

Argentine flour, which is trying to make its way into northern Brazil, cannot compete with the American product.

Oklahoma is making a place for herself in the world. Last year she produced 25,000,000 bushels of wheat and more than 150,000 bales of cotton.

Grooved rails have been introduced on some of the Chicago street railroad tracks and they are likely to be adopted there as a substitute for all other kinds of rail in use.

One benefit that the United States is conferring upon France at her exposition is an introduction to corn bread. If the French will drink less absinthe and eat more corn bread, they may yet regain much of their lost prestige.

Another paper-making substance has been developed. The wild cane, which grows in unlimited quantities throughout the south, can be converted into pulp at nominal expense. Nothing was ever created in vain. It was supposed, up to this time, that nature had overdone the fishing pole industry.

Americans who contemplate going to Porto Rico, or Cuba, or Mexico, will do well to learn Spanish. English will "do" around hotels and barber shops, and among the better educated people, but not for everyday, all around intercourse with the people. Linguistic changes are effected slowly always. Americans will never gain that intimate commercial hold on Latin America that the Germans have until they learn Spanish, and, for Brazil, Portuguese.

Canon Edwards, who spoke for the foreign delegates at the farewell meeting of the recent Ecumenical Missionary Conference in New York city, said: "You have got your problems to solve in this nation, but you will solve them." There has never been a moment since the foundation of our government when that feeling has not been supreme in the hearts of the American people. No temporary fear or depression has weakened the nation's purpose to fulfill its mission, nor eclipsed its faith in its ability to do the things given it to do.

Professor Forbes, the state entomologist of Illinois, estimates that with out the assistance of birds the state of Illinois would be carpeted with insects, one to each square inch of ground, at the end of 12 years. Professor Beat of the United States department of agriculture calculates that one species, the tree sparrow, destroys 875 tons of noxious weed seeds in seven months in Iowa alone, and the investigations of the department of agriculture have proved beyond question the value of hawks and owls as the natural enemies of the small rodents so harmful to agriculture. Farmers are beginning to realize the great practical value of birds, but women continue to demand their slaughter at the dictates of fashion.

The opposite of rest is not work, it is restlessness, and one of the popular "quick-lunch counters" is its exponent. The modern time-saving young man, says a keen satirist, gives his order before removing hat or coat, thus economizing 15 seconds. When his order arrives, he gets his fork into it as it appears over his shoulder, and cleans the plates before the sauce appears, which thus has to be eaten by itself. Cups of coffee go down in two swallows. Little piles of cakes are cut in quarters and disappear in four mouthfuls; and the really accomplished luncher assimilates his last quarter of cakes, wiggles into his coat and pays his check at the desk at the same moment. The next he is half a block away in pursuit of a receding trolley!

Within 47 hours after unexpected orders had been telegraphed to a surprised outfit, the battleships Massachusetts and Indiana, then moored on reserve at League Island, were commissioned, manned, equipped and reported ready for any fighting service required. A fine achievement this, and one filled with the credit to all hands from Rear Admiral Casey and his captains down to the apprentice boys, but notably Rear Admiral Crowninshield who conceived the plan and made possible its realization. It is doubtful if this smart and cheery work has been surpassed abroad, despite the practice the other sea powers have in such war exercises. Great Britain congratulated her sailors upon their readiness in mobilization when Fashoda quickened the brain and burdened the brawn of her reserve fleet. But this clever trick, this deft array, tops that effort and sets a higher standard for the world.

TAKE HEART.

Though fearful storms have swept in wrath About thy toilsome, rugged path, And thou hast oftentimes been cast down And sore dismayed by fortune's frown, Faint not, but bravely bear thy part, O fellow man; once more take heart.

The storm is followed by the calm, And winter's gales by airs of balm; Dark night gives place to sun-bright day; For thee still cheer thee on thy way, Beyond the cloud still shines the sun; Press on until thy work is done.

Perchance thou many times hast failed, Some weakness over thee prevailed, And thou hast faltered in the strife And sadly rued thy blighted life; Though great thy grief and keen thy pain, O weary one, take heart again.

