Bonnets.

The small capote bonnet is the success of the season, and is worn on all occasions, both with simple and rich toilettes, and by elderly ladies as well as by the youngest bridesmaid. Fancy materials are more fashionable and dressy than straw braids for these bonnets, yet the straws are not abandoned, and are made so soft and pliable that their crowns are pressed into varied shapes, some of which are straight and square across the top, while others are folded or laid in box plaits. Thus the straw is used as any worn fabric would be, instead of being pressed into shape, and the front is covered with a roll of velvet, a cockade bow of velvet, or an aigrette. Embroidered net in white, black and varied colors is also chosen for crowns of bonnets, and these are given greater variety by being placed over a gilt or silver woven foundation. Plain tulles, embroidered, beaded and spangled tulles, are used for light and dressy bonnets in both dark and pale shades over a foundation that is merely a few wires of gilt, steel, or silver. Tulle trimmings are also employed on straw bonnets in the way of full ruches for the brim made of several neat plaitings; the mushroom browns and bright coquelicot red shades are most stylish for bonnets of tulle and for tulle ruches that are on straws of the same or a darker shade. Velvet retains its hold as a fashionable garniture for bonnets of the fancy materials, and for straws as well. The various kinds of colored crape, the English transparent crape, and the thicker Chinese and Japanese silk crapes are chosen for dressy bonnets to match rich toilettes. Sometimes the crape is only used for a shirred crown, while the brim is a mixture of velvet, tulle, or lace.

All the pale shades of rose, lavender, blue, and cream are made up for dress hats of crape, and the dark mushroom browns, violet and poppy red are used to match costumes. The ivory white crape capote is chosen for bridesmaids to wear with white crape, grenadine, lace, or embroidered muslin dresses. At a recent brilliant wedding eight bridesmaids wore these small white capotes, with gold braid on the velvet-edged brim, and a gold and white aigrette high on the left side; their white grenadine and lace dresses were short, and they wore golden brown Suede gloves, and carried large bouquets of Marshal Niel roses. Lace bonnets promise to be very fashionable as the weather grows warmer, and those of ecru and of black lace are already worn to spring receptions. A roll on the brim and throat bow of dark velvet of a becoming shade are given to most of the ecru and white lace bonnets, while those of black lace are brightened up by transparent butterflies, tiny humming-birds, very gay flowers, marabout pompons, or else clusters of fruit, grasses, wheat, or pines. The flowers most in favor are quite small, and may be arranged as a wreath just before the crown, or as an edging for the brim, or in one large cluster high on the left side. The smallest unblown rose-buds, either white or pink, are much used by young ladies; clover heads partly white and partly red are worn in the same way; small pink roses without leaves, the pink flowering almond, bachelor's-button, myosotis, and all kindred blossoms are chosen. Pink flowers on dark red and on brown bonnets are very stylish. White blossoms are much used with black bonnets, especially when white lace is part of the trimming. White clover is liked for green bonnets, and poppies are in favor on ecru mushroom bonnets of straw or of crape. Some long gilt pins are stuck about most capriciously, being thrust deep into the bonnet, or else merely into its trimmings.

These small bonnets need so little trimming that many ladies do their own millinery. The strings may be of velvet ribbon or of bias velvet, but must in either case be tied in a small bow just under the chin, and if made of piece velvet this bow may have spangles or beads upon its ends to match those used on the bonnet. One or two rows of lace on gathered frills pointing toward the front cover the brim fully, a bunch of flowers, a lace rosette, a cockade bow of velvet, or a marabout pompon trims the left side, and the strings are put on according to fancy, either crossing the lower part of the crown, or pointing upward in a triangle on each side, or else passing down the middle of the crown in two rows, then branching out to the ears. There are many cap-faced brims formed of tull plaiting, edged with beads, or else made of lace, which is sometimes laid over a jetted brim. The handsomest jet bonnets are without lining, being merely a latticework of large cut jet beads or bugles or crescent-shaped pieces. In many other bonnets silk crown linings are omitted, and if any lining is used it is made of net. Some flower bonnets are seen, especially those of violets and of heliotrope. All the new shapes are made with reference to high coiffures, but as these coiffures are soft and flat, they do not require large crowns, and for this reason the bonnets of last summer are easily altered for this season. The long crowns of Langtry turbans are still used. The round hats now exhibited are the shapes already described, and novelties in these will be exhibited at the later spring openings given before they are needed for the country and sea-side resorts.—*Harper's Bazar.*

Timber Farming.

