

AGRICULTURAL.

TOPICS OF INTEREST RELATIVE TO FARM AND GARDEN.

Grape Growing.

An Hungarian, who is starting a vineyard at Chester, Conn., says that the Americans make the ground too rich for this fruit, and in the selection of his vineyard has taken land with a soil originally "too poor to grow white beans." This enterprise will be watched with some interest and the conclusion may be found to be correct. We remember visiting a vineyard of wonderful productivity, of T. B. Wakeman, at Green Farms in the same State, and it was situated upon a side hill of very light sandy soil, but it was a feast to look upon the enormous clusters of fine fruit. The thin soil may have been a partial secret to the success.—*Germantown Telegraph.*

Grafting Fruits.

Next to the planting of new trees during the coming spring, preparation should be made for grafting the natural apple trees and other bearers of worthless fruit to be found on almost every farm. Some varieties of fruit, however, should be budded, rather than grafted, and I give the following schedule of modes of propagation adapted to different trees and fruit-bearing shrubs.

Apple and pear, budding and grafting.

Cherry, mostly by budding, but succeeds well by grafting if done very early.

Peach and nectarine, by budding only, at the North; often succeeds by grafting at the South.

Plum, by grafting, and also by budding if the stocks are thrifty.

Apricot, mostly by budding, sometimes by grafting.

Almond, by budding and sometimes by grafting.

Chestnut, by early grafting.

Walnut, by early grafting and by annual budding.

Quince, by cutting and grafting.

Filbert, by suckers and layers. The finer sorts may be grafted on the more common, which reduces the size of the bush and makes them more prolific.

Grape, by layers and cuttings, and, in rare instances, grafting is advantageously employed for new or rare sorts on old or wild stocks, producing rapid growth and early bearing.

Baspberry and blackberry, by suckers, cuttings of roots and layers.

Gooseberry and currant, by cuttings and sometimes by layers.

To insure good grafting one must have sharp tools and good wax. The grafting wax purchased is not always a good article, and it is preferable to make it, by heating and mixing equal parts of rosin, tallow and yellow beeswax. A coat of this wax, about one-twentieth of an inch thick, spread over muslin, calico or tough and flexible paper, makes an excellent plaster for out-door grafting; or, if spread half an inch on paper, is well adapted to root grafting. In either case the strips should be narrow, that they may be easily wrapped around the graft till it is well covered, when the rest may be torn off. In making the plasters it is essential that the ingredients of the wax should be thoroughly stirred together before it is spread. A kind of paper, soft, thin and tough, is now much used by dry goods shopkeepers for wrapping, and may be purchased cheaply by the ream. For out-door grafting, in cool weather, a lantern or chafing dish is required to soften the plasters. A cheaper kind of wax can be made of four parts of tallow, one part of yellow beeswax, but it sticks to one's fingers and cannot be rapidly used.—*Cultivator.*

Farm and Garden Notes.

As a protection for rose bushes all seaweeds are good fertilizers.

Apple and peach trees should be planted annually, to keep up a good supply of fruit.

The best time to sort potatoes is when picking them up, which should be done very soon after digging.

Don't destroy the humble bees. They are the agents by which the clover pollen is carried from one blossom to another.

A cow in milk should never be driven faster than a moderate walk. With a full udder it hurts a cow to trot or run.

It is said that eggs from hens kept without roosters, will keep at least twice as long as those from hens running with roosters.

Cows at pasture after the first severe frost want something more than the damaged grass. Grain will come in play as well as in mid-winter.

Gives the cows only pure, clean water to drink, and fence them away from stagnant pools if you do not wish to be bothered with bitter milk.

In England a very fine flavor is imparted to the flesh of fattening turkeys by feeding them, in confinement, with cooked food in which chopped sweet herbs, like parsley, have been mixed.

By keeping Canada thistles cut down close to the ground they can be destroyed, but it will require two or three years to become free of the pests. Not a single plant should be allowed to grow.

Those who pack eggs in salt must remember that it is necessary to pack the eggs as soon after they are laid as possible. They should be put into the salt as soon after they come from the nest as possible.

Every farmer's wife knows that apple-wood ashes make a very strong lye. This is also one of the most fruit trees, and especially those that have been very productive. The men fruit needs potash to enable it to flourish, and the roots take up sap filled with this mineral wherever it is available. One of this never leaves the tree, but remains in the yearly layer of wood.

Some of the farmers in New Jersey think that tomato skins make an excellent fertilizer for wheat, and several of them claim to have used it for that grain for several years with marked success. After taking 15 to 20 tons of tomatoes from the acre the vines are turned under and great crops of wheat are not unfrequently gathered the following July from a tomato field of the past year.