Dwell not upon thy mournful past, Arise, and for the right stand fast; Be strong and brave, fold not thy hands, For thee still flow life's golden sands; To better things sweet voices call And God in love rules over all.

—John Allen Guilford, in Boston Transcript.

IN THE PRAIRIE COUNTRY.

By Bertha Gerneaux Woods.

It was a dry, stifling day on the prairie. The south wind blowing with hot, irritating persistency across the plains raised clouds of dust that almost hid the view from the woman at the window of the sod house. She could see only faintly the burnished golden cups of the prickly-pear, or the deep crimson of the pin-cushion cactus blossoms, breaking the monotony of the brown stretch of land. The creamy bells on the yucca were dimmed with the dust of the plains.

In the small, square sitting room, although the windows were tightly shut, a gray coating lay on the furniture and mantel, on the row of rose geraniums and the little pot of heliotrope in the window. Hester Gilbert's lips were tightly compressed and there was a sad look in her eyes. That south wind was blotting out from her view more than the flower-dotted landscape. It seemed to dim all remembrance of the long days of perfect weather, when the prairie seemed an Eden and strength and hope grew large with the fresh, bracing air.

Some one came in with a heavy, weary step, and stopped a moment on the threshold to look at the drooping figure. Then he approached her with awkward tenderness, laying his toll-ringed hand on her shoulder.

"What's the matter, Hester?" he said, softly.

There was a smothered weariness in the tones, but her ears seemed deaf that morning to anything but the wind's piercing voice. Half unconsciously she drew a little away from his hand.

"It's everything," she said, "everything! Why did we ever come here, to such wretchedness as this?"

He did not attempt another caress, except with his anxious blue eyes, and her face was turned away from them, hidden in her hands.

He slipped something back into his pocket. Hester did not see the motion. It was only an Indian arrow-head that he had found half buried in the sod, and had unearthed, thinking it would make a pretty addition to her cabinet of curiosities. She was so tired that now she would not care for it; some other time, he thought. Her nerves were all quivering; it was always so when the south wind blew.

"Hester," he began again, gently, "I've been thinking for several days—I don't know but we ought to fix it some way so you can go back East for a while quite soon—sooner than we planned. You've had a hard time of it out here. I know how hard it's been, with the homesickness and all, and—"

"No," she interrupted, "I can wait. We'll go together later, just as we planned all along. You couldn't manage it, John. Why, how could you?"

"Oh, I'll get along some way—that'll be all right. I've been thinking I could spare a little of the stock, after all. You know Brown would be glad to buy what I could spare."

He spoke bravely, and Hester smiled faintly up to him. In the depths of her heart she felt sure she would never consent to such a sacrifice. They would wait till they could take the long-planned trip together, or not at all. But just now, with the wind making her grate her teeth together, she did not protest. She was in the mood to enjoy the imaginary self-indulgence, regardless of what it would cost the one dearest to her.

"We'll see," she said, briefly. "There's so much to think over first. But it's good of you, John, to plan it so."

down-bent heads, were snatching what little rest they could. In the covered wagon sat the man and woman—such a hollow-cheeked, large-eyed man, and such a little slip of a wife! The hot wind flapped the canvas cover, and sent swirls of dust over the two occupants and their scanty possessions. That they were scanty indeed, Hester could not help seeing in the briefest glance. A dry, untempting lunch the wife was taking from a basket. Some of the self-pity that had darkened Hester's face all the morning faded out of it, and was replaced by a purer, nobler look.

"You ask them, John," she said, softly.

"They'll like it better from you," whispered her husband.

The face of the little wife in the big wagon brightened visibly at her approach.

"You must be tired out," Hester began, without preamble. "We want you to come up to the house for a little rest and to have dinner with us. Won't you?"

A pleased smile breaking over the young face seemed almost to fade out the little worried line between the dark eyes. An answering gleam stole over the worn face at her side, but they both protested faintly. They couldn't give so much trouble; it would not be right.

"You come right along," said John, with kindly authority. "We want you, so don't make any fuss about it. We'll take the horses into my barn; let 'em try my feed and a good bucket of my well-water."

