

AGRICULTURAL.



Fence Posts.

Mr. Ames Fish, of Bethlehem, N. Y., in a communication to the *Country Gentleman*, says:

"I often hear persons who use posts in supporting their fences in clay ground complain of the difficulty of frosts raising them out of the ground. I think that the most of such difficulty arises from not having used suitable posts for such ground, and from the work not having been properly done.

The posts used should be rather the largest at the lower end—that end sawed off square, and its edges and corners slightly taken off. That part of the post within the ground should be made straight, and should be set plumb. The parts in the ground would then be parallel with each other, and there would be no hindrance when the frost leaves the ground in the spring to the posts dropping back to their places. But when posts sharpened to points at the lower ends are raised by frost, should a small bulk of earth settle into the space which was occupied by a post having a blunt end, and when the post settles it could not so nearly occupy its former position.

When a fence on such ground has become raised by the posts have been "hitched up" from time to time, and the earth having settled in and occupied the void left at the foot of the post, it is very easy to lower the fence down to its former position as follows: Brace the sides of the fence, so as to keep it in its upright position; then at the post side of the fence, (if there is one,) at each post, and at right angles with the fence, dig a trench 3 feet in length, one foot wide, and eighteen inches deep. Preserve a "step" at the end of this trench to stand upon while continuing the other part of the trench down to the level of the seat formerly occupied by the foot of the post, and equal in width, at that point, to the diameter of the post, and remove the post to the level of the trench. After the fence is set to its place, the earth, on being returned to the trench, should be well pounded in, so as to keep the post firm."

Absorptive Power of the Soil.

No contribution of science to the practice of agriculture is more calculated to arrest the attention of the farmer than the various observations which have been made within the last few years regarding the remarkable power the soil possesses of absorbing and retaining some of the indispensable elements of the plant. They are the more worthy of attention, inasmuch as the facts which have been determined are, to a certain extent, opposed to some of the more commonly prevalent opinions. They lend but little countenance to the idea that the manure, when committed to the soil, lies there in a precarious condition, liable at any moment to be deprived of its soluble constituents by the rain, and of its volatile matter by the heat of the sun's rays; but, on the contrary, they tend to show that there is a conservative influence at work in the soil which imprisons these substances within it, and stores and preserves them for the future uses of the plant; and, what is more, it exercises this influence most powerfully on those substances which are most sparingly distributed through the soil, holding with the firm grasp of a miser the potash and ammonia, but leaving the soda and lime, which are less important to the plant, at the mercy of the rain.

The discovery of these facts has thrown an entire new light on the chemistry of the soil, for they have shown that it must be studied not merely by itself, but in relation to the various substances with which it comes in contact in the course of cultivation, so as to trace the influences which they mutually exert, and thus a subject already sufficiently complex has become more difficult and laborious than it was before.—[Scottish Farmer.]

Healthfulness of Apples.

There is scarcely an article of vegetable food, says *Hall's Journal of Health*, more widely useful, and more universally loved than the apple. Why every farmer in the nation has not an apple orchard, where the trees will grow at all, is one of the mysteries. Let every farmer lay in from two to ten more barrels, and it will be to them the most economical investment in the whole range of culinaries. A raw, mellow apple is digested in an hour and a half, while boiled cabbage requires five hours. The most healthy desert that can be placed upon a table is a baked apple. If taken freely at breakfast with coarse bread and butter without meat or flesh of any kind, it has an admirable effect on the general system, often removing constipation, correcting acidities, and cooling off febrile conditions, more effectually than the most approved medicines. If families could be induced to substitute apples,—sound, ripe and luscious—for the pies, cakes, and sweetmeats with which their children are too often indiscreetly stuffed, there would be a diminution in the sum total of doctor's bills in a single year, sufficient to lay in a stock of this delicious fruit for a whole season's use.

Grape Vines and Irrigation.