The small fruits ripen in hot weather, when drying them by old-fashioned methods is very difficult. The evaporator, says the *Cultivator*, does its best work in these, and its use has created a popular demand for the evaporated product which as yet has never been fully supplied. The black and red raspberries are especially valuable, and the demand for evaporation will long keep the price during the picking season at a paying rate.

In caring for roses it is not so much protection from the cold as from sudden changes that is desirable, as all roses will stand a fall of temperature some degrees below the freezing point if not in growing condition. Wait until the cold has killed the foliage on the rose bushes and checked the growth, and then cut away the withering buds and tender shoots, which, being full of soft wood and sap, tend to produce decay during warm winters or early spring.

Live Mastodons in Alaska.

For several years scientists have been greatly interested in stories that have come from Alaska tending to shake their faith in the belief that the mastodon is an extinct animal. The latest contribution on this subject—the importance of which, from a zoological point of view cannot be overestimated—is furnished by the *Free Press*, published at Juneau, Alaska. The editor of that paper says:

In conversation with D. H. Summers, formerly of Denver, Col., who came out this fall with a party of miners from Forty Mile Creek, we learned that the existence of living mastodons were not the mere fabrications of northern furriers, but that the Stick Indians had positively told him that such animals had been seen by them. One of the Indians said that while hunting one day in that unknown section he came across an immense track sunk to a depth of several inches in moss. It much resembled an elephant's track, but was larger round than a barrel. The Indian followed up this curious track, which, to all appearance, was very fresh, tracking from one immense stride to another, a distance of some miles, when he came in full view of his game. The hunter gave one look, then turned and fled. These Indians, as a rule, are the bravest hunters. With no other weapon than their spear they will attack and kill a grizzly, but the immense proportions of this new style of game both startled and filled the hunter, brave as he was, with great fear.

He described it as being larger than Post Trader Harper's store, with great shining yellowish tusks and mouth large enough to swallow him at a single gulp. He said the animal was doubtless similar to those which furnished the immense bones scattered over that section. If such animals are now in existence, and Mr. Summers has no reason to doubt the veracity of the Indian, as other Indians, and also Mr. Harper, confirmed it, they inhabit a section very high in altitude, but very rarely visited by human beings. We also have no reason to doubt the Indian tale, for at no very distant period Yukon country was inhabited by these animals, as hundreds of their massive skeletons, strewn along the creeks, are silent but truthful witnesses. On Forty Mile Creek bones can be found projecting partly from the sand, and among the driftwood of the stream on the creek below this these skeletons are also quite numerous.

Settling an Old Score.

An old citizen, a gentleman of high social and official standing in St. Joseph, tells a story of the famous Missouri Governor, Bob Stewart, which, true to the letter, proves that fact is stranger than fiction.

"I was coming up the Missouri River when I was a boy," said the ex-Governor, "and I was working my way on a steamboat. At a point where we had to wood up I didn't carry as big a load as some of the roustabouts, nor move with that agility that the others did, for I was not strong and had been tenderly raised. The mate became enraged at my slow movements on the gangplank, and he gave me a kick and sent me ashore, and confiscated my buffalo robe as payment for my passage to that point. I never saw that mate again until I had been inaugurated Governor of this State.

"One day wandering through the wards and districts of the penitentiary, I saw that mate working at a forge. He had been sent there for killing, in a passion, a man under his command. I knew him instantly, and I directed the warden to send the man to the gubernatorial mansion in the garb of a gentleman. When the man arrived I took him into my private office and asked him if he recognized me. 'Do you remember one time, at such and such a place, of kicking a boy and sending him ashore who had been working in your gang?'"

"The man said: 'No, I don't remember it; but it is very likely that I did it.'"

"Well," says I, "I am that boy, and here is your pardon. I always thought I would get even with you."

"The tears came to the old man's eyes, and he said: 'Well, Governor, to be a mate in those days a man had to be a dog.'"

"You played well your part," I said. "Now leave here and don't let me see you again."

"As he made his exit I gave him an able-bodied kick, and little Bob Stewart had got even with that big steamboat mate."

"Sounds like a romance, don't it? Yes. But every word is true, I need barely say, sir."—*St. Joseph (Mo.) Gazette.*

NEWS AND NOTES FOR WOMEN.

Dark blue cashmere garments for girls are braided with scarlet or pale blue braids.

Velvet appears to be a favorite material for the waistcoat, collar and cuffs to wool dresses.

Black and white French lace scarfs are revived for the strings and trimmings of velvet bonnets.

Shot moire ribbons, silks and velvets, plushes and wool and silk novelties are a feature in fabrics.

Fancy woolsens, combined with plain twilled wools, are conspicuous among French importations.

Tailor-made basques are invariably pointed in front, and much trimmed with fine fancy braids.

Mrs. Mackay, wife of the bonanza king, allows herself one hundred and four new gowns a year.

The ex-Empress Eugenie uses an umbrella which cost \$2,000. The handle is a mass of splendid gems.