The two men went off together, Hester and the little wife beating their way back to the sod house. A look of cheer and comfort seemed to be in its brown walls now. "How good it will seem to rest in a house!" said the little wife, with a happy sigh.

"Wouldn't you like to lie down a little while till dinner is ready?" said Hester. "Come right into my room, and just feel that you are at home." A protecting kindness had sprung up in her heart for this little creature with the appealing eyes. "You must be so hot and uncomfortable! There's cold water in that pitcher, and I'll bring you some warm. No, it isn't a bit of trouble. Then you must just rest until dinner."

Unpleasant thoughts were far away as Hester prepared the simple dinner, trying to make it as attractive as possible. She would get out some of her wedding china—why not? John would enjoy it, and it might make a bright spot in the day for the strangers. She even picked a bunch of astragalus, making a centerpiece of the white, furry leaves. A sprig of wild geranium was laid at each plate.

There were cheery faces around the table, and Hester's face was not less bright than the others.

The gaunt stranger sat a little more erect now, and his face, after even this brief rest, seemed less sharply outlined. The warm, human kindness as well as the outward comfort had wrought the change, and in some way made it easier to remember in whose larger protecting care they were, and would still be when rolling over the brown prairie. Bit by bit their story came out. The man told how he had been a carpenter and builder in Iowa; what a happy little home it had been, and why they were flying now to the untrod world of Colorado, that Mecca for consumptives. The gaunt man and the young wife avoided the dreaded word; they said, instead, "people with any sort of lung trouble."

Hester's dish of canned wild plums seemed to meet with special favor from the gaunt man. He accepted the pressing offer of a third saucerful with an apologetic laugh, and Hester mentally schemed to convey a generous supply to the canvas-covered wagon.

"I don't know when George has enjoyed anything so," said the little wife. "Everything's so good! And oh, how nice it feels to be rested! Traveling will be so much easier now!"

cough worse, and that always frightened me. Sometimes when we have been going so slowly the horses just seemed to creep, and when the dust has almost seemed to choke him, I have felt as if I should go frantic. All these days that we have been on the way I have been longing so to reach Colorado. I have felt as if I couldn't wait, when the waiting might mean everything to him, and it has been so hard, almost impossible, to keep cheerful before him! That is always very hard, don't you think so? When your life is all wrapped up in somebody else's, to keep that one from feeling how you suffer? And, of course, if they knew, that would make it all so much worse.

How the poor young thing was emptying her heart out! It was as if all the grief and anxiety of the days in the covered wagon, rolling over the brown plains, had burst its bounds, and must pour itself out to this listener.

"I wanted you to know," the excited little voice ran on, "how kind you have been—what a comfort it has been to me! Don't you see how much less tired he looks? And he hasn't coughed near so much, not near! You have cheered us up, too. It has been so strange—all this journey—every day talking us farther away from home, and the trying to choke down the homesick-s-s-an—" She broke off short with gratitude and tears shining in her eyes.

There was just time for Hester to take the little brown hand in hers and press it close, when the two men came back.

The man with the stooping shoulders and the flush on either cheek went up close to the little woman with the bright, eager eyes.

"Well, little woman, are you 'most ready?" he said, patting her shoulder. "You've had a fine rest, haven't you?" He coughed sharply as he spoke, but she smiled up at him brightly that he might not know how much more it racked her chest than his.

"You'd better get on your bonnet, little woman," he said; "it's time we were going. I don't know how we're to thank you and your wife, Mr. Gilbert, for all you have done for us, but we feel it, sir, we feel it."

"It wasn't anything at all!" John protested. "It has done us good to have you here."

Hester and the little young wife went into the tiny bedroom together. The wind had stopped its maddening song outside, and the air was clear again from its burden of dust. The furniture would have to be dusted for the third time that day, but the thought brought no scowl to her forehead now. The little traveler pinned on the rusty black hat, and turned to hold out both hands impulsively to Hester. "Thank you again," she said; and then, in a whisper, "Colorado is a wonderful place, isn't it? Haven't you heard about the way people get cured there—people just as bad off as George, or worse? You feel sure it'll do him good, don't you?"

