FARM, GARDEN AND HOUSEHOLD

Fruit Culture.

The following is taking from a paper read at the late meeting of the Pennsylvania State board of agriculture by Calvin Cooper:

The proper care of fruit trees is too often neglected. The habit of crowding trees into some out-of-the-way place, or fence-corner, as though unworthy of a better place, is too common. Trees treated thus fail the first year, or languish a few years at best, and finally die for want of a little care and attention, and then the vender or nurseryman is condemned for having sold worthless or diseased trees.

Location should be the first consideration. Rolling ground is always preferable, and a northeasterly slope most desirable, with the altitude as great as circumstances will allow. In adopting such a site you will have perfect drainage and a much lighter and less humid atmosphere; you will also have some protection from the afternoon sun on mild winter days that sometimes follow excessive cold. The sun striking the trunk of the tree after midday, warming one side while the other remains frozen, is often the cause of bursting bark, not unfrequently followed by the destruction of the tree. This can be avoided, however, by growing the trees with low tops, to which I shall allude hereafter. This injury generally occurs about the time the trees begin to bear, and also when there is no shade except from the branches of the tree itself. You can readily see that a slope of from ten to fifteen degrees would elevate the tops of the upper trees sufficiently to afford some shade to each succeeding row. To assist in this protection and to occupy the ground while the trees are small (particularly with apple and standard pear), I would advise planting a peach tree between the apple trees, and indeed, a row of peach trees between each two rows of apple trees. They would materially assist in protection, aside from the fruit they would bear before the apple trees commenced to bear or occupy the entire ground.

Cultivation is of prime importance. Thorough tillage of the soil is necessary to induce good healthy crops. Discretion is necessary, to preserve the surface soil on hilly ground, especially if the soil is of a light, porous shale, as is often the case, as the material washed away is essential to success. Summer crops will not be detrimental to the trees provided the fertility is kept up by application of proper manures. Corn, potatoes, all vegetables, and most of the small fruits, may be grown, for the first few years, to advantage, yielding a profit in themselves that will fully compensate for the work. There must be no double taxation; if secondary crops are taken off, an annual dressing of manure must be applied to compensate.

The question of cultivation or non-cultivation after the trees have attained bearing age (particularly the apple) is one upon which many of our most successful horticulturists disagree. I am decidedly in favor of no cultivation after the trees have been planted ten or twelve years, or say are half grown. It has been my practice to top dress with stable manure every two or three years, and occasionally dressing with lime or unleached wood ashes; one bushel to each tree will very materially assist in keeping them in health and productiveness. We generally cut the first crop of grass and feed as a green crop; an after growth is cut for a mulch, or trampled down and allowed to remain. But no grass or other vegetable matter should be allowed to grow within three or four feet of the tree. This we try to prevent by the annual application of the finer parts of coal ashes, which we also think assists in preventing the ravages of the "borer."

Care should be used to prevent too rank growth. I have often heard planters speak of the great vigor of their trees, rapid growth, etc. This is often caused by an excess of stimulants, and is not infrequently followed by incurable injury, if not entire destruction. Moderate growth, of apple and pear, particularly, will be longer lived and more productive. Peach trees require somewhat different treatment—not that they require less cultivation, but it should be continued while fruit is the object. The critical period is the first few years after planting, to escape the depredations of the borer; one grub will do more injury to a one or two-year-old tree than a dozen might to one full grown. The tendency to overbear, when the peach does well, should be counteracted by judicious thinning or shortening of the branches, to preserve the vigor and shape of the trees, as they are at best short-lived.

Household Hints.

Beeswax and salt will make rusty flatirons as smooth as glass.

A teaspoonful of turpentine in the boiling water will whiten the clothes.

A little sperm, or green arabic, with salt, should be put into boiled starch.

Fish may be scaled much easier by dipping them in boiling water for a minute.

Cool rain water and soda will remove machine grease from washable goods.

