



FOOD FOR CROPS.

A correspondent of the Germantown Telegraph, in a communication relative to food for crops, says:

It has been said that the farmer feeds the world. In the first place he supplies food for himself and family, then he feeds his domestic animals, fowls, &c., and lastly he supplies aliment to those who are engaged in artistic and other pursuits around him. His industry gives nerve to the broad wings of commerce, and to the rough hand of the operative wherever he may be. The fowls of the air are also pensioners upon his bounty, and wherever life pulsates, there may he behold the results of his patient and productive efforts developed in the phenomena of breathing and joyous life.

But how he is enabled to do all this, is more than he can tell you. He plows and sows his seed, and beneficent Nature accomplishes for him the result. He examines not into the mysteries of her operations. Contented with the result, he inquires not into the *modus operandi* of her system, or the principles of her policy, for that were to become a philosopher, and "philosopher he is none." The soil he considers as a bank of inexhaustible wealth from which he may "draw" indefinitely without making any corresponding returns. Every plant he cultivates, he is very well aware, must be supported by alimentary matters from some source; and this source he regards as the soil. But let us examine this subject a little more closely. Of what are soils composed?

Of the debris of rocky masses; they are of different constitutional character, and different degrees of productiveness. As a general thing they contain not more than one part in a thousand of the atoms, in an available or appropriate form, which nature makes use of or consumes, in forming a plant of any kind. Even where the mechanical texture and physical properties of soils are identical, they will be found upon analysing them, to be possessed of very different degrees of alimentary power. Plants must be supplied from the soil (or from the atmosphere,) with all the ingredients requisite to their formation. No matter in how small a degree a constituent may fall short of the actual quantity required to furnish forth the organized structure, the deficiency will be fatal to the result. No sooner is the supply in the soil exhausted, than the development of the plant ceases, disease supervenes, and decay and death follow as inevitable results.

Iron is always found in the blood of animals, and is derived from their food. Both phosphorus and sulphur are extant both in the brains and muscles of animals as constituent elements. These are derived from their food and of course primarily from the soil. If the food of which we partake, in common with other animals, were deficient in either of these constituents, would not the deficiency induce weakness and disease, and, ultimately, premature death?

Phosphate of lime is regarded as the "bone earth" of vegetables. Now if nature should produce vegetation without this constituent, could the vegetables so produced and constituted supply to man and animals the solid, earthy matter requisite to impart solidity and strength to the bones? Certainly not. Nature proceeds, in all her evolutions the most simple as well as the most complicated, upon a system equally well graduated and comprehensive. She refuses to organize vegetables without the "presence in the soil, in an available form, of those peculiar atoms adapted alike to the wants of vegetable and animal vitality."

It is very easy for a farmer of a discriminating mind to perceive when there is a failure of any of the important constituents of fertility in his lands, although he may not be always certain as to the extent or actual character of the deficiency. Wheat, for instance, after yielding bountifully for one or two years, will, on being again sown on the same land, prove an entire failure. This failure indicates and demonstrates the exhaustion by the previous crops, of some principle without which it cannot be organized, and before another remunerating crop of the same grain can be taken from that soil, it must be replenished with the pabulum of which it has, by the successive crops it has already produced, been exhausted.

Remove the silica (sand) from the soil, and you will find that notwithstanding nature will put forth an effort to produce corn or wheat, yet the stalks will be weak and diseased, and the final result will be little else than a perfect failure. In supplying manure to cultivated lands, and with reference to the productiveness of specific crops, it would be well for the agricultural interests of the farmer and those of the country at large if a more perfect idea of vegetable alimentation were obtained. If the soil and the grains he cultivates could but be analyzed by the farmer, how vastly more pleasant and productive would be the now onerous and uphill business of farming. We lament that it is not so, but live, nevertheless, in the hope of the "good time coming."

PARSNIPS FOR CATTLE.

This root has frequently been recommended for culture as a food for prime stock, but for some reason has never become a favorite—at least has never been extensively grown for

feeding purposes. The Canadian *Agriculturist* has the following article which may be useful to our readers interested in the question:

On the one subject most difficult of all in root culture in this climate—and still more so in Canada, the parsnip doubtless has some advantages; we mean in keeping in the ground through the winter. The difficulty of wintering roots is the greatest drawback to their profitable cultivation here.