She searched Hester's face as if to read her fate there. It was hard to meet the girlish eyes.

"I've never been farther West than this myself," she said, "but everyone says it's a wonderful climate in Colorado for people with trouble with their lungs. I'm so glad you are going there, and when he's grown well and strong you'll be coming back to see us."

The delight of that possible future was in the young wife's eyes. "If he only does!" she said. "Oh, if he only does!"

There were hearty handclaps exchanged a few minutes later. Then the "prairie schooner," with its freight of human love and anxieties, rolled slowly away. The two left behind in the little sod house stood long at the window—till the wagon was seen a dark blot above the sharp horizon. With a quick, impulsive movement, Hester's hand stole into her husband's.

"How good you are!" she said, almost solemnly. "And while I have you, why do I care about other things? Did you think I would really go East without you? Why, John, I couldn't bear it, away from you!"

Far off in the big wagon a little woman sat with her round cheek pressed against a shabby coat-sleeve, and the cry of her heart was like that of Hester's. "What are other things," she was whispering, "while I have you, dear?"—Youth's Companion.

Something About Trees.

The stems of trees have provision for a symmetrical arrangement of branches, the nodes or points where the buds are produced, being placed at regular intervals. This tendency toward symmetry is, however, interfered with by several disturbing causes, internal and external. The most important of the former is the varying degree of vigor in the buds, which behave like distinct plants, some of them growing into strong branches, while others produce comparatively small shoots.

Even if all buds were of equal vitality, regularity would not result. Many of the buds and tender shoots are devoured by birds, insects or squirrels. When of larger size, branches are often torn away by high winds, blasted by lightning, or broken off by accident. A tree will sometimes grow into an irregular form through the pressure of prevailing winds. This irregularity has also its use. In a gale of wind it will be observed that the branches sway in all directions, and the various movements counter-balance each other. If the branches were arranged with perfect regularity they would all sway together, and the leverage would be so great that the tree might often be uprooted or broken off short.

In Japan are not published three times as many books as in Italy.

FARM TOPICS

Wooling Lambs.
If lambs are fed a little grain daily from the time they can be learned to eat it, there is almost no trouble at all in wooling them, and they need not shrink in weight or worry for the mother. They may be left with her, and they will not nurse any more than she takes to take a suck when they are shorn, but as the ewe is not burbed regularly her milk loses both flavor and nutritive quality after a few days and the lamb no longer likes it. The habit may remain for a few days, but seldom longer, and he has weaned himself.

Renewing an Asparagus Bed.
An old run out or neglected asparagus bed can be best improved after the season for cutting is over, by putting on a liberal dressing of manure in June or July and plowing it in, not taking much care to prevent breaking the roots or to save seedling plants. The plants are apt to become root bound, and they will grow up all the better for a little breaking up of the matted roots. Keep the weeds out all the summer, and in early spring or even in February, if the ground is open, put on from 600 pounds to a half ton of good fertilizer to the acre. This will push it along to make a good growth, and it will be better if it is not cut very freely that spring or not at all after the first of June.

Plenty of Space For Chickens.
The farmer whose hens run at large at all times when the ground is not covered with snow may excuse himself for keeping them in houses smaller than are generally advised for the number of fowl upon the plea that they have plenty of room during the day. Perhaps if his house is well ventilated they may not need much more than roosting room nights, but the man who keeps a small flock in a small house and small yard, ostensibly to furnish his family with fresh eggs, need not expect to increase his income by the sale of eggs if he puts twenty-five hens in a space only large enough for fifteen. He will be likely to lose eggs and lose hens, too. We have kept more in a pen than we thought profitable, because our space was limited, but we found it required extra care in cleaning, ventilating and in other ways, so that we think we could have done better with a small number, and few would have cared for the hens and the house as we did.

Thrifty Young Turkeys.
Place the coop on dry, sandy ground if possible, and move it daily. Feed dry bread crumbs or bread dipped in milk and squeezed dry, rolled oats, clabbered milk, onion tops, dandelion leaves and lettuce chopped fine. They will eat greedily. Give mill to drink and always keep a supply of fresh water in a shallow dish covered so that they cannot get their bodies wet in it. Don't overfeed them. Feed often, but little at a time, and scatter cracked wheat for the first two weeks. After that whole wheat will do. Keep a supply of small, sharp gravel and ground bone.

