FOR FARMERS AND GARDENERS.

Grape Vines, it is said in the *Homestead*, bear most abundantly when they are so trained as to be swayed by the wind—the motion operating upon the sap in the body of the vine, "which being prevented from descending by the valves which nature provides in the wood for that purpose, is in this way constantly forced upwards and into the smaller branches and leaves, thus vastly increasing the elaborated sap to be returned." The very nature of the vine leads it to seek a lodgement in trees and, as we have often observed, if a branch should happen to ascend a tree, it at once "luxuriates in unwonted thrift" and attracts to itself an uncommon share of the vine—this extraordinary growth being, no doubt, attributable in a great degree to the motion of the vine, caused by the wind.

In large vine-growing and wine-making districts throughout France and Switzerland, each separate vine is trained on a single upright post, thus allowing all the freedom so peculiarly suitable to their luxuriant growth and abundant yield.

The *Homestead* says, "Grape vines on arbors seldom bear fruit of prime quality, doubtless because they are not moveable and the light and air do not have free access to them. Those on trellises do better, especially if the trellises are so made that the vines move freely in the wind."

Never trim your vines in the the spring, but all feeble buds and shoots may be pinched off as soon as they are developed. The *Homestead* says:

"Many branches if left to themselves will bear from three to five bunches each, but only the more thrifty and vigorous will perfectly ripen even three. Indeed, if a vine is suffered to overload itself in this manner, it will not only fail to afford full bunches of well ripened fruit, but it will so enfeeble itself by its over effort, as to break down its vital force for years. All small, imperfect, or supernumerary fruit buds should be sternly removed, leaving as a general rule two bunches to the strong branches, and one on those less vigorous. In this way, instead of small and immatured fruit, there will be nearly an equal weight of fully developed bunches of large and well ripened fruit."

The grape vine is a rank feeder and, as Professor Mapes, of the New York Farmers' Club, lately said, "You may, if you like, bury a horse near the roots of a vine and it will use it up in time"; but the roots should not be disturbed by digging around them. Wood ashes and bone manure are excellent for top dressing, or digging into the soil around the vines, but do not let the spade touch their roots. Probably to use a hoe would be best.

Mr. Provost, of Williamsburg, also a member of the N.Y. Farmers' Club, has made fifteen hundred gallons of wine in one year from a vineyard of a single acre. He has found the application of sand, with other manure, very beneficial.

As to summer pruning, says Prof. Mapes, "I pinch off, twice, the shoots bearing canes at the third leaf beyond the bunch." "The cutting of the fall," he says, "can be kept for use, if required, by burying in earth or sand." We shall have occasion to allude to summer pruning, at more length, in the future.

It is recommended by one of our amateur vine growers, an old farmer, that, in this country, where, as yet, the vines have to be covered during the winter, to allow them to spread out on benches or any moveable arrangement by which the vines could be supported one or two feet from the ground, would curtail the labor required in taking them down from trellises in the fall and perhaps, at the same time, give greater freedom to the vine.

FLOWER SEEDS may now be sown as soon as you please. The ground set apart for flowers should be thoroughly prepared—made light, rich and as fine as possible. Do not cover the seeds too deeply; from half to one inch and a half will generally suffice.

Among the best varieties of flowering seeds we we will here enumerate a few choice varieties, which should now be planted, if they can be procured, namely, the Asters, Double China Pink, Phlox Dromondii, Sweet Abyssum, Mignonnette, Blue Glove, Portulacca, New Golden Chrysanthemum, Sweet Peas, Burridgii, Hyacinth, Cerevolulus, Flowering Larkspur, Major, Lupias, Sulpiglossis, Erysimune, Peroffskyanum, Scabiosa, and many other beautiful and fragrant flowers; besides the numerous list of flowering shrubs, vines and roses, among which we might particularize the Sweet-scented Magnolia, Broad-leaved Laburnum, Rose Acacia, Tartarian, Tree-honey Suckle, red and white, Siberian Lilac, Snowball, Fragrant Clethra, Double purple Tree Pæony, Queen of the Prairie Rose, Sweet-scented and Double purple Clematis; the Japan Evergreen, Scarlet Trumpet, Monthly Fragrant and other choice varieties of Honeysuckles; the Glory of Rosamond, Phillipart, Infant d'Ajacie and others of the climbing Roses; the Archduchess, La Reim, Giant of the Battle, Luxemborg, Queen of Lombardy and others of the Monthly Roses.