The parsnip is one of the most valuable roots that can be grown. In the Island of Jersey it is used almost exclusively for fattening both cattle and swine. According to La Conteur the weight of a good crop varies from thirteen to twenty-seven tons per acre. When parsnips are given to milch cows, with a little hay, in the winter season, the butter is found to be of as fine a color and excellent flavor as when the animals are feeding in the best pastures. As parsnips contain six per cent. more mucilage than carrots, the difference may be sufficient to account for the superiority for fattening as well as butter-making quality of the parsnip. In the fattening of cattle, the parsnip is found superior to the carrot, performing the business with more expedition, and affording meat of exquisite and highly juicy flavor; the animals eat it with much greediness. The result of experiment has shown that not only in neat cattle, but in the fattening of hogs and poultry, the animals become fat much sooner, and are more healthy than when fed with any other root or vegetable, and that, beside, the meat is more sweet and delicious. The parsnip leaves being more bulky than those of the carrots, may be mown off before taking the roots, and given to oxen, cows or horses by which they will be greedily eaten. Another thing in favor of parsnips for this country is, that the frost does not injure them. They may remain in the ground until spring, when they make a splendid feed, at a time when every other kind of root or green thing is scarce, or they may be slightly buried, where they can be obtained almost any time during the winter. On account of their rapid growth when young, the weeding is less trouble, than weeding carrots.

COTTONIZED FLAX.

During the past year a series of experiments, mechanical and chemical combined, have been made in Rhode Island, the object of which was to provide, as a substitute for cotton, a material that could be manufactured without any alteration of machinery now in use.

The object has been attained by the production of a material which is properly named cottonized flax.

The flax is pulled in the field by a machine which does the work of forty men. Either matured flax or flax not in seed may be used. As flax is cultivated for the seed, a double crop may be thus produced—a crop of seed as well as of flax.

The dried flax, as gathered from the field, is first cut by machinery into suitable lengths representing the staple of upland cotton about one and one-eighth inch long. This process is performed by automaton machinery with great facility and at little cost. The material is subjected to a steaming process in large vats, and is then dried by machinery, rapidly revolving.

Next it passes through what may be called a ginning process, whereby the woody husk or chives is separated from the fibre. By chemical process the fibre is then exploded longitudinally, and assumes the required fineness of cotton. The whole process is rapid, simple and cheap.

In this form the material is successfully carded, spun and woven. Beautiful specimens of flax cotton, drawings, rovings, yarn and cloth, and also of flax mixed with cotton, have been exhibited to the Secretary of the Interior and others by ex-Gov. Jackson, of Rhode Island.

As a material for mixture with wool, the cottonized flax is vastly preferable to cotton. It combines in the carding process with greater facility. The yarn is stronger. The cloth is more durable, even more so than if made wholly of wool. The lustre of the cloth is improved. Flax wool also receives a dye with the same facility as wool itself. — [National Intelligencer.]

NEW RECEIPT FOR MAKING SOAP.

FRIEND TELEGRAPH.—We lately tried a new receipt for making soap—new at least to us—and as we have had such good success, I thought it would be well to send you the *modus operandi* for the Housekeeper's department of your paper.

Pour four gallons of boiling water over six pounds of washing-soda and three pounds of unslacked lime; stir the mixture well and let it settle until it is perfectly clear. It is better to let it set all night, as it takes some time for the sediment to settle. When clear, drain the water off, put six pounds of fat with it, and boil for two hours, stirring it most of the time. If it does not seem thin enough, put another bucket of water on the grounds, stir and drain off, and add as is wanted to the boiling mixture. Its thickness can be tried by putting a little on a plate to cool occasionally. Stir in a handful of salt just before taking off the fire. Have a tub ready soaked to prevent the soap from sticking, pour it in and let it set till solid, when you will have from the above quantity of ingredients, about forty pounds of nice white soap, at a cost of about two cents per pound.

Housekeepers, try it!

THE PRINCE OF WALES IN THE HOLY LAND.

The Prince of Wales and his suite left Jerusalem on Thursday, April 10th, at three o'clock in the afternoon, encamping at Bethel, and proceeding the following day by Shiloh to Nablous, arriving on the eve of the Samaritan Passover. After visiting Jacob's well in the morning, the whole party ascended Mount Gerizim in the evening, and there witnessed this ancient ceremony, the only direct vestige of the Jewish Passover.