After the first few days let them travel during the day at will. The turkey hen will protect them from passing storms. But see them home at night, and keep them in till the dew is off the grass. Do not put them in a close building; they want plenty of fresh air, and without it will soon droop and die. Watch for lice. The large variety clings to the back of the head and neck and is hard to find. A drop of lard, without salt, rubbed well in, will destroy them, but do not use much or you may kill the poult. In conclusion, observe these rules: Proper breeding stock, proper food and proper care and cleaning, and I feel sure you will have a good return in the fall for your trouble.—Alex Johnson, in New England Homestead.

Care of Milk Utensils.
Possibly for persons just come into possession of cows—beginners in dairying, or for those who have made their own butter only hit-or-miss and propose to cater to the public for markets, it may not be amiss to direct attention to some simple but indispensable rules. They are founded both in science and experience.

1. Don't carelessly spill milk. Bacteria and disease germs rapidly multiply by such means.
2. Borax is recommended in the water for washing vessels and for washing hands of the milkers and others having to do with the work.
3. Don't let the churn stand uncleaned too long after the churning.
4. If a churn has been out of use it should be cleaned with boiling water and thoroughly scoured with salt. Better scald it two or three times.
5. Some one well says there is nothing gained in patching up old utensils about a dairy. Like farming tools, the apparatus of a creamery or cheese factory generally deteriorates more quickly in value from neglect than from practical use.
6. Salt water will corrode the iron work of dairy utensils very quickly. Heat and rubbing carefully by a dry cloth are both necessary. It is a very poor economy to let your tools or machinery corrode. What should last ten years may be spoiled in one season by such neglect.
7. The good old-fashioned habit of setting the milk pans, crocks, cans, etc., in the sunshine, right side up, out in the open air is hygienic and based on common sense as well. The good housekeeper rinses as soon as possible with cold water, then washes inside and out with hot water, rinses again with hot water, wipes dry and then gives them the fresh air and sunshine bath.—Farm, Field and Fireside.

KEYSTONE STATE NEWS CONDENSED

PENSIONS GRANTED.

Heavy Storms in Mercer County—Young Lady Arrested for Horse Stealing—Centenarian Dies From Effect of Surgery.

Pensions granted last week were: Lyman L. Shattuck, Pleasantville, \$5; Abednego Crain, Osceola Mills, \$10; Robert Shields, Boggsville, \$10; William P. Cherry, Midway, \$8; Orlando P. Eaton, Corry, \$10; Thomas Young, Philipsburg, \$12; Joseph L. Thomas, Wilkinsburg, \$10; Samuel F. Hazlett, Tarentum, \$6; Thomas W. Rhea, Saltsburg, \$8; Ferdinand Buckingham, Franklin, \$8; James M. Peck, Corry, \$10; Nelson Plack, Bellefonte, \$12; William K. Galbraith, South Burgetstown, \$10; Andrew J. Brown, Mansfield, \$8; Robert H. Miller, Turtle Creek, \$12; George Wilson, Lewistown, \$12; John W. Berry, New Buena Vista, \$17; Thomas W. McConnell, Canonsburg, \$10; Abraham Kingensmith, Leechburg, \$12; Jeremiah Standard, McDonald, \$8; Joseph A. Miller, Mount Pleasant, \$10; George O. Jones, Washington, \$8; Hamilton H. Say, Parkers Landing, \$10; Baxter Hamilton, Roaring Springs, \$10; Joseph A. Hetrick, Oakland, \$12; minors of Ephraim Catlin, West Newton, \$12; William Stanton, Clark, \$12; Austin C. Eckley, Snow Shoes, \$10.

Capt. Tilton Reynolds, of Reynoldsville, formerly a special agent of the dairy and food commission in the Pittsburgh district, has been appointed a capitol park watchman by Gov. Stone.

