

MICHIGAN FARMER

AND STATE JOURNAL OF AGRICULTURE.

DETROIT, AUGUST 25, 1888.

THE HOUSEHOLD---Supplement.

For the Household.

THE FARMER'S SOLILOQUY.

The sun was declining behind the hills
At the close of a beautiful day.
The day of the month was the seventeenth,
And the month of the year was May;
The sky was arrayed in its gayest gown
Of delicate pink and blue.
While the earth with its fields of growing grain
Was gorgeous in beauty too.

The farmer had finished his work for the day,
The stock had all been fed,
The supper was eaten and cleared away,
And the little ones were in bed.
The farmer was seated with pipe in mouth
By the side of the kitchen fire,
For the evenings were somewhat chilly yet,
Albeit the days were mild.

Silently sitting and smoking away,
Not a word to anyone said,
But his mind was at work tho' his tongue was
not

O'er a difficult problem indeed.
A problem that some would think odd enough,
But to him! ah, he never could see
The affirmative side of the following words:
"Are my daughters of much use to me?"

"Two grown up daughters have I," he thought,
"Women a'most, it seems,
Yet, neither of them seems to bring in a cent,
Tho' both are far into their teens.
They can spend the earnings my hands have
wrought,
O yes! that's quite easily done;
But the thing of it is when they're needing new
clothes
Why don't they try and earn some.

"To be sure they help my wife with the work,
But I think she could do it alone,
Although she *does* look a trifle pale.
But working makes people strong.
They can play the piano and sing, O yes!
For the neighbors that happen in,
I don't know but that I am proud of them
When they're asked again and again.

"Well, and there's the family sewing,
I believe my wife has said,
They save her a deal of hiring,
By sewing themselves, instead.
And the village folks all count on them
To help with their doings and such,
And to tell the truth, without them
I'm thinking they *couldn't* do much."

"And then too, the house and its fixings
Are sort of 'kept up' by them,
For *without* them the mother and I
Might drift into old fashioned plans.
I've been judging too harshly I reckon,
The worth of our girls, to see
If I couldn't find some way or other
That my daughters *aren't* much use to me."

CONCORD.

B. M. F.

THE FARMER'S WOES.

I saw in a recent issue of the FARMER a report of the discussion, at a Farmers' Club, of the following question: "Are the agri-

cultural interests and the farmer properly represented in the legislative bodies of this country." It is not this question I desire to discuss, but the views of the speakers, as briefly reported. One gentleman claimed they were not properly represented, laws being made by lawyers, who work for the moneyed interests. If the farmer is not properly represented, whose the fault? He votes for the lawyers who make these obnoxious laws. Our professions and commercial classes are constantly being recruited by drafts from the agricultural classes. The farmer is continually grumbling that his sons will not stay on the farm; often we find him educating them in the professions (and putting a mortgage on the farm to do it) because he knows they will have a better chance of advancement. If he chose to exert his influence and train his sons to a proper understanding of the needs of the agricultural interest, he could, beyond the shadow of a doubt, through his own vote and theirs, control the "balance of power" and become a dominant factor in legislation.

To enact wise laws, laws which shall do justice to all classes and industries, a legislative body must include representatives of all the interests in the State. Then each acts as a check upon the other to prevent class legislation, or injustice to one industry through laws framed to protect another. There must be business men of broad views who can comprehend the effects of laws upon trade, lawyers, to see that statutes are constitutional and binding, farmers and manufacturers to look after the needs of their respective interests.

But when it comes to election what do we see! Nominate a farmer for representative in our State Legislature, and the votes of the farmers in his district defeat him, in nine cases out of ten, in favor of some windy orator from the city who thinks cabbages grow on trees and don't care a snap of his finger about the "agricultural interests"—after he gets elected. Farmers almost invariably vote on party lines; it is the Democrat, or the Republican, or the Prohibitionist, who gets the votes, not the one of their number who could represent them understandingly. A wool-growing district sends a man to Congress who says wool is a minor industry in his State, although it ranks fourth in production among its sister States. It is enough for the farmer if the man he is asked to vote for belongs on his side of the political fence, and has a ready tongue and the reputation of being "a sharp feller." And one great reason why farmers will not vote for a farmer is through what looks to me suspiciously like

an ignoble jealousy because he is preferred before them; he has grown up among them, he is no better than they think they are themselves, and "he's getting too big-feeling," so they humble him at the polls to take the conceit out of him. Any person at all conversant with the political history of this State knows this is true, and that more than one good man, who would have nobly represented his profession at Lansing, has been politically assassinated in the house of his friends. When farmers *want* to be represented in Congress or Legislature by a farmer, and will unite and support their candidate because he is *their* representative, they will have no reason to complain, and they may feel certain the remedy lies in their own hands, and there only.