If all these are not now to be had, send to your friends in the East and ask them to forward them, with other varieties, if you please—as soon as practicable, taking the precaution to have them put up in small tin cans, air and water tight. They may be forwarded by mail at a trifling expense.

By so doing, you will be enabled to richly adorn your door-yards and walks, with a profusion of flowers of variegated colors, affording a succession of bloom throughout the season, thus greatly enhancing the beauty and attractiveness of home.

The Weather has, for the past few days, been quite warm and summer-like and probably sufficiently settled for planting corn, sorghum, beans, squash, melons, cucumber seed, &c. If the weather should hereafter become cold, causing the more tender seeds to rot before germinating, it will of course be necessary to replant; but the adoption of the plan recommended in No. 5, of the present volume, will not only obviate the necessity of replanting, but secure to you the earliest fruit. Lest some may have forgotten and others, perhaps, have lost or torn up the paper, we will here repeat the suggestion: Having thoroughly prepared your ground, mark across each hill at right angles and plant one quarter each successive week—thus, if one planting fails, another immediately follows.

This may be applied in the planting of melons and squash, as well as cucumbers, if thought proper.

Irrigation should not be applied to the early vegetation while there remains sufficient moisture in the ground to sustain the plants, or, until they show the need of water, which is indicated by a shrinking or curling of the leaves. When water is given to plants while the weather is yet cool, they are liable to permanent injury therefrom. This, however, does not apply to fruit trees and shrubbery set out this spring, which should now receive water, to assist and induce the putting forth of roots and proportionate tops. Especially should those trees procured from low, moist soil and transplanted on dry, gravelly uplands, be carefully irrigated now and also during the whole season, which will save and give them a much-needed start for future growth.

In Transplanting, as well as in planting seeds, be careful to select the very best varieties to be found. "Like produces like." A tall slender-stocked kale will never produce a large, solid head of cabbage. If we breed from poor animals, whether horses, cattle, sheep or swine, we shall propagate an inferior species. So it is with grain and vegetables.

Cabbage Plants should be set out as soon as they can be obtained of sufficient size; also tomato and egg-plants—care being taken to protect them for a week or two, every cool night, by placing flower-pots over them, or something with an opening in the top. Cone shaped boxes are best.

Cabbages are recommended by the Worcester *Palladium* as food for cattle—being more easily raised than roots and quite as good. "For milk cows," it says, "they work wonders." The planting, hoeing and gathering of cabbages require less labor than carrots, and the cabbage is said to improve the quality of milk.

The Germantown Telegraph wants to know if the seed of the Early York cabbage was ever produced in perfection in the United States; having been always under the impression that the seed was imported from England. It considers this variety of the cabbage 'superior to all others, especially of the early sorts.'

Peanuts have been grown here with considerable success, and they are excellent and very nutritious. The kernels may be planted now.—Take off the shuck and put three or four kernels in a hill—the hills about eighteen inches apart. The soil should be rich and mellow.

"The Honey-Blade Grass Seed" has proved to be a speculative humbug. Thousands, in different parts of the States, have been deceived by it and thousands of dollars have been swamped in its purchase by farmers.

Cotton Culture is beginning to attract considerable attention in Central Polynesia. A sample of wild cotton growing on the Friendly Islands, it is stated, would be worth 8d. per pound in the English market.

Cooped Hens may be made to lay regularly by feeding a small daily allowance of raw fresh meat of any kind.

A Good Cow is an important auxiliary to the comfort of a family. But some cows are better than others, and in choosing one, there are some points that deserve particular attention. Sandford Howard, in "transactions of the N.Y. State Agricultural Society" says:

"The points of a good dairy cow may be given as follows:—The head rather small, wide across the eyes; the face somewhat dished; the muzzle fine; nostrils open and spreading. A wedge-shaped head should be avoided as indicating weakness of constitution. The eye should be large, full, bright and expressive of mildness and intelligence; the horns slender and of a waxy appearance; the ears thin; the neck small at its junction with the head, clean at the throat, rather thin than fleshy, but pretty deep and full where it joins the body; the breast not so wide as in cattle designed chiefly for fattening; that portion of the chest beneath the shoulder-points deep; the shoulders not coarse and protuberant, smoothly laid at the top; the back straight; the ribs less spreading than is preferred in fattening stock; the carcass deep, gradually enlarging from the chest backwards; the flanks deep and full; the hind quarters long and heavy in proportion to the fore quarters; the twist wide; the thighs thin; the tail slender, except at its upper end, where it should be large, but should not rise much above the level of the rump; the legs rather short and small and flat below the knee and hock; the skin of middling thickness, mellow and elastic, of a yellowish color, as indicating richness of milk; the hair thickly set and soft; the udder capacious, spreading wide on the body, but not hanging low, without fleshiness, but with plenty of loose skin; the teats of medium size, widely separated from each other and placed well on the forward part of the udder; the milk-veins large, springing out near the fore legs, appearing well developed along the body."