In gravies and milk porridge the salt should not be added until the dish is prepared.

Lamp-wick dipped in hot vinegar before using, is said to prevent offensive smell from lamps.

Tortose-shell and horn combs are preserved from cracking by being occasionally rubbed with oil.

To remove oil spots from matting, counterpanes, etc., wet with alcohol, rub with hard soap, then wash with cold water.

Half a dozen onions planted in the cellar, where they can get a little light, will do much toward absorbing and correcting the atmospheric impurities that are so apt to lurk in such places.

A nice stool can be made by taking a soap box, or any small-sized box, from a grocery store; fix a lid by nailing pieces of leather on for hinges; fasten a piece in front to lift it up; then cover it with pieces of carpet tacked on with brass-headed nails; cut some pieces of old quilts to pad the top, then cover with carpet and trim around the lid with any old cast-off fringe. This also makes a convenient piece of furniture, useful for keeping shoes in, out of sight.

FOR THE FAIR SEX.

Spring Fashions.

The success of American ideas in dress and fashion, as in other practical details of modern life, is due to the fact that out of a mass of fashions the best features have been taken and combined with what experience has shown to be the best methods of uniting the modern exigencies in regard to clothing. Street dresses must follow certain well-defined rules in order not to be conspicuous or attract undue attention. The short woman can wear her skirts demi-trained and untrimmed. The plump woman can display her figure to advantage in a princess dress, and the medium, slender figure indulge in delicate stripes and fabrics, speckled or dotted by a figure. The large woman, tall in proportion, should never wear anything but solid fabrics—black or neutral in tint, and unbroken by line or dash—but she may revel in trimmed skirts, provided they are draped low, and by adding a few loops of crimson or gold satin ribbon to the folds at the back, where they merge into the train, will shorten her perspective and sufficiently reduce her line of length to make it harmonize with the line of beauty.

All the soft materials in cotton, wool or silk—and the two first have been so greatly improved that they are now equal in appearance and more sympathetic to the touch than the last—adapt themselves to the graceful designs of the present day—designs which ladies ought to prize and cling to as long as possible, for they will not be appreciated until they permit them to be superseded by something far less desirable, and whose stealthy approaches may be seen in the efforts to revive the panier, the short apron and the grotesque conceits of Paris during the first consulate.

SPRING WALKING COSTUMES. — The street dress must be dark, short and unobtrusive to make it suitable for walking in different kinds of weather and in a crowded thoroughfare. The present styles of dress adapt themselves to every requirement of in and out door life, and the best styles can therefore be relied upon for a certain degree of permanence. The "Mathilde" walking skirt, for example, is more fashionable to-day than when first issued, and will be good for a year to come. The "Griselda" walking skirt is another excellent design for walking dresses, and either of these may be used for spring costumes with entire certainty that they will not be likely at present to lose their popularity. With these skirts, which require but a moderate amount of material, and are exactly adapted to the all-wool materials or the pretty mixed fabrics of silk and wool, may be employed the "Clementine" or "Pamelia" basques, the "Melanie" or the "Balsamo," for a combination of silk and wool or wool and velvet.

The "Princess" walking costume is a still excellent model, and forms a charming design for spring dresses for street wear, in conjunction with a long jacket or fichu draped and knotted at the back. Ladies who wish it can revive for house wear the French waist, with its belt and simple skirt, trimmed with two or three narrow flounces, and cut so as to clear the ground. This is really a pretty dress, in delicate striped or checked ginghams for medium-sized slender women, and very convenient for wear with aprons of silk or muslin.

Charming spring suits are in gray and fawn shades and small designs which quite cover the surface. They are made short with a draped polonaise, or deep, close basque and trimmed skirt, the flounces being kilt-plaited or triple box-plaited and spaced between. The sleeves are demi-long and filled in with fine plaitings of crepe lisse, and the garniture consists of a combination of blue and wine-colored ribbons, arranged with more or less profusion. Nothing can be more picturesque to a street costume than the straight mantelet, knotted in front, to complete a dress which is of one solid color or of two shades of the same color with hat to match. The fashionable shade of the season for these complete costumes is no longer the pale mastic, but a deeper shade, verging to coffee color; and fawn is also considered very distinguished.