Mayor Robert J. Black and James L. Devenny, of McKeesport, will have offered to 10,000 acres of land in the oil fields of Tennessee. Both have had considerable experience in the oil business. They say the oil sand lies about 500 feet below the surface and the oil is pronounced of the best quality. A number of drillers will be sent to Tennessee in a few days to drill several wells at once.

While cleaning out the test well being put down by the West Monongahela Natural Gas Company the workmen discovered that the well contained over 400 feet of oil which seemed to be coming from the upper sand. Samples of the fluid were taken to interested parties and was pronounced of an excellent quality. The well is located on the Marston farm at the east end of the river bridge, opposite Monongahela, and is only down about 2,400 feet. It is proposed now to drill the well to the sixth sand in the hope of finding more oil.

A heavy storm prevailed throughout Mercer county Friday, wind, hail and lightning doing great damage. The residence of Dwight McFarland was struck three times by lightning, and a barn owned by W. Mercer, in Hickory township, was burned. Hail literally cut the young corn to pieces and knocked fruit off the trees. Two barns a few miles west of Sharon were also destroyed by lightning.

Paul Shapleigh, the young man who has been missing from Lock Haven since Tuesday last, was found dead Sunday morning about a mile from the summer cottages near Farrandville, the point for which he started from Hagers' farm on that day. Hundreds of men have since last Wednesday searched the woods.

The Van Giesen Oil Company has been organized at Leechburg with the following officers: President, T. J. Van Giesen; secretary, C. A. Ehrenfeld; treasurer, J. B. Kifer. A number of prominent men of this town are stockholders. The company has secured 500 acres of oil territory in Venango county, which will be thoroughly developed.

James L. Smith, a carpenter of Butler, died Tuesday from lockjaw. On June 30 he stepped on a rusty nail that penetrated his shoe and into his foot. Smith was a member of Company E, Fifteenth Pennsylvania volunteer infantry, and served with that company during the Spanish war.

Michael Maloney, of Glenwood, Susquehanna county, is dead, aged 107 years. He was one of the pioneer residents of Northern Pennsylvania. At the age of 104 years he underwent a very critical surgical operation. Until within a few years he was in possession of all his faculties.

J. D. Kramer, of Brookfield township, Mercer county, a well-known farmer, was seriously shocked by lightning and his horse killed Tuesday afternoon. Since the accident he has been totally paralyzed and speechless.

Miss Effie Price, a pretty girl scarcely out of her teens, is a prisoner in the lockup at Altoona on the unique charge of horse stealing. It is alleged that she and John Mauk, her lover, hired a team from Liverman King, of this city, and drove to Bellwood, where they sold it.

George Buxton, of Cherry Tree township, Crawford county, died Tuesday morning of lockjaw, after severe suffering. A short time ago Buxton put a lighted pipe in his pocket while driving home from this city, setting fire to his clothes and burning him severely. His injuries resulted in lockjaw.

Last week a mammoth hemlock tree was felled on Wolf Run tract, Corydon township, McKean county, opposite the village of Kinzua, which measured 6 by 5 feet at the stump, was 116 feet long, and the butt log 18 feet long, will produce 2,500 feet of lumber, 7,000 feet being estimated for the whole tree.

At Connellsville a dog attacked the little child of William Bradley Friday evening and had to be torn loose, the dog taking a piece of flesh with its teeth. An exciting chase resulted in the death of the dog and another dog, both of which a policeman shot.

Vern McKillip, a 16-year-old son of Hugh McKillip, of Paeblo, near Brookville, shot and instantly killed himself while handling a revolver, the ball striking him in the head and penetrating his brain.

Puddlers to the number of 200 employed at Moorhead's mills, Sharpsburg, struck Monday against a reduction of 30 per cent. in wages. The finishers accepted the reduction, but unless a compromise is effected, the mill will be shut down, throwing over five hundred men out of work.

Marion Smith, 10 years old, son of James A. Smith, of Grove Summit, Clearfield county, one of the best known farmers in that section, was struck by lightning and instantly killed while at work in a hay field late Saturday afternoon. He held a hay fork in his hand and it was shattered to pieces.