In the West are large forests, not much injured by the ax, and in the Middle and the Western States many farms have wood lots of fair area in which large and valuable trees are growing; but most of these are being thinned out, while in many cases the land is being cleared of every vestige of timber in an insane desire to add to the acreage of plowed land. Even in the older States something of this is seen. Within a week the writer has seen in Central New York men busy in cutting thrifty maples, birches, ashes, cherries and other trees, sound and of fair age, that the logs might go to mill and the land be used for growing costly crops. The theory was that this land will produce better crops than can be grown on the old worn-out soil; and the fact is that the logs are worth from five to twenty dollars per thousand feet at the saw mill.

Once this very land was covered with bird's-eye maple, whitewood, ash and linden trees, which would to-day readily sell for twenty dollars per thousand feet; but noble great trees were burned by the thousands that the land might be cleared for cultivation. It would be a moderate estimate which would place the yield per acre of such timber at 25,000 feet. At half the price the logs are now worth an acre of such timber would be worth $250; but the land itself, "improved" they call it, is worth less than one-quarter that sum. Of course it seemed to be necessary, half a century ago, to destroy that timber that room might be made for growing food for the people who did not know that nature had left cleared land, ready for the plow and wonderfully fertile, in the West to furnish food for all the people of America, and more. But this generation has the experience of two or three hundred years to guide it, and surely should be able, in the light of that experience, to avoid the more serious errors which have been made. Yet it has gone eagerly along in the paths followed by the pioneers, and, while it may not destroy as many valuable trees by burning them on the land, it is sending the larger ones away in the form of fuel or of lumber and destroying the smaller ones. The work of destruction is going on in several States, particularly in Michigan, Wisconsin and Missouri. To-day the timber on those lands is worth more than the ground it stands on will sell for when the trees are gone. Ten years hence the timber will have more than doubled in value, if the population and the needs of the country continue to increase in the ratio of growth of the last ten years.

Shrewd capitalists see that the future will make timber lands more profitable than almost any others, and they are quietly and quickly buying good timbered lands in large blocks, especially in the South. For the country this is fortunate, as these men will not repeat the folly of past decades by destroying the forests. They clearly understand that no crops they could produce on their lands woul give a greater return, or require less labor, expense, and care than will the timber which is indigenous. They have only to guard their property from timber thieves, and cut out a few of the largest and best of their trees where they are crowding the younger ones, and thus each year get a very liberal interest upon their investment. Meantime the soil upon which the timber stands increases in value, while each year adds to the market value of the timber it produces.

Is there nothing in these facts of interest to the general farmer? Is not the fact that a single walnut, or ash, or maple may be worth more as it stands than an acre of the ground it stands on suggestive of a better plan than that so generally followed by landowners in the timbered States? Is it not true that timber-culture can be made one of the most profitable of all branches of farming, and the least laborious? Already enough has been done to show that tree-growing is very profitable, yet as a rule the trees grown have been of the less valuable kinds, soft and quickly-growing poplars, willows, and ashes.

The objection may be made that too long a time must pass after planting before trees can be made to yield an income. The young trees will grow more rapidly if cultivated during the first few years after planting, and crops have been grown profitably between the rows, for two or three years in succession. But most farmers can well afford to set aside a part of their land for all time to grow trees upon, for the labor of preparing the ground and planting the trees is, with the exception of taxes and repairing fences protecting the trees, the only outlay the timber lot will require. The owner has only to wait for his rich reward, which will surely come. But if he cannot wait the years required to secure the greatest return, he will find in the greatly enhanced value of the land a goodly profit without cutting a twig.—*Chicago Tribune.*

Pecan Trees and Pecan Nuts.