Are American farmers the worst off of any class of people in the world? How about English farmers, with their high rents, their tithes, their worn out lands and American, Indian and Australian competition in wheat, wool and meat production? How about French agriculture, where the farmer's little holding would not make a potato patch for an American, yet a whole family must live on the returns; and Germany, where the able-bodied men go into the army and women till the fields and live on black bread and cabbage? Is the American farmer "worse off" than these? Would he exchange places with any one of them? Is he not rather the man most to be envied among agriculturists? The truth is, the farmer thinks he has a hard time because he does not know how other people are compelled to live.

A late resident of this city who came here from England and was very loyal in his attachment to his native country, after a number of years' residence here paid a visit to his old home. On his return, his friends of course were anxious to learn his impressions of the condition of agricultural and live-stock interests in England, and what comparisons he would make between that country and his adopted home. Asked if he would return there to live he replied: "If her majesty Queen Victoria were to offer me as a free gift the finest farm in her royal dominions I would say 'I thank your Gracious Majesty most humbly, but I very much prefer to return to America.'" And that is the way nearly every foreigner feels who comes here willing to work. Poor as they may be in their own land, poor as they may be here, they find themselves infinitely better off here; and the fact that none will willingly return proves clearly that they are aware of their better prospects.

There are fewer business failures among

FOR THE GIRLS.

A correspondent of *Women's Work* tells the girls some of her secrets, as follows: "You can have a pretty gilded rocker at an expense of twenty-five cents, and you need not trouble to sandpaper and scrape the paint off; either. Pour some varnish into an old teacup, adding a little turpentine, spread a couple of newspapers on the kitchen table, and give part of the chair a thin coat of varnish. In a few minutes, when the varnish is "tacky," not dry, put on the bronze, and with a bit of chamois rolled up in a ball, rub lightly back and forth till evenly covered.

"In a few hours put on another coat of varnish and bronze, and then the third one, then it will not rub off."

A home made screen can be manufactured with a little work and small expense, and is useful in the kitchen to keep the heat of the fire from the worker, and in many other places in the house: Fasten two clothes-racks together with hinges; cover the panels thus made with common cotton cloth, cut as wide as the panels, tack firmly at the bottom; then stretch tightly over the frame and fasten securely at the bottom on the other side; also fasten the cloth firmly to the sides. Now fill the whole with a thin coat of glue size, this causes the cotton to shrink and makes the frame work very solid, also giving a nice surface to work upon. Go over the frame with black shellac and rub to a soft surface with emery cloth. You can then decorate in any way preferred. Pretty wall paper, used for dado and frieze, with a plain space between, which may be covered with olive, dark red, sage green, or any color of paper preferred. A pretty ceiling paper with gilt stars is not bad.

Birch bark pictures are very pretty for home decoration. Take a nice smooth sheet of bark any size desired, and fasten firmly with mucilage to a piece of thin cardboard; decorate with the brush or arrange pressed autumn leaves and ferns upon it in any way desired. Pretty frames for pictures of this kind are made by cutting from thin, unplanned boards pieces the size desired, and glue together. At each corner, or, if the frames are large, at equal distances apart, arrange groups of tiny acorns in their cups and glue firmly to the frames, and gild the whole. The unplanned wood when gilded gives the appearance of rough gilt. Cornucopias made of bark bound with ribbon decorated with autumn leaves and ferns and filled with dried grasses are rather pretty. Place at the points pretty bows of ribbon, to the ends of which attach tiny gilded acorns in their cups. Another pretty receptacle for dried grasses is a round box any depth and width desired, covered with bark, ornamented in front a little above half way with a bunch of pine or hemlock burrs glued on firmly, varnished or bronzed, or both. At the bottom of the bunch is fastened a broad satin ribbon bow, from the ends of which fall small burrs. The bottom and top are finished by broad bands of ribbon. The width of the ribbon depends upon the size of the box. A pretty ornament for the front of this box instead of the burrs is a small bunch of dried grasses tied with a bow of ribbon. The

burrs at the ends of the ribbon may be fastened by small brass-headed tacks. These are only a few of the things for which birch bark can be used, and as it serves the purpose of perforated cardboard, the making of one article will suggest the making of another.

CUCUMBER PICKLES.

A. D. Grover, of Ann Arbor, desires to know how to put up cucumbers in salt brine, and also in liquor, making what is known as "whiskey pickles."

