dread of attracting the attention of some rapacious mandarin—for not showing more richness of attire than is absolutely necessary, and he may prefer to go about in warm rags than run the risk of being "squeezed" by the local officials, so that many a traveler may mistake this intentional poverty of attire for want of money. I had pointed out to me in Canton one day, for example, a particularly woe-begone-looking Chinaman going up the street. The gentleman who was with me, and who was a resident on the adjacent island of Shamien, said: "Poor! I wish I was as rich as that Chinaman. Why, half the European houses here are in his debt; but if he showed this by his dress the Mandarin here would soon borrow a trifle of him."—*London Morning Post.*

USEFULNESS OF GIRLS.

Why Every Young Woman Should Acquire a Knowledge of House-Work.

There is a large class of Americans—people of opulence, men of acquired or inherited wealth—who do not hesitate to inculcate the belief among their children, and especially their daughters, that it is useless and unnecessary for them to learn to do any thing useful in connection with domestic manual labor. It is no uncommon expression in the higher circles of society for ladies to declare: "My husband" or "my father is rich, why, then, should I demean myself by manual labor?" In such "society" it is deemed vulgar for a lady to know how to do a useful thing in connection with housekeeping. Parents in these cases rear their daughters not to learn to do the useful, and many mothers, whose husbands are under a hard strain every day in the year to find the wherewithal to keep up appearances impress their daughters with the idea that labor is degrading, and that a hand which shows any sign of manual work will not be sought in marriage by a gentleman. We confess we do not know how

true this is. If it is correct, then it is the evidence of a lack of manhood, and if it is not true, it is a wicked libel on the character of an American gentleman.

Girls who won't learn to do useful things at home because their fathers are rich lose opportunities to fit themselves to meet the exigencies and the accidents of life. It has always been the custom for the Princes of Germany to learn trades. The Bourbon Princes of France all acquired trades. Some of them were printers, bookbinders, shipwrights, house carpenters, joiners and painters. They did not follow these vocations, but they understood them. Royal and princely ladies in Germany and France understand every function of housekeeping, and know how to perform it. They can go to the dairy and stable and milk a cow and handle a horse with dexterity and satisfaction. The Prince of Wales is a bookbinder. Each of his brothers has a trade, and his sons are now learning trades according to their tastes. All the ladies of the English royal household are accomplished in practical things—they know how to do useful things, even if they are never called upon to perform them.

The awkwardness or sentimentality which encourages girls not to learn to do useful, practical and strengthening labor is a debasement of the noblest impulses of nature. When such an inculcation is encouraged it tends to deprive girls especially from developing their mental and physical forces, to enervate them, and improve functions which, if properly trained, might develop the good and grand in their character. Work properly performed is a recuperator, not an exhauster, of mental and physical forces. Knowledge is power is an axiom as truth. To know how to do the useful is an accomplishment of which any girl can be proud, and especially an American girl.—*Hamburg Independent.*

WOMEN HUSKING CORN.

Industrious Wives and Daughters Who Have Aided in Iowa's Development.

A man who had returned from a trip across Iowa, was telling as though it were a new or rare case, that he saw women out in the cornfield in autumn husking corn. He talked of it as though it were degrading and unbecoming for women to be engaged in such servitude. It shows a man's ignorance of the world, especially of the Iowa part of it, if he does not know that it is not a new, a rare, or a degrading work. Every good man of course, deeply regrets the necessity which demands such work in inclement weather by women. But it has been practiced in all parts of the State ever since it was inhabited. It is doubtful if there is a county or even a township, but what noble and true women, the past fall, could have been seen husking corn. It was not as a free husk, or for mere amusement. But it was done in most cases as a work of necessity. Nor is a girl or a wife lessened in the estimation of good men and women, in times when the profits of the farm will not justify hiring men to gather corn, for the daughters and wives to prepare themselves comfortably, and go to the field and aid brothers and husbands in corn husking. It is a tedious and lengthy part of farm work which has not yet been aided by any patent machinery. It has to be done in the old-fashioned way.

The writer has known in the past thirty years some of the best girls and truest women Iowa ever had, who made regular hands during the entire fall, in the corn-field. And we especially recollect seeing an intelligent and bright girl who prided herself in being able to husk forty bushels of corn per day, glorying in the honorable and exhilarating labor of corn-husking. That woman is now the honored wife of one of Iowa's ablest Senators. Instead of these being rare cases, thousands of girls and women have aided efficiently in the corn-husking in Iowa. Nor is it in the least dishonorable or derogatory to the character of any good woman. The best of women of England, France and Germany (not, of course, of the Lady Campbell class) aid in the wheat harvests. And in this country, until recently, it was the universal practice for all the females of the family, in health, to work in the fields in hay harvest. The invention of the mower, horse rake and automatic pitcher have relieved the females of the farm from this service. Yet there are many who go out yet from choice to aid in this healthy and invigorating work.

Instead of decrying the women who annually aid in the corn-harvest in Iowa, we honor them for the spirit and economy which prompts them to aid in this most pressing work of the farm. It does not degrade them in character, but, on the contrary, aids in developing them physically for the great duties of life.—*Des Moines (Ia.) Register.*

—A Bangor ice man says that they never take a horse on the ice without tying a rope around his neck, so that if he gets into the water the rope may be tightened and the animal choked. The strangled horse at once puffs up and rises to the surface, and is then usually pulled out without much trouble, and when he is well away from the hole the nose is loosened and he gets his wind again. A few hours' hard work generally warms the chilled horse thoroughly, and he is none the worse for his cold bath.—*Boston Journal.*

—Why is it that a woman with a costly fan finds the atmosphere in the theatre so warm while the man next to her is thinking of putting on his overcoat.—*New Haven News.*