I see with much satisfaction the growing interest for the cultivation of pecans and other nut-bearing trees, living as I do in the centre of one of the best pecan-growing sections in the world. Here the trees grow naturally all over the country. It occurs to me that, from observation and experience, I can offer a few hints that may be of service to those who are making these efforts. The pecan tree will grow almost anywhere. It seems able to stand any amount of cold, nor is it injured by the heat of our protracted summers.

But there are other things to be considered. Most writers seem not to take into account the fact that there are many varieties of pecan, and there is as much difference in the quality as there is in the sorts and sizes. Some have thick and others thin shells. Some are very early, and others very late.

These, however, are only matters of taste or fancy. The real idea of paramount importance is with this tree, as with fruit and other trees, its health and freedom from insects. Like the walnut, the foliage of the pecan tree is not infrequently totally destroyed by the caterpillar. Hence those trees that have the thickest, toughest foliage do best. There is one sort growing here the nuts of which are an inch and a half long, with a medium thick shell, of short, stubby growth, and with foliage so thick and tough that I have never seen it injured by insects of any species. This variety is very early, and for this reason is frequently gathered by eager boys before fully matured. The nuts are soon gone, and seldom reach the markets.

Here we plant the seed in the fall soon after they are gathered. They sprout well in the following spring, growing about two feet the first year. As soon as they drop their leaves in the fall we lay bare one side of the root and root prune them, replacing the dirt. In the spring, before the plant growth begins, we pursue the same course with the other side. In this way a fine lot of young roots are developed, rendering the transplanting in the fall easy and as safe as other nursery grown trees. Pecan trees are easily grown, and will flourish in almost any kind of soil. Every one can have an abundant supply by planting the nuts.—*Texas Cor. N. Y. Sun.*

Influence of Woman.

The well-being of society rests on our homes, and what are their foundation stones but woman's care and devotion? A good mother is worth an army of acquaintances, and a true-hearted, noble-minded sister is more precious than the "dear five hundred friends." The love we experience for domestic blessings increases faith in an infinite goodness, and it is a foretaste of a better world to come. Our homes, as one well observes, are the support of the Government and the church, and all the associations and organizations that give blessings and vitality to social existence are herein originated and fostered.

Those who have played around the same doorstep, basked in the same mother's smile, in whose veins the same blood flows, are bound by a sacred tie that can never be broken. Distance may separate, quarrels may occur, but those who have a capacity to love anything must have at times a bubbling up of fond recollections, and a yearning after the joys of by-gone days. Every woman has a mission on earth. Be she high or low degree—in single blessedness or double—she is recreant to her duty if she sits with folded hands and empty head and heart, and frowns on all claims to her benevolence or efforts for the welfare of others. There is "something to do" for every one—a household to put in order, a child to attend to, some parent to care for, some class of unfortunate, degraded, or homeless humanity to befriend. "To whom much is given, of them much will be required." That soul is poor indeed that leaves the world without having exerted an influence that will be felt for good after she has passed away.

There is little beauty in the lives of those women who are drawn into the gay circles of fashionable life, whose arena is public display, whose nursery is their prison. At home does woman appear in her true glory; in the inner sanctuary of home life can she be most like those who walk above "in soft, white light" and follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth?—*Cleveland Leader.*

—The official census recently taken in China for the purpose of taxation shows a total population 255,000,000. This does not include the Mongolian and other outlying dependencies of the Empire, but only the eighteen provinces of China proper. Nor does it embrace the aboriginal tribes which exist in very considerable numbers in the Island of Formosa and in many provinces. Making due allowance for all these, for the Mongolian dependencies and for the under-statement due to the purpose for which the census was taken, it is probable that the sum total of the population of China really exceeds 300,000,000.

Rye.