Col. Harazthy, who owns a large vineyard in Sonoma county, and thoroughly understands the culture of the grape, is now in Europe, and in one of his late letters he says: "You cannot insist too much on the injury done to the grape by irrigation. The experience of France and all wine making countries in Europe, proves that irrigated vines produce weak vines, void of acidity or stringency, possess an aquish or watery taste, and without flavor." And he advises all who are engaged in the cultivation of the grape, to put a stop at once to irrigation. By irrigation more wine is produced, but the gain in quantity is lost in quality, and much more, for such wine won't keep. Many persons in our county labor under the belief that it is absolutely necessary to water the vines to make them thrive, but this is a mistaken notion. A German friend informs us that after the first year they require no irrigation. He was employed for many years in one of the largest vineyards in Europe, and therefore is competent to speak and speaks from experience. Let those engaged in the business profit by these facts.

Working Cows.

We find a communication in the *Ohio Cultivator* as to the mistaken exemption of cows from labor, from which the following extract is taken:

In Germany they have to do it, and the owner is greatly the gainer, while the cow is none the worse off for having to work. Many a small farmer could make money did he work his cows, while, when he does his work with oxen or horses, he expends all his profits upon those animals and their feed, which keeps him poor. Let him have four cows, and to plow; use two half of the forenoon, and then change; and so in the afternoon, milking them three times a day. In resting time they could be grazing or eating mown grass. A little grain must be fed, but this would repay in the greater abundance of milk and butter. How proud I should feel, were I a farmer, to drive my team of four fat cows to market with a load of grain, produced with the aid of cow labor. My neighbors might laugh at me while using my cows upon the farm; but when I should have realized the fruits of their labor, and the saving of oxen and horse flesh, my turn would come to laugh.

Value of Shelter for Sheep.

William H. Ladd, one of the best farmers of the State of Ohio, who has given especial attention to sheep, gives the following careful estimate, in the *Ohio Farmer*, of the value of sheep, suggested by the remark of a neighbor, "It won't pay to build shelter for sheep":

This neighbor kept 1,000 head, and lost many animals, and it was from his losses that a part of this estimate is made: "Let me take some low estimates in reference to the loss occasioned by this treatment in thirty years. First, if the sheep sheared two pounds of wool per head under this treatment, they would have shorn three pounds had they received good care. Second, one pound difference per head on 1,000 sheep, makes 1,000 pounds; 1,000 pounds in thirty years, at forty cents per pound, \$12,000. It is a very low estimate, counting sheep at the lowest common price, that a flock of 1,000 sheep should yield \$500 worth of surplus stock to sell each year; this, in thirty years, amounts to \$15,000.

Feed saved by shelter, say \$200 each year, worth in thirty years, \$6,000; simple interest at six per cent, on the amount saved in thirty years, \$30,690; difference of the value of stock on hand at the end of thirty years, \$1,000; value of shelter to the proprietor at the close of thirty years, \$1,000; amount saved, \$65,890. Per contra, shelter cost, say \$3,000; additional grain fed, say \$400 each year; in thirty years, \$12,000; interest as above, \$16,560; for keeping shelter in repair, \$1,000—total, \$32,560. Difference in favor of shelter and good care, \$32,130. Don't look at this as a fancy sketch, it is a reality; and the only incorrectness about it is that the estimated difference in favor of good keeping is in every particular below the reality.

From Nevada Territory.

The great freshet that visited California, Oregon and Washington, from the published accounts, came over the mountains and swept over Carson valley, destroying much property and some lives.

The Nevada papers state that Gregory & Riddle's saw mill was damaged to the amount of about \$3,000, having gravel, logs and boulders washed into it, completely covering boilers and engine. The foundation was slightly injured. Child's & Hunt's quartz mill was slightly injured. Ash & Co.'s saw mill was carried away.

At Washoe, a slide took place, demolishing three houses. One man, named Pinrod, a brother of Mina Pinrod, Clear creek, was buried.

All the mills in Gold canyon were injured. Paul's mill suffered but little damage. Fifty men were employed to make a ditch and protect the place from damage. In French's mill the boiler was turned up on end, all the

stamps were carried away, and 250 pounds of amalgam, worth \$12,500. The next mill below was filled with sand.