For the small quantity usually put up for home consumption, as good a way as any is to wash the cucumbers and pack them in alternate layers with plenty of salt which soon forms a brine, which preserves them until needed, when they are freshened by several days' soaking in water changed daily, and put into vinegar. When large quantities are put up, they are thrown—after being washed—into a weak brine in which they remain two or three days, then put into a barrel or cask and covered with strong brine. They should be covered with a cloth weighted to keep them under the brine.

We have no directions for putting up cucumbers in liquor, nor are we able to obtain any. The "whiskey pickles" of commerce, are, we think, put down in brine at first, and after freshening, put into white wine vinegar, which gives the sharp tang. A recipe which we find in an exchange is as follows: "Take one quart of good alcohol to four quarts of water; put the cucumbers in fresh from the vines, after wiping them with a wet cloth, or washing and draining them. Keep in a warm place until fit for the table; then keep in a cellar or other cool place."

If any of our readers can furnish other information, Mr. Grover will be glad to receive it.

COOKING POTATOES.

Our potato crop was brought into the cellar last night, and as quite the largest share of them are about the size of marbles, the question before the house now is, how are they to be disposed of?

As I understand the bulk of the crop throughout the State is in much the same condition, perhaps a few ideas exchanged on the methods of preparing them for the table might be mutually beneficial.

The very smallest are the best eating if nicely cooked and served hot; that is necessary to any potato to have it in its prime. When I have enough time at my disposal to do so, I sort out the little ones and fill a large dinner pot, boil quickly, pour off the water and allow the potatoes to cool, then take off their jackets, as grandma would say, and set them in the refrigerator or a cool place. It will be but little trouble to put a quantity in the spider, with sufficient butter or pork drippings and salt to season, and fried brown, they are really delicious. I have known of several families who bought small potatoes on account of the difference in price between them and large ones, and used them principally in that way.

The next larger grade can be washed clean and baked in a quick oven. It will

take but a few minutes to bake them, and they should be sent to the table direct from the oven; but of all things a gritty baked potato is—well, bad enough, so be sure they are above reproach.

Last spring when we had potatoes through all the grades of good, bad and indifferent, the ladies of our Farmers' Club took up the subject and we received some good ideas. One member said she could make soggy potatoes really palatable by boiling quickly and removing from the fire just as soon as they were done, then pour off the water and mash well with plenty of seasoning. The point was to not allow them to cook a moment after they were tender, to absorb water.

Another member gave directions for baking, which I have tried and found very nice. Pare large potatoes, cut in quarters or eighths, fill a pie tin or dripping pan, sprinkle with pepper, salt and bits of butter or drippings and bake quickly. This makes a nice supper dish.

When potatoes are scarce I mix small pieces of moist bread with warmed over potatoes, let them brown, and it is not bad at all.

After a season of substitutes for potatoes in the shape of pancakes, johnny cake, fried bread, gems and what not, we are ready to receive with gratitude and make allowance for the genuine article even if they are

SMALL POTATOES.

GRASS LAKE.

Useful Recipes.

SALT MACKEREL WITH CREAM SAUCE.—Wash and soak a mackerel over night. In the morning put into a baking dish and pour over one pint of milk. Bake twenty minutes. Remove; strain the milk; melt one tablespoonful butter, add one tablespoonful flour and pour on the hot milk; add one saltspoonful pepper and pour over the mackerel.

STEWED TOMATOES.—Pour boiling water over the tomatoes and then remove the skins. Cut the tomatoes into pieces, rejecting any hard or green parts; put them in a porcelain-lined or granite pan; add one slice of onion and simmer gently for thirty minutes, stirring occasionally with a wooden spoon. When done add three ounces of butter to every quart of tomatoes; season with salt and pepper to taste. Do not add flour or bread, as they destroy the flavor and color. The gentle cooking in an uncovered vessel will evaporate the liquid until the tomatoes will be the proper consistency without thickening. Violent heat destroys the delicious flavor of this half fruit, half vegetable, so when you cook them be most careful to use only moderate heat.

PEAR MARMALADE.—Weigh, pare, halve, and core as many ripe mellow pears as you desire to use. Put them into a preserving pan, cover them with water, and simmer gently until they are tender. Lift them out of the water and boil the liquid for an hour with the skins and cores of the pears. Strain it. Make a syrup of it by boiling a pound and a half of sugar for every two pounds of fruit. Let this syrup boil until it will stiffen when a small quantity is poured upon a plate. Stir the pears into the syrup and boil all together for a few minutes. Turn the marmalade into jars, cover in the usual way and store in a cool, dry place. This is an English recipe.