DRESSY WRAPS FOR SPRING. —Black mantles will be most used, though light drab or beige-colored wraps will be considered more dressy. The shapes are very similar to those of last season, fitting at the back with three seams and flinging sides that drape the arm, and finished in square Hungarian fashion, instead of drooping in pointed wings like dolmans. These are of medium length, covering the tournure and hips, and are trimmed with one or with three braided points down the back. A great deal of French lace will be used for trimming fine wool wraps. Coats of soft, light cloth will be fashionable, stitched edges and showy buttons being the only trimming. The small fichus of embroidered black cashmere worn last spring are again largely imported.

A novelty in trimmings consists of painted buttons for dresses of black or white silk, satin or velvet. These are painted in sets by competent artists, each button differing from the others. In this not only skill but attention to proportion is necessary, as it would be absurd for a tiny bird to be associated with a large butterfly. Each button must properly accompany the others, and a set of sixty buttons, of which no one resembles the other and all alike are well executed, is a decided improvement to a dress. Some of these designs are intended to imitate the fine mosaics.

NECKERCHIEFS AND COLLARETTES.—There never was a time when the neck was dressed in so many charming ways. A coat bodice, for example, will be turned back from the front, and the neck filled in with soft plaitings of crepe lisse, in which flowers always nestle. This decoration of flowers has brought back the fashion of wearing flowers in the hair, nor are they confined to full dress. Lace bows and jabots are also decorated with roses, to which are sometimes added loops of pearls.

The double neckerchiefs of silk or crape are still used, but are gathered to the left side and fastened with a long spray of roses or carnations. The newer styles are of soft mull, slightly gathered and bordered with lace. These surround a high or square neck and fall in square tabs in front, or are carried in the fashion of a fichu to the waist. There is nothing stiff and conventional in the arrangement of these accessories; they must appear graceful, easy and natural.

NOVELTIES OF THE SEASON.—"Lace shoes" are of satin, over which appears to be lace. The designs of applique and guipure are carefully imitated and superposed to all appearance on the main fabric. The shoe is finished with the smallest heel yet worn. It is so narrow and so high that it requires practice to venture upon it. Some designs of these shoes imitate velvet with overlying lace. Some ladies have worn shoes upon which was set lace, the fancy was taken up, and hence this really beautiful shoe.

There is an entire change in the style of combs. The present idea seems to be that the comb shall merely push forward the superabundant ornamentation of the head, consisting of light and fluffy crimped puffs and feathery curls, or narrow, flat, many-stranded braids, and that it shall lift away from the nape of the neck all floating ripplets. The comb is not intended by fashion to be worn with any low coiffure. The highest mode gives a narrow, three-forked, ball-headed affair, and the poniard, with one ball or a cross-shaped hilt, carries out the same idea. This finishes a high head-dressing with fine effect. So long ago as when Rachel was in this country it was *la haute mode*, and the great tragedienne wore at a dinner a poniard of gold in her jetty hair, in which were set three diamond solitaires.

"LA SURPRISE."—Only the ultra fashionable will venture to wear this, the first hat of the season. It is best suited to carriage wear. To walk the street with it would be hardihood indeed; and this, not because either its material or trimming is eccentric, but because of the adjustment of the feather. This feather is three-quarters of a yard long and is attached to the forward part of the brim on the right side, and simply hangs from that "proud eminence," curling down upon the shoulder. The effect is that of its being detached by a high and unreasonable wind from the main body of the hat, and of its hanging thus almost apart from it without the wearer's knowledge. The hat is of the "mousquetaire Louis XIV." shape, either garnet or navy-blue velvet, and the plume is white, or very light. As associated with a suit of gray silk, trimmed with either garnet or navy-blue, its effect is good, or would be, could the eccentricity of the feather be lost sight of.