But, we will venture, that, with all these qualifications, a cow will be a poor one, unless she is fed well. It is unreasonable to expect an animal to yield more than the actual amount of milk-producing substance provided her. If you want a cow to give a "pile" of milk, feed her and treat her well.

A Breed of Hogs—called by a New England journal, the "White Chester," is now claimed, at the East, as being superior to any other—combining in a great degree, the "large pork-producing qualities of the Leicester, with the firmness of bone, and early maturing of the Suffolk and others." A farmer says they "will weigh from four to five hundred pounds at twelve months old, when properly fattened." Such hogs would be more profitable than the common breeds.

Here is some quaint and pertinent ideas on hogs, from the *Valley Farmer*:

"Reader, did you ever see a hog while rooting, kick up every time he bored his nose in the ground, as if trying to stand on his head? If so, don't buy him; he will not prove a profitable feeder. We might call this a sub-soil variety.

Did you ever see a hog that would grab an ear of corn and run a quarter of a mile before he would stop to eat? If so, beware. We will place such in the same category, and for the sake of distinction we will call them Elm-peelers.

Did you ever see a tall, slab-sided, long-legged, razor-backed breed that were always hungry, and when opportunity required, would climb up to where the rails in the fence were some distance apart, and then either slip through a crack or throw off a few rails and jump over? If so, don't purchase unless you are a small farmer and can't possibly build corn-cribs. We might perhaps, call these free-soilers, or else barn-burners.

Did you ever see a slim, dead alive kind of thing, that would get so poor as to be obliged to trot before and canter behind when required to get up motion, and still not die; its eyes both coming out at the same hole, or at least so near it that the hog appeared cross-eyed? If so, let us pass the dismal picture and simply call them old-liners. All these breeds may be described as follows: Long ears, large, heavy heads, long and thick legs, a streak of lean underneath a thick grizzle, and that covered with a thick, tough hide, with abundance of bristles, and in fine a great amount of offal of every description. Such animals have no thriftiness, no capacity to fatten, and very little about them that is digestible after they are killed. Pick for a hog with a small, clean head, rather small bone, bow low to the ground, long and square; hams full and round, disposition quiet and pleasant. Such a hog will always ensure a good return. If you can come across such hogs, whether called Berkshire, Woburn, Suffolk, Grazier or what not, get some and try them. They will not disappoint you."

A Big Crop of Corn was raised by Mr. Willard, of Wilton, Franklin county, Maine, in the following manner:—The half acre selected was a gravelly loam, which he plowed ten inches deep and enriched with six cords of stable manure in best condition for use, half of which was spread and covered with the plow, the other half being put in the hill. Good, well-seasoned seed was plentifully dropped and the plants afterwards thinned out so as to leave about one plant to each square foot of ground. To these preparatory labors were added thorough hoeing and weeding. The result was a yield of fifty five bushels and eight quarts of shelled corn—from half an acre—besides, the feed afforded from thinning out during the summer.

Whitewash your horse and cattle stalls; also your hog pens and heneries—as soon as you can get the lime—if you want to render them more agreeable and healthy and prevent your live stock from being infested with vermin. 'White walls,' remarks the Germantown *Telegraph*, 'and long lines of white fences gleaming amid luxuriant and embowering foliage,' give to the home of the industrious farmer or mechanic an appearance of comfort and neatness that well repays the little expense attending it.

Talking while milking is discouraged. At the Farmer's club of West Cornwall, Conn., a member said that he discharged a man because he would talk and interrupt the milking in his dairy, and that "in three days the increase of milk was equal to the man's wages." Talking much is not alone detrimental in milking cows, but in all branches of industry.

Last Published Patent Office Agricultural Report (1857).

