



### FERTILIZER AND CAPONS.

GUY ELLIOTT MITCHELL.

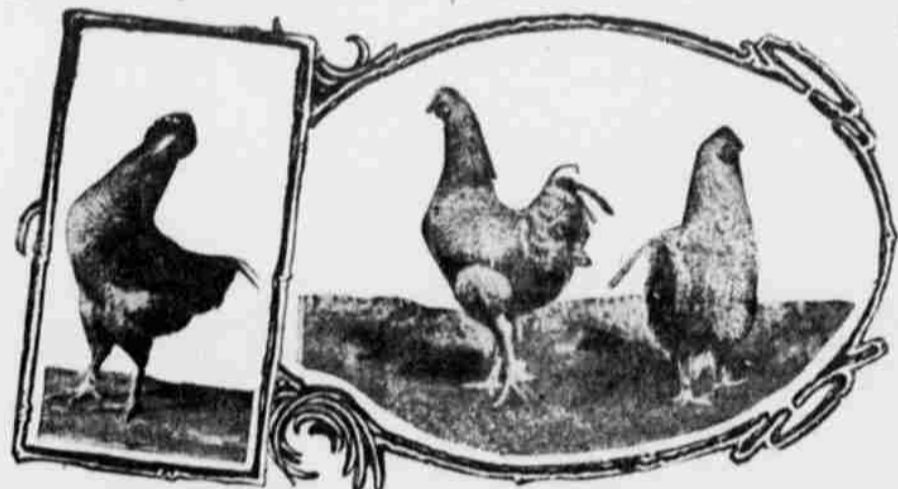
#### New Potash Discovery.

One series of experiments have just been concluded by the Department of Agriculture that promise to be of immense value to the farmers of the country in furnishing them with a new supply of fertilizer at very much cheaper rates than has ever been possible before, and at the same time emancipating this country from Germany, which has heretofore furnished almost our entire supply of potash fertilizer. It is a long and quite an interesting story, and probably will mean a great deal to agriculture in this country. The most remarkable part of it is, too, that the idea originated in the bureau of roads, which normally has nothing to do with fertilizers.

Last summer when Dr. Cushman of the roads office was working in the laboratory with very finely powdered rock, the idea struck him, as it has struck a good many other chemists, that it was a natural born shame that this country, with an unlimited supply of rock high in its percentage of potash, should have to depend on other countries for its potash salts, for there has never been any commercial deposits of the salts found in this country as it is in Germany. He extracted some of the potash by electricity, though it is by no means certain yet that this can be done on a paying commercial basis. But then he decided that as ground rock was very cheap it might be worth while to try the experiment of letting the plants do their own extracting. He tried the experiment on his own place up country and found that the powdered rock did actually act as a fertilizer, though the potash it carried was so tied up that it took the chemistry of nature to extract it and feed it into the plant. But the first trial promised well.

#### SUCCESSFUL GREENHOUSE EXPERIMENTS.

The work was then turned over to the bureau of plant industry, and three similar plots of tobacco were



NINE MONTHS' OLD PLYMOUTH ROCK CAPONS.

planted in the greenhouse. One of these was treated with the imported German fertilizer, another was left without any fertilizer at all, and the third was fertilized with finely ground common granite. The granite was high in potash, but it had not been treated in any way, and if the experiment succeeded it simply meant that there was a big new field of home-grown fertilizer open to the farmer.

When the crops of tobacco were cut, the imported fertilizer had produced a crop of green leaf that weighed 155 pounds. The powdered granite produced a crop of 154 pounds and the unfertilized crop was spotted and ran only about 120 pounds.

This crop was examined by the experts, and so far as could be told, the leaf was not only just as heavy, but of just as good texture in the granite fertilized patch as in the patch on which the German fertilizer had been used. The crop is being dried now, and it will take a long time before it is all fermented and properly cured so that it can be made up for smoking and tested in that way.