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farmers, proportionately, than among any other class of people; and real estate is everywhere classed as the safest of securities. The total mortgage indebtedness on all the farms of Michigan in 1887 was nineteen per cent on their assessed valuation; in England, as long ago as 1876, the farms were mortgaged for fifty-eight per cent of their total value! Not one American farmer out of two hundred is compelled to mortgage his farm for money to meet its current expenses. He puts that adhesive plaster upon it to pay for the luxuries; for more land to make himself "land poor;" for the expensive implements the agent flatters him into buying; because he must build as big a barn or as fine a house as a neighbor who has money in the bank; because he goes into the Bohemian oats or Red Line wheat business, or undertakes to get ahead of a "patent right" sharper.

There is no one thing more noticeable by the person who observes with careful eye the progressive movement of all ranks and classes, than the fact that the farmer of today is a broader-minded, more intelligent, better-educated man than was the farmer of twenty-five years ago. And what has made him so? What, but the influence of the tide of advancement that has carried him along in its wake, giving him advantages and privileges his father could not secure. How many of us would care to go back to those "good old days," when the crops were put in by oxen and gathered with sickle and scythe, the days of stage-coaches and post-boys carrying letters demanding twenty-five cents postage and newspapers telling the events that happened six weeks or two months ago? What makes the farmers' market but a "live town," and where do you find a live town but where those great arteries of trade, the railroads, throw their gleaming belts of steel around it? What is a farm twenty miles from a railroad worth, anyhow? and what takes a farmer "out of the woods" quicker than the coming of the iron horse? There is no law to prevent a man from gathering his crops after antique methods and dressing in homespun, an' it please him, but where will he rank among his brother farmers even though his farm be unmortgaged?

What men would do for a scapegoat were it not for women and their fashions, a gracious Heaven only knows. Now I will venture the assertion, and defy any masculine grumbler to disprove my words, that three-fifths of the farmers' wives of a township do not average, in five years, over an annual expenditure of fifty dollars for every article of dress, from shoe-buttons to hairpins, which they wear. And in the name of justice, if the hard working farmer's wife, who toils more hours than does her liege lord and master, does not earn and is not entitled to an average of a dollar a week for her work, what is it worth? If her poor little bills for calico and millinery are to be grumbled over as the cause of her husband's business misfortunes, she better throw up her situation and come into town where she can earn her board and three dollars a week, not work nearly as hard, and follow more fashions than she ever saw or heard of on the farm.

BEATRIX.

IN THE HOME.

It is always interesting to me to learn the home-life of people, to see what those I meet are, what they do, and what they read at home. In my journeyings about I am surprised at the few persons among the intelligent classes who read much, or anything, beside their newspaper. The political newspaper and the religious newspaper abound. I do not know which is the worst; but, in truth, people should reflect on what the author of that fine work, "The Intellectual Life," says, that but a very small portion of the newspaper is worth reading, and we should find that and waste no time over the rest.

The lover of fine literature, who has felt his being enlarged on finishing some great work, is familiar with the exaltation of mind experienced, and his resolve to dig deep in the intellectual mines and store up their wealth of thought. Yet what we accomplish seems to me finely illustrated in Rider Haggard's story of "Solomon's Mines," where the travelers at last enter the mine and discover about them a wonderful wealth of diamonds. Yet if I remember correctly, but one of the number succeeded in getting to the foot of the mountain with any of the precious stones, and he in retaining but a few of the smaller gems.

I have entered many homes and households new to me, and the joys and miseries of the home-life to be seen have impressed me deeply. The wealth and the poverty of the life within these little worlds of being is not to be seen at once, but the discerning heart soon sees the undercurrent and feels its throbbing ebb and flow. There seems gathered and combined forces which shape human destinies; here are developed the wonderful powers of the soul to bless or to blight others. The home presents, as it were, a picture of the life within it. In its surroundings and belongings it indicates the taste and ability of its inmates, and their inner life flows out in light or shadow over it all. The home-story is the history of the world. It has always seemed to me that those who were born and who have grown to man and womanhood surrounded by the beautiful in nature, with her daily benediction of beauty and peace resting upon them, would be beautiful in character and fine in sympathy. But I find it is not so. There is a deeper secret in life, a more subtle power which builds up the pure and lofty in soul amidst unlovely surroundings and proves environment a secondary condition to nobility of mind.