The whole Samaritan community were assembled on a terrace just short of the summit. About an hour before sunset the prayers began, and six sheep, tended by young men in white garments, appeared among the crowd. As the sun sank beneath the western ridge the young men burst into a wild chant, drew their long bright knives, and brandished them in the air. In a moment the sheep were thrown on their backs and the knives drawn across their throats. In the stream of blood which poured from them the young men dipped their fingers, and marked the foreheads and noses of all the children.

Next came the skinning and roasting—the first in a trough, the second in a hole prepared for the purpose.

The Prince and most of his suite returned to the tents, one or two remaining through the night on the mountain top, to witness the "feast," which was eaten in haste in the early morning by the Samaritans, girded and shod, and with staves in their hands.

Sunday, April 13, the royal party remained at Nablous, and divine service was performed in the tents by Professor Stanley, who preached on the epistle for the day.

From Nablous they descended from the hills of Samaria to the plain of Esdraelon and Megiddo, and camped on the 15th of April, at the foot of Mount Carmel, crossing the plains to Acre on the following day.

Here the Prince was received by the Governor of Acre, the seashore being lined with troops. Proceeding over the hills of Galilee, they reached Nazareth by Good Friday, Professor Stanley performing divine service and preaching.

On Saturday, April 19, half way between Mount Tabor and Tiberias, his Royal Highness was entertained by a famous Bedouin chief, Agyle Aga, who had protected the Christians during the massacre of 1860. The repast was served in the Arab style, and the Chief was much gratified by the Prince's visit.

At sunset, on Easter eve, the first view of the Sea of Galilee broke upon the party. The tents were pitched by the old walls of Tiberias, on the very edge of the lake; and here, on Easter day, Professor Stanley, after the usual service and a sermon on St. John xxi, administered the Holy Communion to all the party.

On Monday, April 21, they explored the shores of the lake northwards, and then mounted to Safed, where they passed the night. The following day they reached Kadesh Naphthali, whence they came down into the valley of the lake of Merom, and halted at midday, on the hill of Dan, at the first source of the Jordan.

The rest of the week was spent in crossing the plain of Abel Bethmaachach to the great crusading castle of Belpoit, and exploring the banks of the Litany.

On Sunday, April 27, divine service was, as usual, performed at Rasheya, by Professor Stanley.

On Monday, they reached Damascus, all the authorities coming out to meet the Prince, who spent the following day in visiting the antiquities of the town and its bazaars.

The Prince also received a visit from Abdel-Kader.

Between Damascus and Beyrout, the Royal party halted at Baalbec, spending Sunday, May 4, among the ruins, in a portion of which Professor Stanley held the service and preached.

QUOTING SCRIPTURE IN CONGRESS.

Mr Daly, in Congress, recently, set the House in a roar of laughter, by quoting as from the Bible the familiar lines:—

"And while the lamp holds out to burn, The vilest sinner may return."

But Mr. Daly was more nearly right than the laughing members imagined, as we will show by a story.

When the Old School Presbyterian General Assembly were preparing a hymn book, it was brought before the body for a 'option, at its meeting in Philadelphia. The work of the committee was vigorously criticised, and various amendments proposed and some adopted; hymns modified or rejected at the will of a couple of hundred of song members. One member assailed the hymn beginning:—

"Life is the time to serve the Lord."

He said it teaches the false doctrine, that while the lamp of life holds out to burn, the vilest sinner may return; whereas we all know it is not time, for many sinners are abandoned of God, given over to perdition and sealed to destruction before they cease to breathe. He moved to strike out these two lines, and also the first two of the next verse, making one verse of two, and avoid the heresy of teaching that every sinner is within the reach of mercy as long as he lives. The Assembly heard the criticism, were convinced of its soundness, and without any ado forthwith voted out the objectionable lines.

A few minutes afterwards, the Rev. Robert J. Breckenridge, D.D., came into the House,

and the writer of this, who was not a member, mentioned to him the singular step the Assembly had taken. "Why, they have stricken out the words of God himself," said Dr. Breckenridge, and immediately rising, he called the attention of the House to the fact that the hymn in question is a beautiful paraphrase on the ninth chapter of Ecclesiastes, and the obnoxious lines are another form of stating the divine declaration, "To him that is joined to all the living, there is hope." The Assembly saw its error, and restored the lines instantly.