But that was a greenhouse experiment, and greenhouse work to field work is about like laboratory experiments to commercial work. What succeeds under glass may or may not go out of doors. But the department was so well pleased with the results, that it has tried the new fertilizer on crops of tobacco up in Connecticut, in Virginia, Kentucky and Florida. These crops are now under way, and there is a great deal of interest felt in the success of the work out of doors. The principal question seems to be whether there will be enough water in the natural rainfall to make the potash in the ground rock available for the plants. During anything like a decently wet season there is little question that there would be water in plenty. But it is possible that for a very dry crop there will have to be as much as a tenth of imported fertilizer added to the native rock.

#### A VAST SAVING.

The ground rock, on the other hand, can be produced for about \$3 a ton, and there is so much of it in the country that runs high in potash and is available for use that the supply could never be cornered. It is true that the native fertilizer takes about two tons to give the same results as one ton of the soluble imported salts. But this amounts to \$6 for fertilizer against \$90 or \$100. So the result is not bad.

Several mills are already being erected, one in Maryland and one in New England, for grinding rock for just this purpose, and there are a number of other concerns that have talked of going into the business before even the field experiments of the department are finished.

The outlook is for a very important change in the fertilizing business in this country. Just where the credit for the work ultimately will land is a question. It probably will not be with Dr. Cushman or the road office, (A 29)

as it is not in their line of work. And the department will get nothing out of it from the farmers but thanks, for that is what the department is there for.

It is a discovery, which, if it "pans out," is of immense importance to agriculture. There are many crops, such as tobacco and tomatoes, which require excessive proportions of potash, while all complete fertilizers contain liberal percentages. Potash is one of the trinity which makes plant growth possible—potash, nitrogen and phosphorus.

#### Capons and Caponizing.

By CHARLES J. PILLING.

Capons are aptly termed the "finest chicken meat in the world," for there is nothing growing feathers which is their superior, if equal. A capon is neither rooster nor hen—it is nothing else than a capon. After removing the organs of reproduction from the cockerel, his nature becomes entirely changed. The birds take on a more rapid growth, are more tame, awkward in carriage and always exceedingly lazy; they grow a very hoary and beautiful plumage, the comb and wattles cease to grow, the spurs do not develop as in the cockerel, and being cast off by both rooster and hen the capon soon shows a fondness for the society of little chicks.

#### BEST TIME TO CAPONIZE.

Fowls hatched any time of the year make fine capons; no ill results follow the operation at any time in the year. The bird should be from two to three months old (not over six months) and weigh not less than a pound to a pound and a half. The size is equally as important as the age. April, May, June, July, August, September and October are the months generally taken for caponizing, for the reason that spring chickens arrive at the proper age and weight for the operation during these months, also because cockerels caponized then reach at the proper age and weight for market during the months of November, December, January, February, March, April and May, at which times there is the greatest demand for them in the cities and highest prices secured.

#### PROFIT IN CAPONS.

Caponize the chicks and you have at once laid the foundation for a handsome profit in a short time to come. Outside of the cardinal points of profit, the simplicity of the operation when proper instruments are used recommends itself to every one. A boy ten years old can readily perform the operation, and any one can soon become an expert.

To the poultry raiser it can be said that there is no source of profit bringing larger returns for the outlay than raising capons, the profit in a great majority of cases being over 100 per cent. The question of assured profit is an all-convincing argument in any line and pre-eminently so to the poultrymen whose losses are added to from various unlooked for sources.

#### DIRECTIONS FOR CAPONIZING.

From twenty-four to thirty-five hours before performing the operation, select such cockerels as you intend to caponize (these should be from two to four months old) confining them in a clean airy coop or room without food or water. The best time to confine them is at early morning, as their long fast will then end about noon of the following day, at which time the operation is performed. Should the day be cloudy or wet do not caponize them, but let the operation go until you have a bright and fair day. It is necessary that you have all the light possible in the matter. Now after slightly wetting the spot proceed to turn down the feathers from the upper part of the last two ribs and just in front of the thigh joint.

Pull the flesh on the side down toward the hip, and when the operation is finished the cut between the ribs



MAKING THE INCISION.

will be entirely closed by the skin going back to its place.