The following is the article from the American *Agriculturist*, alluded to in our last. While the exposition of the "Agricultural Department at Washington," published last week, gives a view of the inefficiency of that Department and some of the causes of the inferiority of the Reports—indicating, at the same time, the means of at least partially remedying the evil—this shows up, in their true light, the glaring discrepancies and almost total lack of practical utility characterizing the latest Agricultural Report, issued from that department—pointing to the very articles, and the pages they occupy, attesting, most conclusively the correctness of the grave charges with which the Report has been assailed:

We recently saw an unpublished picture, representing a large cabbage—the different leaves of the plant being labeled with the names of sundry agricultural words such as, Farmer's Encyclopedia, Loudon's Works, etc., etc. By the side of this cabbage stood a man with a monster pair of shears clipping off the ends of the leaves, which dropped into a basket labeled "Patent Office, Agricultural Report." This picture was an admirable and truthful satire upon the volume named at the head of this article.

Here is a volume of 552 pages got up at an expense of some $50,000 of which 240,950 copies have been printed and bound at an additional expense to the U. S. Treasury of some $150,000, and distributed free through the mails, taxing them perhaps $50,000 more.

And what has the country in return for this outlay of a quarter of million of dollars, professedly expected for the promotion of Agriculture? Let us look into the volume.

We find, first, some fifty pages on the "Progress of Agriculture," evidently made up from an English Encyclopedia and a Prussian public document, save twenty pages of old statistics from former Census reports; the whole without especial value even as a work of reference. Then we have eighty pages on animals, such as: English draft horse (brief,) Lama, Asiatic Goat, Hares, Canadian Porcupine, Shrews, Weasels, elementary chapters on Bees, (condensed from Swammerdam?) etc. Most of these pages might appropriately appear in a work on Natural History, if well written—the only practically useful thing being an investigation on Cotton plant insects by Townsend Glover, which is condensed into the smallest possible space, and like most other things in the book is signed D. J. B.

A little further on we have 20 pages on the manufacture of salt—we can not find that this has the slightest connection with agriculture. Then come 14 pages on Bread crops, 8 pages of it condensed from the London Farmer's Magazine (signed D. J. B., of course), followed by some analyses by Dr. Jackson, who is retained in the pay of the Patent Office, we suppose, in return for his influence in securing a berth for D. J. B.

Next follow 16 pages on Tea Culture, mainly from Robert Fortune's report to the French Government in 1853! (This was translated for and published in the Agriculturist some five years since!)

We then have 46 pages on Sorghum Canes, not originated for this work but taken from a report to the U. S. Agricultural Society, and consisting chiefly of statements of individuals—now so far behind time as to be of little use; except to flatter the writers.

We have following this, short chapters on Wine, and Hedge Plants, succeeded by 34 pages on Horticulture, confessedly condensed from two English works.

Next, short chapters on Asparagus in Spain, and Hops in England, "condensed from authentic sources"—nothing said about hops in this country.

Next under the head of "Textile and Forage Crops" we find 125 pages entirely devoted to Cotton, and made up mainly of European commercial statistics. There is nothing practical said on the culture of Cotton, and not a word is said in the book of other textile crops, such as Hemp, Flax, etc., while the great forage crops of the country, only second in importance in our agriculture, are entirely ignored.

The work then closes with 138 pages on meteorology by Prof. Henry, a valuable thing in its line, though one which will hardly be read by one person in fifty of those into whose hands this report will fall.

So much for the Official Document on Agriculture, nominally got up by the General Government of a great agricultural people, and distributed at home and abroad.

If any have thought the criticisms on the Agricultural Department at Washington severe, we think such illusions will be dissipated, after reading the above. The devotion of twenty pages to a dissertation on the manufacture of salt—the transfer, to the pages of a work such as the National Report of a great agricultural people *should* be, of an old French report on tea culture, published five or six years ago, and as generally circulated, probably, as its merit would demand, as also other matter "so far behind time as to be of little use"—a shallow aping of the scientific, in the adoption of a spurious heading over a general division of the work, as though the mass of our farming community, or at least of those who would peruse the Report, were novices and would award an excellence to it that its intrinsic worth did not deserve—and the large insertion of abstruse meteorological tables, in a great degree inapplicable and foreign from the kind of information sought for by the farmer—it must be admitted, furnish some grounds for serious objection to the Report and for candid investigation and deliberation as to the most effectual means of rendering it what it *ought* to be.

Bees—Several hives have been lost in Napa county, California, in consequence of neglect to hive the queen bee, after they had commenced swarming.