The road in Gold canyon was in many places washed away. All the adobie houses in the canyon were dissolved.

In Carson canyon, two saw mills and one quartz mill were tipped over into the river and swept away. Two men, names unknown, were drowned.

In Carson city every street was flooded. Nearly all the cellars were full. In Governor Nye's house the basement was full, and the water stood on the first floor.

Not a dam was left in Carson river below Dayton.

About three-fourths of a mile of the Kingsbury road, on the eastern slope of the Sierra, was washed away, and it is impossible now for wheeled vehicles to pass.

Gold Hill, a famous mining locality, caved in December 13th, owing to the late storm.

The *Territorial Enterprise* says:

"The principal cave occurred about noon yesterday, at the claims of Mosheimer & Winters, and Hurd & Winters, situated at the southwest side of the hill. There has been a fissure, occasioned by the ground settling along the west side of the hill for some months. The recent rains permeated the loose formation, and on Sunday the indications of a cave became so obvious that the workmen ceased operations. Yesterday morning the ground commenced settling gradually, and about noon a huge mass, which rested on timbers—the rock having been completely excavated—fell, leaving a chasm about forty by sixty feet at the surface, and some thirty feet deep. One of the companies have a tunnel running from the base of the hill and intersecting the mine at a depth considerably lower than the cave, and it is probable they will be able to prosecute the work by this means after the mouth of the tunnel has been cleared. The tunnels of some of the claims adjoining on the north have partially fallen in, and the bent state of the timber indicates an immense pressure.

It is difficult to say whether the caving will stop now, or the whole of Gold Hill proper fall in. The mine has been improperly worked, the whole hill resting on timbers, and it would not surprise us, since what might properly be compared to a portion of an arch, has given way, to see the entire structure fall."

The World in Trouble.

From the St. Louis correspondence of the *Sacramento Union*, under date of the 28th of November, recently published in that journal, we take the following:

The conjecture that the 'distress of nations,' predicted in the sacred Scriptures, is now an existing fact, has much to support it in the present prospective condition of the world. There is hardly to be found a quiet country on the globe. Where trouble does not exist, it is at least momentarily expected.

Besides the stupendous war in the United States, there is war in several of the South American States, and there will soon be war in Mexico. In China, the war that has raged for several years still reigns, and in Japan there have recently occurred events that must lead to an armed demonstration against that island by England.

In Europe, where there are still unadjusted disputes enough to produce a dozen wars, we see the indications of a convulsion which diplomacy cannot much longer postpone, and which, confident of their inability to arrest, all monarchies are preparing to meet.

Poland is in revolt, and though the people are unarmed and surrounded by foes, the presence of a large army at Warsaw cannot repress the rising aspirations of the people—long oppressed—for nationality. Even in Russia itself there are popular demands for a Constitution, attended by outbreaks that betoken a general rising against the Czar's despotic authority. Hungary, too, is insurgent, and a war in that country that will call for all the strength of Austria may open at any moment. With it will begin the struggle of the Venetians for independence of Austria and union with Italy.

Great Britain and France, though nominal allies, are actual enemies, and each has been preparing for a war with the other ever since the alliance. Every steel-clad ship built at Cherbourg is constructed with a view to a war with England, and every iron-plated battery built at Portsmouth is intended especially for Louis Napoleon.

Thus in every quarter of the world we perceive the presence or symptoms of trouble that may ere long make the whole world a theater of strife.

The Ettrick Shepherd's Dog.

This dog, though of a sullen disposition, managed a flock with extraordinary skill. On one occasion, about 700 lambs, which were under his care at weaning time, broke up at midnight, and scampered off in three divisions across the hills, in spite of all that his master and an assistant lad could do to keep them together.

"Sirrah," cried the shepherd in much sorrow, "my man, they're a' away."

The night was so dark that he could not see

his dog; but no sooner did Sirrah hear these words, than he quietly set off in search of the lambs. The shepherd and the lad did, meanwhile, what they could, and spent the whole night in scouring the hills for miles around, but of neither the flock nor the dog could they find a trace.