#### PROPER INSTRUMENTS.

It is a matter of importance to have proper instruments for caponizing, and the more is read of the literary effusions appearing in numerous papers to-day touching caponizing instruments the more need there is to caution the inexperienced operator. While it is not cruel to caponize, it is inhuman to butcher or to cause unnecessary pain.

#### NOT A CRUEL OPERATION.

A large number of persons hesitate in caponizing, feeling it to be cruel to

the bird. To these the writer wishes to bring his experiences in this matter proving to the contrary. This is a greatly mistaken notion, and the operation bestows an unlimited amount of kindness on the bird, even if there



INSERTING THE SPREADER.

were no other considerations or returns. The writer has had everyone else on a farm, has seen cockerels fly at one another time and time again, tearing flesh and feathers with beak and cutting with spurs. Before the combats could be separated there has been a disfigured comb perhaps a blinded eye and a generally cut up bird. This is the essence of cruelty.

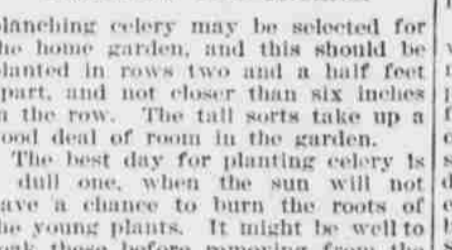
After caponizing, the habits of the bird are entirely changed. Their disposition is quiet and peaceable, habits mild and tending to a solitary life and perfectly contented wherever situated. They no longer chase about the farm spoiling for a fight and running off fesh as fast as put on. They no longer arouse the whole neighborhood from morning until night by their incessant crowing, but, on the contrary become models of good dispositions, leading a quiet life, that will surely bring large returns to the raiser. An operation that does away with so much inborn evil can not be considered cruel.

#### Celery for the Home Garden.

The waning of summer acts as a gentle reminder to the home gardener, that in order to have a crop of celery for winter use, it is desirable to get the plants into the ground before August has too far advanced. If the celery seed has been sown in April or May, the young plants should, by August first, be in proper shape for transplanting. If this has not been done, stocky plants may be obtained at the seed store.

Celery culture, to be successful must rely upon deep soil, the deeper the better, for thereby the roots are not dried out as is the case where the tiny rootlets come close to the surface in a mad search for moisture. Celery plants require that the roots be cool, with plenty of water—but not stagnant water. It is considered advisable, therefore, before planting, to prepare the ground thoroughly and deeply.

Having the ground in good, workable condition, the next step is planting out. The easiest way to do this is to make a six-inch deep furrow, filled in with three inches of fine well-rotted manure or rich compost. The furrow is then filled in nearly level with the surface with good soil mixed with manure. Dwarf, self-



REMOVING THE ORGANS.

blanching celery may be selected for the home garden, and this should be planted in rows two and a half feet apart, and not closer than six inches in the row. The tall sorts take up a good deal of room in the garden.

#### Called Shonts' bluff.

Railroad men are telling of a recent experience of Mr. Shonts, the head of the Panama Canal Commission. Shonts, as president of the Clover Leaf System, was traveling on a pass. He was approached by a conductor, who appeared to be about as husky a specimen of manhood as Shonts is, and who told him he would have to pay extra fare or cease occupying the drawing-room of the parlor car. Shonts produced his pass, but the conductor said the agreement between the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad and the Pennsylvania System was that passholders could not occupy drawing-rooms unless they paid extra fare. Shonts remarked that he would not pay extra fare. The conductor declared Shonts would pay or be put out. Shonts managed to conceal his feelings well enough to inquire with a show of calmness who would conduct the ejectment. The conductor calmly answered that he would undertake the job. Shonts said he did not believe he could do it. The conductor then told Shonts to produce the money in ten minutes or be ejected. The conductor went away and returned on schedule time. Shonts paid.

