

CAN WE AFFORD TO LIVE IN IT.

Occasionally some millionaire builds a mansion, which is the admiration of the town, or erects a country house, which, with its grounds, is the pride and boast of its neighbourhood. In time the great man dies, becomes insolvent, goes abroad, or tires of his hobby; and then the property is put up for sale. Everybody crowds to see the dwelling, or drives out to the country house. The pictures, the furniture, the hot-house or the grounds, by turns the theme of admiration. The night of the sale arrives. The auction room is crowded. To judge from the sea of faces looking up at the crier, one might think that the competition would be enormous. But the fact is the reverse. The auctioneer expatiates long before he can obtain a single offer; the property, at first, seems about to be knocked down to the first bidder; and when at last, other offers are made, they come almost reluctantly, and though the hammer falls amid a general cry "how cheap!" the purchaser looks as if he already half repented of his bargain.

And why? Simply because it is one thing to buy a costly house, but quite another thing to live in it. Men, before they purchase a stately mansion, should ask themselves whether they can afford to keep it in appropriate style. A hundred thousand dollars for a dwelling makes necessary thousands of dollars for furniture, thousands for dress and equipage, and thousands more for servants, parties, Newport and Saratoga. There is a fitness in things, demanded by public opinion, which requires these expenses, and to this opinion nine men out of ten sooner or later practically yield, even if they or their wives do not embark in the extravagance at once. But usually there is backwardness in this respect. Fitznoodle purchases a new house, with rosewood doors, walnut staircase, stained glass windows, and before he has fairly recorded his deed, Mrs. Fitznoodle wants the walls frescoed and panelled with satin, and ten thousand other superfluities. The estimated cost of the movement is soon trebled; the annual outlay grows in proportion; and Mr. Fitznoodle is either ruined, or condemned to groan, forever after, over his increasing expenses.

What is true of the would-be-fashionable, is just as true, however, of persons with more limited means. If men worth only a hundred thousand dollars or two, ape the millionaire's style of living, so do young merchants, professional men, even clerks and mechanics, ape those richer than themselves.—The weakness of wishing to live in a fine house is almost universal. The fine house, too, is relative; for that which a millionaire scorns, the young merchant thinks superb, and that which the merchant looks down on, the clerk pinches himself to obtain. It is amazing how many families live in dwellings beyond their means! The miserable shifts to which such families are driven in order to keep up appearances, are melancholy to think upon. In the end, too, the head of the family dies, having laid by nothing, and the widow and children sink into a hopeless poverty, the more poignant to them, because of the mortification attending it. It would be well if the question was often asked, when moving into a better home is proposed, "Can we afford to live in it?"—*Horticulturist*.

TO PREVENT GIRDLING OF TREES.

(From the new revised Edition of Downing's Fruit Trees of America.)

Great injury is done to young orchards in some districts by the *meadow mouse*. This little animal always works *under cover*, and therefore does its mischief in winter when the snow lies deeply upon the ground. A common and effectual mode of deterring it is that of treading down the snow firmly about the stem directly after every fall of snow. But this is a very troublesome affair.

The following mixture will be found to be an effectual prevention. Take one spadefull of hot slaked lime, one ditto of clean cow's dung, half ditto of soot, one handful of flowers of sulphur, mix the whole together with the addition of sufficient water to bring it to the consistency of thick paint. At the approach of winter paint the trunks of the trees sufficiently high to be beyond the reach of these vermin. Experience has proved that it does no injury to the tree. A dry day should be chosen for its application.

English nursery men are in the habit of protecting nurseries of small trees from the attacks of *rabbits*, simply by distributing through the squares of the nursery coarse matches made by dipping bunches of rags or bits of tow, in melted sulphur, and fastening these in split stakes a couple of feet high. The latter are stuck into the ground, among the trees, at from 12 to 20 feet apart, and are said completely to answer the purpose.