In many parts of the country rye is a very important and paying crop. Of course, land which will produce twenty oushels of wheat, or fifty bushels of corn to the acre, should not be sown to rye. In New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois and Wisconsin, some of the New England and several of the Southern and Northwestern States, there are many acres of land which will not produce paying crops of wheat or corn, and upon these lands rye often proves a valuable crop; while very poor land will grow rye, still no crop pays better for manure. If a farmer has land suitable for rye, which is located near a paper mill, or where freight is low, it will pay to raise this crop, as the straw often brings as much as the grain. A farmer who needs manure on his land—and what farmer does not?—may raise rye, have it ground, and feed the bran to his stock with cut rye straw, thus furnishing an excellent feed for horses and cows. The writer has wintered horses on bran and cut rye straw, with only a small quantity of hay, and the cost was less than half what it would have been if they had been wintered on oats or corn, and they came out lively and in good flesh in the spring.

As a green manure, rye is very valuable to farmers who have not as much barn-yard manure as the farm needs. The cheapest way to enrich land is to sow rye and turn it under while green. A farmer can better afford to turn under rye than to draw barn-yard manure two miles, if it is given to him. The time of the man and team will cost more than the plowing under of rye, and the carted manure will not restore the land half as effectually. Land that is too poor for clover will grow rye, and the rye plowed down can be followed with clover.

As a soiling crop, rye has no equal for feeding in the spring and early summer; and the sooner our farmers come to understand that on high-priced land soiling is the true system and the cheapest for feeding cattle, the better; and rye is the best crop for early feed. It should be sown in September, and will then be ready for use in May or June. It will not be many years before our dairymen will abandon the plan of letting cows hunt for feed over the farm. Not only can we get much more from an acre by mowing than cattle can get by grazing, but when the cattle are kept in stable and yard and furnished with plenty of litter, the manure made will pay for the extra labor.

I need not say that rye mixed with wheat or corn, or both, makes excellent bread; and every farmer who raises rye should have it ground and save the flour for his own use, while he feeds the bran to his stock.

Rye, then, is a valuable crop for farmers whose land will grow it, but will not produce a paying crop of corn or wheat; it is valuable for the straw to sell or feed. As a green manure, for worn-out land, it has no equal. As a soiling crop, it is the best for early feed. As food for the family, it is nearly as good as wheat, and for stock it equals corn. To conclude: if your land is rich, don't raise rye unless as a soiling crop; if the land is poor or worn out, turn under a crop of rye.

In many localities and on many farms there is always a certain portion not quite as good as the rest, where it will pay to raise a crop of rye. Often, if land is beginning to fail a little with wheat or corn, it is well to sow rye. A farmer must exercise judgment in this as in all other matters, but he should not be afraid of rye, nor allow his prejudices to prevent his trying it.—*Rural New Yorker.*

The Business of Bill Posting.

An English stage manager, in a pamphlet on advertising, written about 1850, asserted that the business of poster advertising, even then supposed to have outgrown all reasonable proportions, was yet but in its infancy; that the time would come when every inch of blank surface in this mundane sphere would be devoted to the purpose of advertising. Curiously enough, about the time this prophecy was made a scheme was inaugurated by a single individual on this side of the water which was destined to go a long way toward its fulfillment. In the winter of 1849-50 a young sign painter of Brooklyn, finding his business very dull, amused himself by going along the Harlem Road and painting his name, occupation and business on all the rocks and fences. Several business men were struck with the idea and employed the young man to blazon advertisements for them in various localities. Soon after, securing a large number of contracts for the work, he traveled with his brush and paint up the Missouri River, exercising his peculiar talents on the bare crags of the Rocky Mountains. He journeyed into Oregon and daubed her pyramids, down the golden valleys of the Sac, over the granite cliffs of the Humboldt range he went, leaving behind him staring legends of "liver pills," "ague pads," etc., to terrify the wandering savage and buffalo. We are happy to say he was shot at several times and had to run to save his wretched hide. He was pursued soon after by a rival as fearless and unscrupulous as himself. Finally, the two went into partnership and between them transformed the country into a vast billboard. They established their headquarters in New York and undertook, at specified rates, to advertise merchants, medicines, etc., in as few or many States as desired. In 1880 the manager of this business—the quondam Brooklyn sign-painter, now a millionaire—declaired that he and his partner had traveled 1,500,000 miles, had painted 90,000 signs, and used 500 barrels of linseed oil and 150 tons of white lead. This was before they two retired from active participation in the manual part of the business. They now have this work done by their 1,800 agents, through whom they can work the whole United States on the billboard plan. They charge for billing a patent medicine in seventeen States $30,000.—*Chicago Inter Ocean.*