#### To Determine Length of Day.

By a simple rule the length of the day and night at any time of the year may be ascertained. By doubling the time of the sun's rising, the length of the night is obtained, and by doubling the time of setting the length of the day is given. Thus when the sun rises, say at five o'clock, the length of the night is ten hours.

#### FROCKS FOR THE YOUNG GIRL.

What the Little Folks are Wearing this Summer. BERTHA BROWNING.

Batiste of all descriptions is the material most in vogue for young girls' dresses and children's frocks of dressy order. Taffetas are also used usually of a fancy type showing small checks or equally small broche effects on a plain or changeable ground, and in medium tints. For ordinary wear there are pique, linen and neutral fabrics fashioned into frocks of simplicity and trim style. The dressy gowns for young girls are simple too, but not without some degree of elegance. Many of the skirts have one or two flounces about the lower edge and these are often set on with deep bands of embroidery or lace. Tucks and ruffles are much used while the knife platings of batiste are a much favored garniture for frocks of dressy order.

A great simplicity pervades the linen, pique and light woolen suits for girls. These usually have a plain skirt trimmed only with bias folds of the material. The jacket is a short, narrow semi-fitted one with basques never exceeding four inches in length. Girls from twelve to sixteen do not wear the corset skirt nor are they suitable for any but fully developed figures. The Parisian girl attains the age of sixteen before she is considered sufficiently developed to wear such a style.

#### FOR THE TOTS.

For younger children from five to twelve, the same materials are used with the exception of taffetas. For these, the skirt is usually completed by a blouse while tucks and very narrow frilling are the favorite trimming. The best frock may be of eyelet embroidery having a ribbon sash.

#### Birthplace of Common Plants.

Celery was first grown in Germany. Italy was the first home of the chestnut. The onion is from Egypt. Tobacco is a native of North America. Spinach was originally an Arabian plant. The radish is a Chinese product. Rye was first cultivated in Siberia. Greece gave us the citron.



A LITTLE TOT IN A COOL SUMMER DRESS.

This merely surrounds the waist without being drawn in snugly and is knotted at one side with short ends while long loops and ends finish the other side. The ribbon used for this is not wide, number 16 being the usual choice. The only silks used for children are tussah and occasionally foulard, the latter plain and in ecru tint.

#### TRIM COATS FOR SMALL FOLKS.

Coats for small folks are constructed a bit differently from those worn by older girls. These are cut with loose front as well as back, but at the same time it is narrow. In proportion the basque is longer, often reaching one-third down the skirt and retaining its narrow shapeliness cut. The sleeves are of simple coat style being of full length while dress sleeves usually end at the elbow.

A separate wrap which is much in vogue among young girls is the loose medium length coat of shepherd's plaid. This is of some soft wool a favorite being white lined with black or grey. The only adornment consists of the fabric or pearl buttons down the front. The coat is worn with every sort of dress from the knockabout frock to the dressy afternoon or Sunday outfit. Some of the same style coats a bit different in shaping are being worn by young and older women. They do not appear so well upon any one as upon the girl for whom they were originally intended. Taffeta coats of similar style are also worn but are not so popular nor suitable for youthful wearers.

#### LINGERIE HATS FASHIONABLE.

Hats for the young folks are mostly broad and of the capeline order. The straws are supple so that they may be readily pinched up into any sort of shape. The fabric hat—that is to say of batiste or linen, is of broad shape and very becoming. These are more popular than last year if possible and may be worn upon almost any occasions according to the hat. These are stiffer than the straw hats because they are made over wire frames.



"That farmer thought he would fool me when he put a door knob and a china egg in my nest."—From Life.

A musty cellar may be sweetened by setting pans of very hot charcoal about the floor, especially in the dark corners.

The Standard Oil Trust has now gotten control of the starch industry. Here is where we will all get it in the neck. Numerous office boys who lost their grandmothers just after the opening of the last baseball season are already reporting other relatives in a critical condition.

#### FREE FARM SCHOLARSHIP.

Offer to Some Bright Boy Who Wants to Improve His Knowledge of Agriculture.