Some of the old homes seem just as they must have been thirty years or more ago, and the children have grown up in the homes and faith of their fathers, attending the old stone schoolhouse and the little church, never having traveled one hundred miles from home. One feels in some of these homes as though he were living several centuries ago. Somehow the old house with its ancient belongings and crumbling walls seems illy adapted to the young beginning their wedded life together. As the young birds build their nests when they mate and have their song because they have their nests, so it seems right and beautiful that

the young should begin their new life in a new home sacred to the future of united hearts, where each may give the true expression of taste and character. We like to leave our impress upon the world; we like to feel that we are building, and there is no purer pleasure for human hearts than the building of the beautiful kingdom called home, the gathering together, as opportunity and fortune permit, those little things which the thoughtful heart and dear hands can accomplish to make home charming.

I wonder if parents often think that a child may feel actual pain because of want of beauty in the home? If they know the ancient and worn articles of furniture which might be easily replaced by modern pieces are real "thorns in the flesh?" If parents could feel the jarring influence which comes to the young and beauty-loving nature from the broken chair, the worn couch, or the tumbling fence, would they not see that these things were changed? So many shadows fall, so many tears must dim the eyes, should not all needless causes of pain and discord be removed? It seems to me the home should be made so dear by grace of life and beauty of surrounding that the heart will cherish and cling to it through the years, as a sweet and joyous memory springing up like a gracious fountain.

There seem so few families who think of gathering a library as the years of home life glide by, and the growing children are seeking amusement and knowledge, their tastes developing and characters being moulded by associations and reading. And it is so easy to keep the young from pernicious reading by placing pure and wholesome books within their reach. I have seen "East Lynn" in several homes recently, and having plenty of leisure have occupied most of the day in reading it. From its popularity I had supposed it to be a novel of the sensational sort and probably shallow, but I was not prepared to find the story so replete with vulgar exaggeration, stupidity, and untruth. The mind is continually repelled by its inconsistencies and the finer emotions pained and shocked by its superficial painting of the most sublime and terrible passions of the human soul. The young and susceptible mind should be guarded from the influence of such books as from vicious companions; for the reading of a book is simply an introduction to its characters and a familiar acquaintance with their principles and actions. The more one sees of the world and the more one thinks, the stronger must be his sense of the undevelopment of the masses of humanity. Yet the good and pure in human lives will blossom out under kindly influences, and a good book is like a helpful hand to the struggling life.

There is another great need in many homes, closer sympathy and more unselfish love between husbands and wives. There is too much indifference, such a lack of the inspiration of love which makes home the dearest spot on earth, lightening the load of labor and making daily duties daily pleasures. Many hearts are weary in the daily toil, for want of some of the tenderness of the old days, just for want of the sunlight of the heart shining in the every day life. The gentle touch upon the aching

head, the simple clasp of the wedded hands, the glad, quick glance of the eye, the kiss at parting, all seem forgotten, or sadder still, were they never known?

Life is justified alone by love. The sweep of sorrow and the rack of pain would give just cause for complaint, did not the crown of love sweeten and glorify the bitterness of existence. And one may well marvel that many strive so feebly for the crown. The daily life grows wearisome and dull, and tired feet stumble and bleed in the dim ways. The fact is early learned that life is "a great bundle of little things." Its happiness lies in the little joys springing along the pathway, in the daily graces and tenderness, in the helpfulness of the little kindnesses bestowed just when the heart is needy.

S. M. G.

SYRACUSE, N. Y.

THE FERRY EXPERIMENT GARDENS.

It had been some time, a couple of years, since I had visited the experimental gardens of the Ferry Seed Company on Woodward and Ferry Avenues in this city, which are under the supervision of Prof. W. W. Tracy. And so, last Saturday afternoon, in company with a friend I took an upward bound car, and after a twenty-minute ride along this tree-lined avenue, left the cars where a big patch of verbenas and another of sweet peas gave promise of better things beyond. But the gate through which I had entered on former visits was barred by a great stone evidently put there to stay; another and smaller gate bore a rusty padlock as its coat of arms, and although I could have climbed that fence, I really did not think it would be proper, right there on the Avenue. Some flower-loving pilferer had broken a board of the fence separating this lot from its neighbor; thither two determined women took their way and crawled through the hole in a very undignified but expeditious manner, and though a regiment of soldiers in livery of pale green, each with a "black seed" shako on his head, stood mustered in martial order in our way, we passed through their ranks, over the soil which yielded to the foot like a velvet carpet, past the patient toilers gathering seeds, who regarded us with evident suspicion, and "all over Robin Hood's barn"—if anybody knows how much territory that covers—till at last, at his pleasant home on Ferry Avenue, we found the guardian genius of the place.