The Wise Mother-in-Law.

She meeteth her son-in-law at the door when the new clock tolleth fourteen, and he essayeth to let himself into the hall by unlocking the front gate with his watch key. And for this ofttimes he feareth her.

She knoweth his ways and his tricks are not new to her. She is up to all his excuses, and when he sayeth he was detained down at the bank until the next morning;

Or, that the last car had gone, and he had to walk;

Or, that he was sitting up with a sick friend;

Or, that he was looking for his collar button;

Or, that he was drawn on the jury;

Or, that he had joined the astronomy class;

Or, that his books wouldn't balance;

Then doth she get onto him with both feet, for she sayeth within herself: "All these things hath his father-in-law said unto me, for lo, these many years. Lo, this is also vanity and vexation of spirit."

And for this he feareth her yet more and more.—*Burlington Hawkeye.*

—Never say to an objectionable acquaintance: "Come in and see me some time." Some time means any time, and he may come when you least expect him. It is better to name some specific time; then you can take the precaution to be out when he calls.—*Boston Transcript.*

—Eggs are sent by mail in England under the parcel-post system.

FARM AND FIRESIDE.

—Under-draining causes the soil to be cooler in the summer.—*Troy Times.*

—If your cows seem indisposed, give them a warm bran slop well seasoned with ginger.—*N. Y. Herald.*

—A well beaten egg is a great addition to a dried apple pie, giving lightness and a good flavor also.—*Chicago Journal.*

—Never put away a silk dress or cloak with dust in the pleats or folds. It is never so easily removed as at first; shake the garment well, then rub lightly with a piece of flannel.

—For the young chickens nothing is so beneficial and so grateful as a run upon the newly-grown grass, and next to this indulgence they should have an ample supply of cut or pulled grass every day.

—Herb Tea: Take a half pound of camomile and a quarter of a pound of gentian root; put them in a jug and pour over them a quart of boiling water; let it stand one hour; then strain into a bottle. Take a wine-glass full, fasting.—*Toledo Blade.*

—The practice of mulching young trees after they are set out seems to be growing in favor. It keeps the soil cool and damp during the summer and prevents plants from drawing from the soil. The mulch should extend well out from the base of the tree.—*Cleveland Leader.*

—Very rich fritters are made of one and one-half pints of flour, the yolks of four eggs, two small teaspoonfuls of baking powder, butter the size of a large hickory nut, salt to taste, with enough milk to make a thick batter; fry in lard that is heated to the boiling point. A rule for plainer ones may be wished for also. Two eggs, one cup of sweet milk, a little salt, and flour enough to make a stiff batter. These are nice with maple syrup.—*N. Y. Post.*

—A good cow should not be fat, even when not giving milk. Her sides should appear fat, but rather by the deepness of her body than by its narrowness. Her head should be small, neck thin and flat and chest deep. In a very young heifer it is impossible to decide what her bag and teats will be, but an animal that shows these points is worth saving and trying as a cow. One that has a sound body and a coarse, bull-shaped head, will be worth more for beef than for milk.—*Exchange.*

—Lemon Pudding: Three eggs, one scant cup of sugar, two liberal tablespoonfuls of corn-starch, one lemon, juice and rind; two cups of milk, one heaping teaspoonful of butter. Scald the milk and stir in the corn-starch wet up in four teaspoonfuls of cold water. Cook—stirring all the time—until it thickens well; add the butter and set aside until perfectly cold. Then beat the eggs light, add the sugar, the lemon juice and grated peel, and whip in, a great spoonful at a time, the stiffened corn-starch milk. Bake in a buttered dish and eat cold.—*Albany Journal.*

Dogs Versus Sheep.