The competition among dressmakers nowadays seems to be which can devise the worst looking sleeve.

The tendency to make the bodice of one stuff while the skirt and its draperies are of another grows in favor.

The newest bonnets have long crowns, and many have long pointed poke fronts filled in with a slight face trimming.

The amount of braiding on frocks, wraps and garments of all kinds is enormous, and the braid designs this season are very fine.

Wax flowers were first introduced into England by the mother of Mary Beatrice, wife of James II., as a present to her royal daughter.

There is in England a society conducted by ladies for the promoting of long service among servants. Valuable prizes are given.

Even feathers are made in two-tone effects to match the changeable or shot ribbons and stuffs brought out for dress and millinery purposes.

Bustles are no longer worn by people who can afford to pay skilful dressmaker. Bouffant effects are now obtained by springs or reeds set in the dress itself.

Miss Grace, an English cricket player, recently stayed at the wicket a whole afternoon and scored 217 runs against the good bowling of four men.

The Empress of China has composed six hundred stanzas of poetry within the past year, and they are said by Chinese critics to be richer than the songs of Persia.

Mrs. Langtry says she began to practice fencing several years ago because she found it the best substitute for the exercise she had been accustomed to in her long walks.

Jackets made of the same material as the dress must be tight-fitting, those suitable for wear with any dress may be loose-fitting in front, but must set snugly to the back.

Mrs. John W. Mackay is having a cloak made from the breasts of birds of paradise. These cost thirty shillings each, and about five hundred birds will be necessary.

The women of New York have been granted more patents than their sisters in any other State. The women of Massachusetts, Ohio, Indiana and Wisconsin rank next in order.

Camel's hair shawls are coming into fashion again for the reason that the manufacture has practically become a lost art, and they are getting to be exceedingly hard to obtain.

The Greek styles of coiffure do not become popular. The fact is they require more hair than most "modern women of these degenerate days" either have naturally or feel like buying at present high prices.

A new idea in jewelry is that of setting single stones of all sorts and sizes in a plain crown setting, so arranged that they can be worn on bands of velvet in such combinations as may suit the owner's fancy, and thus utilized either as bracelets or "dog-collar" necklaces.

In Finland, according to Bayard Taylor, the women resent as an insult a salute upon the lips. A Finnish matron, hearing of our English custom of kissing, declared that did her husband attempt such a liberty she would treat him with such a box on the ears that he should not readily forget.

Both black and white lace is used as strings and as trimmings on the winter bonnets. The milliners, as usual, think French lace quite choice enough for this purpose; but one may use something better if one has it. Since that Alencon bonnet of Queen Victoria appeared, anything seems allowable.

A Parisian wig maker is selling switches so mounted that they may be worn as a long rippling wave that would make a mermaid envious. These are to be used when one is walking up and down the beach to dry one's hair next summer, which, having been covered with oilskin, is not wet, and is combed in with her false tresses.

A Novel Musical Device.

The latest musical device is a connecting wheel and belt for hitching one of the cheap reed organs that play tunes by means of punctured sheets of paper to the fly wheel of a sewing machine, so that poor seamstresses who used to have no music but the thump, thump of the pedal can now make shirts and trousers to the melody of "Hold the Fort." The old juvenile poem must now be altered to "She shall have music whenever she sews."—*New York Sun.*

An Otsego (Mich.) man was saved from a horrible death by a rooster's crow recently. He was lost in the woods and about being done for, when the cock crew, showing him the way back to civilization.

The "Mellow Softness."

He was a dudish poet, and he often cut a swell, And he thought his conversation charmed each gay and giddy belle; So he said to one, one autumn, when the leaves were flying round, "Don't you see a mellow softness spreading over all the ground?" But the "best laid schemes of mice and men will often gang agley." He tripped his foot upon a stone, then to the earth fell he. She said: "I quite agree with you, your saying is most sound, So I see a mellow softness spreading over all the ground."

—*Goodall's Sun.*

Of the seventeen Presidents of the United States eleven were graduates; of twenty Vice-Presidents, ten; of twenty-nine Secretaries of State, nineteen; of forty-one Associate Justices of the United States Supreme Court, thirty.

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The Colt and the Pears.

A gentleman who keeps a two-year-old colt in a lot where there is fruit has been particular of late to have all the fruit that fell during the night gathered before the colt was turned out in the morning, thinking the fellow would get all that his system required if he ate what fell during the day. Yesterday afternoon one of the family heard a pear tree rattle, and, slipping to the window to see if the tree was being molested, he saw the colt rubbing against it. Directly a pair was started and the colt at once made for it. Then he repeated the rubbing operation till another fell, which he secured and ate. He had been seen rubbing against the tree before, but his movements were not watched. But his owner has no doubt that he has secured his share of the fruit, and didn't take up windfalls either.—*Hartford Courant.*

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