By the opening of Ferry Avenue, a rearrangement of the trial plats was made necessary; the most important of these are now on that avenue, instead of Woodward, as heretofore. Here are grown and tested all the novelties sent out by various seedsmen, with a view to a careful and practical estimate of their actual value. All the seductive and glowing adjectives of the catalogues are ignored and the seeds grown "on their merits." I should like to convey some idea of the care and system under which this is done. For instance, the first thing one observes is the rows of tomatoes grown next the fence and guarded from the predaceous small boy by two rows of very business-looking barbed wire, whose numerous bristling points seemed calculated to

make eager youth pause and bethink itself. The tomatoes are grown on trellises, in regular rows, and at the head of each row is a stake with a number upon it. A corresponding number in Prof. Tracy's note book gives the name of the variety, by whom sent, date of planting, and any other information regarded necessary. Over one hundred varieties of tomatoes alone are thus being tested. Among them was a recent novelty, the Mikado, whose great size would attract attention, but whose irregular form and deficient flavor debar it from becoming a desirable market variety. "Many people," said Prof. Tracy, "think if a tomato is good size and good form, smooth and firm, it is a good sort. But there is a great deal of difference in the flavor of the different sorts, and we pay particular attention to this quality." The White Apple is a new and peculiar sort, being when ripe a clear greenish white, and having a very pretty shape and good flavor. The tree tomato looked more like a potato vine than anything else, and seems too late to be a sure crop; it was just in bloom. Other vegetables are grown in the same painstaking manner.

But the flowers! Fancy a space as large as an ordinary house, covered with *Lilium auratum* and the glowing spikes of the gladiolus (which you must pronounce gladiolus, not gladiolus), pink, rose-hued, pale yellow, soft rich carmine, and fiery two-edged swords of flaming scarlet. A great gold-banded bumble-bee was plunging head first into one ruby throat and then another, and backing out with an angry buzz of disapproval, as though disappointed in his search for a supper. The unsold bulbs of the great stock held for the spring trade are planted out here and allowed to fulfill their mission of loveliness. Here are 300 varieties of asters, just budding, which promise a rarely beautiful sight and a grand study in a couple of weeks. Only one sort was as yet in bloom, "Queen of the Hills," not as fine as later varieties, which will have an opportunity to assimilate August's sunshine. We were shown a bed of coleus plants, the product of one paper of Ferry's seeds, and it was very interesting to observe the many fine plants produced, some of which were quite unique in marking and color. A yellow poppy—the yellow rather inclining to orange—was another novelty to me; it seems to hold its petals better than the ordinary red ones, which really justify the poet's words,

" * * * * * like poppies spread.
You seize the flower, its bloom is shed."

Here I saw for the first time the salpiglossis in bloom, and admired it for the delicate pencilling of its flowers. If you ever grow petunias, don't be chary of them; grow them in a bed by themselves and let them sprawl around and over it and tangle themselves up at their own pleasure; you've no idea how effective they are, thus grown. We quite agreed with Prof. Tracy in wondering why the beautiful, hardy, every way desirable perennial phlox is not more generally raised; it has now almost as many kinds of "eyes" as *Phlox Drummondii*, and in its infinite variety is charming in the garden and useful in floral decorations.

But the sweet peas! Here the pink-and-white Painted Lady held her court. "The

secret of growing this beautiful flower," said our cicerone, as he paused by a tall hedge of mixed sorts and began snipping off the pink and purple heads remorselessly, "is to get them in early. They are the first thing we plant. Plant them in trenches, rather deeply, cover them several inches deep and then keep filling in the trench as they advance in growth."

We then paid a visit to the children's pets, some fine Angora and lop-eared rabbits. One black and white fellow boasted a pair of ears which measured $17\frac{1}{2}$ inches from tip to tip. The pretty Angora rabbit had on his summer suit; in winter he wears fur so long that it drags on the ground, and when curled up to sleep must look like a big ball of down; his eyes were a lovely carnelian pink. And perhaps we were not envied the great bouquets we bore away as souvenirs of our call, as we rode down town again! Even the hardened baseball cranks who boarded the car at Brady St. had admiring glances for the glowing masses of beauty and perfume.

BEATRIX.

FRUIT CANS.

A lady who had employed many hired girls once said to me: "I always learned something myself from even the poorest of them." I never open a can of fruit, of late, without thinking of the remark, for a very unsatisfactory girl taught me something about that process that has never yet failed me, and that was to run a case knife around between the metal top and the rubber, using not the point of the knife, but the flange next to the handle.