Mr. Daly was, therefore, not far out of the way, when he quoted from the hymn book, and gave credit to the Bible. — [N. Y. Observer.]

THE LE-SER SINS.

According to laws enacted by the Scotch clergy, "it was sinful for a husband to kiss his wife or for a mother to kiss her child on the Sabbath day. It was sinful for a mother to wish to have sons; and, if she have any, sinful to be anxious about their welfare. Smiling, provided it stopped short of laughter, might occasionally be allowed; still being a carnal pastime, it was a sin to smile on Sunday. A true Christian would be careful, in his movements, to preserve invariable gravity, never running or treading out in a brisk manner, as unbelievers are wont to do. If he wrote to a friend, he must beware lest his letter contain anything like jocoseness, since jesting is incompatible with a holy life. It was improper to care for beauty of any kind. It was wrong to take pleasure in beautiful scenery, the admiration of which should be left to the unconverted. Ungodly eyes were alone pleased by what they saw. Such was their obstinate determination to indulge the senses, all of which were evil. But the eye, being the most wicked, was especially marked for divine punishment, being afflicted with fifty-two different diseases, one for every week in the year."

"According to this new jurisprudence, of which the clergy were authors, it was a sin for a Scotch woman to wait on table at a tavern; a sin for her to live alone, as she may give occasion for slander; a sin to have your garden watered or your beard shaved on Sunday. It was not to be tolerated in a Christian land, that on Sunday one should think of his body at all. On that day, horse exercise was sinful; so was walking in the fields, or in the meadows, or in the streets, or enjoying fine weather by sitting at the door of your house. Bathing, being pleasant as well as wholesome, was a particularly grievous offence; and no man could be allowed to swim on Sunday. A Christian must beware of enjoying his dinner, for none but the ungodly relish their food."

THE COST OF A SIEGE.—The siege of Sebastopol commenced in October, 1854, and ended by the reduction of the south side of the city in September, 1855—11 months. The French started with 60 pieces of cannon (supposing those to be sufficient). The allies employed 2,587 cannon, for which were served 2,381,442 shot and shells, and 11,384,894 pounds of powder, exclusive of what was used by the fleet on the day on which they assisted in the bombardment. The fleets mounted 2,156 guns, half of which were brought to bear on the fortifications Alexander and Constantine, and the quarantine and cliff batteries, mounting 261 guns, 200 of which were brought to bear on the squadron. The bombardment lasted five and a half hours, and 968,680 shot and shell were used.

For the infantry of the French army, there was provided 61,606,869 musket cartridges. The artillery constructed 118 batteries, requiring 800,000 sand-bags and 50,000 gabions. The engineer department constructed 59 1-4 miles of entrenchments, requiring 80,000 gabions, 60 fascines, and nearly 1,000,000 sand-bags, besides 1,251 metres of mining galleries, some of which were 50 feet below the surface.

The French transported to the Crimea, 309,268 men, and 41,874 horses and mules; of the men, they lost 69,229 by sickness and casualties. The reader can make his own calculations as to the number and tonnage of vessels it would require to transport the men, horses, guns, etc.

AN OPINIONATED JUDGE.—A Lawyer took some exceptions to the ruling of the court on some point, and a dispute arose. "If the court please," said the counsel, "I wish to refer to this book for a moment," and at the same time picked up a volume. "There is no use of referring to any book," exclaimed the court, angrily, "I have decided the point." "But, your honor," persisted the attorney. "Now, I don't want to hear anything on the subject," yelled the court; "I tell you again that I have decided the point." "I now that," was the rejoinder; "I am satisfied of that; but this is a volume of Blackstone; I am certain he differs with your honor, and I only want to show you what a fool Blackstone was." "Ah, indeed," exclaimed the court smiling all over, "now you begin to talk."

AN UNLEARNED MAYOR.—Half a century ago, a very ignorant man was elected Mayor of a city in Pennsylvania. He took his seat with great dignity, and the clerk laid a paper before him for signature, remarking, "It is only necessary for you to write your initials."

"My nishels! what's that?" inquired the Mayor.

"Oh, sir, write two Ps on the back of the paper."

The official took the pen and wrote, "Two Pezes?"