"It was," says Hog, "the most extraordinary circumstance that ever occurred in the annals of pastoral life. As day had dawned, we had nothing for it but to return to our master, and tell him that we had lost his whole flock of lambs, and knew not what was become of one of them. On our way home, however, we discovered a body of lambs at the bottom of a deep ravine, and the indefatigable Sirrah standing in front of them looking all around for some relief, but still true to his charge. The sun was then up; and, when we first came in view of them we concluded it was one of the divisions of the lambs that Sirrah had been unable to manage until he came to that commanding situation. But what was our astonishment, when we discovered by degrees that not one lamb of the whole flock was wanting! How he had got all the divisions collected in the dark is beyond my comprehension. The charge was left entirely to himself from midnight until the rising of the sun; and, if all the shepherds in the forest had been there to have assisted him, they could not have effected it with greater propriety. All that I can further say is, that I never felt so grateful to any creature below the sun, as I did to my honest Sirrah that morning."

"The Rejected Stone."

The following spicy extracts are from the above named work, recently published by Walker, Wise & Co., Boston:

"A cry comes up to the ear of America—a long, piercing cry of amazement and indignation—recognisable as one which can come only when the profoundest depths of the human pocket are stirred. The privateers are at large! They have taken away my coffee, and I know not where they have laid it. They have taken my India goods with swords and staves. For my first-class ships they have cast lots!

Was such depravity ever known before? So long as it was a human soul, launched by God on the eternal sea, that they despoil—so long as it was only a few million bales of humanity captured—so long as it was but the scuttling of the hearts of mothers and fathers and husbands and wives, we remained patient and resigned; did we not? But coffee and sugar—Good God! what is that blockade about? To seize a poor innocent sloop—has slavery no bowels?—and its helpless family of molasses barrels, can hearts be so void of pity? Slavery must end; the spirit of the age demands it; the blood of a dozen captured freights crieth to heaven in silveriest accents against it. "Brothers, there is a laughter that opens into the fountain of tears.

"The promptness with which the Secretary of State has expressed the position of our government on our transatlantic relations has elicited the warmest commendations of the people. It has been distinctly announced that in this contest we will submit to no interference and accept no help from foreign powers. Especially, none from the powers above!

"Toward the last foreign powers the cold shoulder has been turned in a way to rejoice the hearts of the New York Herald and the Boston Courier and many others, who have long insisted on the strict application of the Monroe doctrine to the government of God, whose aims at encroachment on this continent, they have watched with such a jealous eye.

"Yet, it is less than doubtful if we can conquer without them, or irrespective of an alliance with them."

False Proverbs.

"A young fellow must sow his wild oats." In all the wide range of British maxims there is none, take it for a l in all, more thoroughly abominable than this one, as to the sowing of wild oats. Look at it on what side you will, and I will defy you to make anything but a devil's maxim of it. Whatever man, be he young, old or middle-aged, sows, that and nothing else shall he reap. The one only thing to do with wild oats is to put them carefully into the hottest part of the fire, and get them burnt to dust, every seed of them.—If you sow them, no matter in what ground, up they will come, with long tough roots like couch grass, and luxuriant stalks and leaves, as sure as there is a sun in heaven a crop which it turns one's heart cold to think of. The devil, too, whose special crop they are, will see that they thrive, and you and nobody else will have to reap them; and no common reaping will get them out of the soil, which must be dug down deep again and again. Well for you, if, with all your care, you can make the ground sweet again by your dying day.

"Boys will be boys," is not much better, but that has a true side to it; but this encouragement to the sowing of wild oats is simply devilish, for it means that a young man is to give way to the temptations, and follow the lusts of his age. What are we to do with the wild oats of manhood and old age—with ambition, overreaching, the false weights, hardness, suspicion, avarice—if the wild oats of youth are to be sown and not burnt? What possible distinction can we draw between them? If we may sow the one, why not the other?—[From "Tom Brown at Oxford."