I think the cause of fruit failing to keep well, is often that the lip on the edge of the metal top is bent or turned up so that it does not press the rubber firmly. For the last two years I have taken a hammer and gone around the top, tapping the lip down evenly after it was screwed on, and have had no losses. There seems no danger of breakage, as the rubber is between the hammer and the glass. It never pays to use doubtful rubbers, as new ones cost less than a cent apiece, and an old can with a new rubber is just as good as a new one. Those who keep much fruit over from year to year can keep it in shape to use the oldest first by having a lead pencil handy, and marking the year on the top at the time of canning; it is easily scoured off for next season.

WASHINGTON.

EL SEE.

C, of Paw Paw, answers "Martha's" inquiry relative to keeping whole tomatoes as follows: "Put sound ripe ones in not very strong vinegar; they will keep until June. When wanted for the table drain them, place in sauce dishes and eat with sugar. They are delicious."

DEAR LADIES, if you do not wish "so much Beatrix" in your HOUSEHOLD, you must take up your pencils in self-defense. The Editor is after the absentees. A. H. J., Mrs. Fuller, M. E. H., Aurora, M. E. F., J. G. A., Mrs. W. J. G., X. Y. Z., and many others who make us occasional calls, are requested to come again. Many have expressed a hope that Ruth Curtis would write again, a wish the Editor most cordially seconds.

A WOMAN'S GLORY.

I wish those middle-aged or elderly women whose once dark locks have been frosted by the tender touch of Time, could or would realize how much—how *very* much better they look when they discard the wads of dead gray hair which never match their own, and wear just their legitimate locks. The false tresses deceive no one; even a child can see that all that mass of rough, faded hair cannot possibly grow on a head where the silver threads are so thin that the scalp is plainly discernible, and it does look "horrid." If the wearer could but see herself once with others' eyes, she would be content with the covering nature has left on her head, no matter how scanty. A small loose coil of one's own hair, or a French twist, which is popularly supposed to require only three hairs, a single small puff held in place by a jet hairpin, is not only more comfortable, but much more fashionable and stylish, not to mention suitable and better-looking, than a switch which evidently has been transplanted. How often we see an elderly woman with her own soft gray hair twisted into a little hard round "nub," and surrounded by a huge twist which is not even "second cousin thrice removed" in color! Now don't do it. It looks "just awful." Brush out your own hair and arrange it loosely and look respectable. If there is a bald spot to be hidden, or you feel your head is quite out of proportion to the infinitesimal knot of hair, get your tasty daughter or granddaughter to fashion you a dainty cap—a morsel of white lace and pale tinted ribbon, for white lace looks much more handsome on gray hair than black—for wear when you are out in society.

Shirley Dare, a popular writer on toilet topics, says to keep the hair from falling out nothing is better than the old fashioned remedy, tincture of sage and rosemary. Even plain sage tea is good. The application should be made daily, and an oilskin cap worn to prevent rapid evaporation. Use no animal fats of any kind on the hair; castor oil scented with lavender is the best dressing; even it should be used sparingly. She recommends the water in which potato parings have been boiled as good to keep dark hair from fading with age. Wet the comb in the water and draw it through the hair. Use the brush a good deal, but not with too much force, if you want nice hair; and clip the forked ends once a month. People who have thin, fine, fragile hair should avoid all alkali washes—no borax, ammonia, soda, etc.; the coarse, strong hair can bear them, but silky hair is burnt and destroyed. Soap bark, two quarts of boiling water poured on a teaspoonful of this bark, and used warm is an excellent wash for the hair, better than any other. Apply with a shampoo brush to the scalp, parting the hair and applying along the line of the parting.

Why, too, I wonder, do red-haired girls consider their locks a misfortune? Titian loved to paint that bright aureole about his ideal heads. Auburn hair is almost always associated with a delicate complexion—or one which would be delicate if well treated, and a bright, quick wit. An auburn haired

girl with dark brown or black eyes, or with those reddish-hazel eyes which are said to "match" such hair, has the makings of a peculiar beauty about her, if nature has been fairly kind in the matter of features and figure. And even the "strawberry blonde" and the "terra cotta girl" can be picturesque if they will only study the colors which they wear, to tone and harmonize their high coloring. The sandy-haired girl with pale blue eyes and florid complexion is morally certain to think she must wear blue, a color which makes her eyes look faded, and intensifies the brightness of her hair and complexion. If blue is worn at all it should be of the palest possible tint, or of a hue so dark as to be almost black. Red and pink ought never to be worn, they heighten the undesirable coloring. Olive and sage green, almost any shade of gray, and seal brown can be worn by a red-headed with good effect. Especially is seal brown effective with hair of a tawny yellow-red. Black is always becoming, especially the softness of velvet or lace. A black dress may be brightened by a few touches of almost any color, if carefully managed; let it appear as the lining of a panel or reverse, as a piping or tiny pleating, anywhere except near the face. Cream white is more becoming than dead white.