Already a novelty in sun umbrellas is introduced and commands attention. The "Pekin satin stripes" harmonize with the satin stripes in alternate bright and dull shades, now the leading fashion in dress goods, and is a novel, tasteful and elegant material for sun umbrellas. Those of Pekin silk, with satin stripes, are shown in blue, brown and black, and those in cardinal are very effective for the carriage. The cotton "Pekin stripes," with silk finish, come only in black. This material is fine, resembling closely those in silk, and is decidedly superior to the boiled twills at half the price. The handles are varied, including carved ivory, gold mounted, pearl and ivory combined, celluloid, white and colored, in perfect imitation of coral, shell, malachite, etc., and those mounted on "ventilated" handles are exceedingly attractive.—*New York Herald.*

Knowledge of the World.

There is a class of people who act as though they believed that a true knowledge of the world consists, not in philosophically comprehending human nature as a whole, but in comprehending that part of it constituted by the frauds, shams and pariahs of society. To know how to protect one's self in the journey through life, so as to escape being imposed upon by the vampires who lie in wait for one, is a duty we all owe to ourselves; but after having discharged that duty it is well to recollect that there are some souls in the world who are sincere, who speak the truth, who are honest and who love justice. People of this kind are not, indeed, so numerous as could be wished. They do not constitute nine-tenths of the population of the world. But they do exist, and any respectable and intelligent person who has reached middle age without meeting many specimens of that class, has an altogether exceptional experience. Full as the world is of humbug of every kind, it contains a certain proportion of honorable men and women, alike in the humblest and in the highest ranks. Those who prowl around, preaching the gospel of cynicism and disdain, are the real fools of fortune, for they mistake gold for pinchbeck and throw away priceless precious pearls. Nothing is easier to acquire than this shallow skepticism, which looks like profundity only to goslings. To know the dark side of life, is not to know humanity.—*New York Telegram.*

The wife of a printer in New Haven has applied for a divorce, on the ground that her husband had no style about him. He wouldn't brace up, had no dash, cut no figure, had no point, lived up to no rule, was of bad form and make-up, wasn't a man of letters or up to the period, was a poor type of the genus, was out of quoin and couldn't impose on her any longer.—*Chicago Commercial Advertiser.*

The True Way to Invigorate.

The true way to invigorate a feeble system is to infuse activity into the operations of the stomach, that wondrous alembic in which the food is transmuted into the constituents of blood, the chief element of our vitality. Hostetter's Stomach Bitters, because it accomplishes this end, is greatly to be preferred to many so-called tonics, useful indeed as appetizers, but inoperative as aids to digestion and assimilation. This sterling cordial, while it invigorates the stomach, healthfully stimulates the liver, bowels and kidneys, ensuring the escape through the regular channels of effete and useless matter thrown off by the system, which is thus purified as well as invigorated by it. Its tonic influence is soon made manifest by an increase of vital energy and a more active and regular discharge of every physical function, and it has the further effect of rendering the system unassailable by malarial epidemics.

We have received from the Advertising Agency of Messrs. Geo. P. Rowell & Co., No. 10 Spruce street, New York, a copy of their Newspaper Directory for January, 1879, a work of over 500 pages, which bears the stamp of neatness and accuracy. The book is invaluable to business men and advertisers.—*The Pendulum, East Greenwich,* (R. I.) *Jan.* 31, 1879.

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Rowell's Newspaper Directory.—This publication, for 1879 has just been received, and is an improvement on any of the former editions. It shows a vast amount of care and labor, and reflects infinite credit upon the enterprising firm by which it is compiled. The price of the book is $5. It should be in the hands of every general advertiser.—*Hagerstown Mail, Hagerstown, Md., Jan.* 31, 1879.

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