We find the following paragraph going the rounds of the agricultural press: "Tennessee has 300,000 dogs. At one dollar a month for food alone that is $3,600,000 a year, not to speak of the damage they inflict upon the sheep industry." We do not believe that the people of Tennessee are any more fond of dogs, or keep any more per capita, than those of other States, for this love of dogs appears to be universal in the United States. The rich and poor, lame and lazy, will have their dogs, but it must be said that those who can least afford it usually keep the greatest number. The poor man usually keeps one dog; and a very poor one, if he is lazy and shiftless, keeps two or more that must hunt their own food, much to the annoyance of the owner's neighbors.

Now, it must be admitted that dogs are the one great enemy of sheep industry, and have been for many years in all of our older States, and thousands of farmers have had to dispose of their flocks or see them killed. Laws have been passed, it is true, to make the owners of dogs responsible for whatever damage they may do, either in killing, maiming or worrying sheep; but the difficulty is in identifying the culprits, for one or a half-dozen dogs may attack a flock on a dark night, and, after destroying more or less sheep, depart for their homes, which may be miles distant, the owner of the flock knowing nothing of his loss until the next morning, when perhaps it is too late to track the rascals that have done the mischief. Besides, if they are followed and found, the chances are in favor of their owners being too poor to pay damages, and the farmer whose sheep have been killed or maimed gets no better satisfaction than to see one of more dogs shot, whose places will be filled within a week by other equally worthless and dangerous curs. Of course, no man who owns a pet dog will believe him guilty of sheep killing unless he is caught in the act, or wool is found in his teeth or stomach, and even then there is a hard struggle to save the life of the brute, the result usually being that a feud is engendered among neighbors.

Sheep killing by dogs is not, as a rule, for the purpose of obtaining something to eat, for the best-fed dog is almost as likely to practice it as the vilest half-starved cur; it appears to be done more for sport or excitement than anything else. We are inclined to think that dogs have a sign language by which they communicate their thoughts and desires among themselves. A dog will start out in the evening and call on a neighbor, and by some kind of signs he will say, "Let us go and see Jim or Jack over at neighbor Brown's," and off both will go at a gallop. When they reach their friend's kennel there will be another consultation, and perhaps the result will be a visit to some flock or sheep, perhaps Brown's flock; and the most curious part of the operation is that Brown's dog will join in the raid, and help kill the very sheep that he has been with and protected from their enemies for years. Of course it is not often that a dog will destroy his master's sheep or aid other dogs in doing so, but such instances of depravity in dogs have been known.

The question for the farmer and all others interested in the development of the sheep industry to answer is, which are worth the most to the country, sheep or dogs? We exempt, of course, the dogs that are too small to injure sheep, as well as some breeds that are not addicted to running about nights in search of such exciting sport as killing sheep; but by far the larger number of dogs in this country are of the sheep-killing kinds. As these dogs increase in numbers sheep must necessarily decrease, as they have in several States, once famous for their fine flocks, but now more noted for the great number of dogs than for choice sheep.

Twenty years or more ago the late Henry S. Randall, the greatest authority on sheep husbandry of his day, said that the State of Ohio expended annually three and a half millions of dollars in food for dogs, or more than three-fourths the total amount of State taxes for 1860. Aside from the expense of keeping dogs, they killed on an average over $100,000 worth of sheep annually in the State of Ohio alone. These figures were obtained from the township assessors' lists, and not estimated or guessed at. Other States have suffered fully as much as Ohio from the depredations of dogs upon sheep, and it is certainly time that something was done to relieve sheep husbandry of this fearful tax.—*N. Y. Times.*