Black velvet with white or pearl gray plumes constitutes a becoming bonnet; so also does grey or smoke color. A wide brimmed lace hat, which casts the hair into shadow, is always becoming, but never allow the milliner to put in a red rose or a blue bow, it ruins the effect. A tawny yellow, somewhat after the color of those ox-eyes in the meadow, will be a rare combination with some hair. Do not try to keep the hair smooth by the use of pomades, etc. Let it ripple and wave and get rough and catch the sun in its meshes, and be sure, if you only dress with taste in harmonious colors, those jealous girl rivals who spitefully call you "red-head" behind your back, will be really in their hearts envying you those maligned tresses.

BEATRIX.

THE DOMESTIC HARNESS.

The foreman came in the other day and said: "Those new collars are galling the horses' shoulders, there'll have to be some pads for them," so the proper amount of cash was handed over for the purchase and there was no farther trouble. Is it not just that way with our own work harness? If we stay in the kitchen, cooking and cleaning, from daylight till dark, does not the harness wear out our nerves, our patience, and leave as unmistakable marks as those on the horses' shoulders? The effort to keep a spotless kitchen floor and work-table, glistening tinware and polished stove is making many a woman old before her time; and still we feel that we *must* be clean though our backs break and our feet are too painful for steady locomotion, because some one might think that we were "slack." So the harness is galling. Only yesterday I had worked steadily for nine hours in the kitchen, except just the time of eating meals, and the harness was all the time becoming more irksome, yet the floor was not clean, the windows were in the same

lamentable condition, and if I left the room there was a heavy plaid shirt cut out and lying on the machine ready to be made; but just then that was not the right kind of a pad. Tired feet could not be rested by running a sewing machine, and work of any kind would not be rest, so I sat me down gilding. I know Evangeline is shocked, but the pad was not as expensive as the one needed for the horses while it had even a better effect. For a time I had not a care or a trouble. I was wholly absorbed in my pastime and it was, for that reason, a perfect rest. At other times the pad was two or three chapters of "Ben Hur," or a drive of a few miles, or a letter, but it does not matter so much what the pad is if it only entirely removes the pressure; then, after a few hours of change, the harness will fit us as easily again as though it had not chafed. But do not try to make us think that loving our work will make our kitchens cool and comfortable during these sultry days, or that we will stay there, from choice, any longer than we are obliged to.

WASHINGTON.

EL SEE.

JANNETTE is anxious to know whether any of the HOUSEHOLD people are using the Davis Swing Churn, advertised in the FARMER; and if so, what are its advantages and what its disadvantages, as compared with barrel churns. An early answer will oblige her.

Useful Recipes.

FIG PASTE FOR CAKE.—One pound figs; three-fourths coffee cup sugar; one-half cup water. Chop the figs, then cook with the sugar and water until thick as paste.

PICKLED ONIONS.—Select small white onions; peel, and boil for ten minutes in equal proportions of sweet milk and water. Drain and pour spiced vinegar over them at once. Use no allspice; it darkens the onions.

RIPE CUCUMBER SWEET PICKLES.—Pare twelve large cucumbers and remove the pulp; cut them into strips two inches wide and four inches long. Take two pounds of sugar; one pint vinegar; one ounce cinnamon and one-half ounce of cloves; boil and skim; cook the cucumbers in this till tender, take them out and boil the liquid fifteen minutes, then pour over the cucumbers.

FOX GRAPE JELLY.—Pick the grapes when they are about to turn. Place them in a stone jar set in a kettle of boiling water. Let the grapes cook in this way until they are thoroughly soft. Strain them through a thin strainer. Allow a pound of granulated sugar to every pint of juice. Put the juice in a porcelain preserving kettle and boil rapidly for twenty minutes. When the juice is put in the preserving kettle, put the sugar which has been measured out into a tin pan and place in the oven that it may be heating while the grape juice is boiling. At the end of the twenty minutes add the hot sugar to the juice. Stir in till it is dissolved, which will be in an instant. Let the whole boil up once, and fill jelly bowls, which should stand ready in a pan of warm water. When the jelly is cold it will be found fine and firm, and a beautiful pale green in color. Cover it with papers dipped in alcohol and seal up with a second paper, using the white of an egg as a mucilage.