A free scholarship in scientific and practical agriculture is open to some young man who can demonstrate his fitness for the privilege. E. J. Hollister, the Dean of the Winona Agricultural Institute, at Winona Lake, Indiana, announces that he will give this free scholarship, providing for tuition and living expenses for the two school years. Thus it will be seen that the young man who wins this scholarship will get through with comparatively little expense to himself. The course given in the Institute embraces agriculture and horticulture. The student will not be allowed to take up any special line, either in the practice or the acquiring of these kindred sciences. However, special privileges may be granted where the student shows a decided taste for specializing. Competition is open to young men over sixteen years of age from any State in the Union, of good character, endorsed by two well known citizens. Those who wish to compete should write to the Dean not later than August 1st, giving a brief history of their life and five reasons why they desire to take up agricultural science. The work is simplified so very much at the Institute that candidates having a Common School education should be able to succeed, and after graduating have an opportunity to take up practical work at other points where the Dean is now directing the development of small farms or reclamation projects and where he is very much in need of the assistance of trained young men. By reason of this necessity, he offers this scholarship.

#### Wherever

anywhere in this country there is Any One who has the Spirit of True Patriotism and Genuine Love of Humanity in his or her heart.

#### "The Coming People"

By CHARLES F. DOLE

should be the first book to be read

Celery was first grown in Germany. Italy was the first home of the chestnut. The onion is from Egypt. Tobacco is a native of North America. Spinach was originally an Arabian plant. The radish is a Chinese product. Rye was first cultivated in Siberia. Greece gave us the citron.

There is a multitude of thinking people who see the dangers the future holds for our country unless we reach a wise solution of the tremendous social problems that confront us.

The spirit in which we should approach the consideration of these problems is set forth in this remarkable book in a way that must be an inspiration to every truly humane and patriotic heart.

Let the spirit of common sense and optimism and fundamental economic and philosophical truth that pervades this book be taken as the underlying motive of the movement, and the Creed and Platform of the Homecrofters as the practical plan to work to, and the rest of the great social questions are certain to be rightly solved by application to them of the sound and humane principles that will guide the action of our people upon all great national questions.

One copy of "The Coming People" postage prepaid will be mailed to any address in the United States for twenty-five cents.

One copy of both "The Coming People" and "The First Book of the Homecrofters" and "Maxwell's Tailor" monthly for the rest of the year 1906 will be mailed to any address in the United States for fifty cents.

Remit in postage stamps to The Homecrofters, 143 Main street, Watertown, Mass.

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#### The Dentist's Bill.

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"What's the matter, Life?" asked the Democratic leader. "I've just been done out of some money, Mars John, and that's matalah 'nough," replied the negro. "Had a terrible misery in mah foot and went to a dentist and got hit pulled, and he chaged me a dollah, a whole dollah. Why, once down in Tennessee I went to ole Doc Tinker, and he pulled two toofs and broke my jawbone, and only chaged me fifty cents. I's been ban-coed."

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WOOD WOOD CO., a BROADWAY, NEW YORK Dept. 179.

#### PALISADE PATTERNS.

A TRIM SHIRT WAIST. Designed by BERTHA BROWNING.

The shirt waist suit fills so large a need in Millady's wardrobe that it cannot be easily dispensed with. This frock figure prominently in the most fashionable wardrobes of the season and no woman can afford to be without several of various materials. Here is a model for a shirt waist dress suitable to development in linen, pongee, Rajah, taffetas or mohair, and not difficult for the home dressmaker. The tabbed yoke with its stole front, closing at the left of the centre, is very effective and full of style. Three narrow tucks appear at each side of the centre, front and back, and again at each side seam of the skirt. Buttons are much used upon the new frocks of tailor construction, and here they not only adorn but serve a purpose. The sleeves are long, but may be easily finished below the elbow if desired. For the medium size 9 yards of 36-inch material are necessary to develop the gown.

Two Patterns: 6496—sizes, 32 to 42 inches bust measure. 6497—sizes, 20 to 30 inches waist.

The price of these patterns is 10c, but each will be sent upon receipt of 10c.

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