

"Life affords disagreeable things in plenty to the highest ranks, and comforts to the lower; so that, on the whole, things are more equally divided among the sons of Adam than they are generally supposed to be."

The above was a remark of one, where the distinctions in society were more visible and of greater consideration, than is presented in Oregon at this period; and what is the inference to be drawn from it, but that the means of comfortable subsistence afford as pure and perfect enjoyment of life, as even affluence itself can bestow; and if the means have to be procured by labor, so that it is voluntary, not excessive, and free in its direction, let us be assured it will not detract from the enjoyment, but rather increase, to a great extent, the absolute end for which we live—the happiness of ourselves and the welfare of the community; for let the idea be carried out individually, and the aggregate result becomes national happiness. And who is there who does not fondly hope that such will be the feature which our young and promising country will present? Young she may be, but with no insignificance is she viewed by the older powers. How desirable then that we should really exhibit that position which will render us worthy of the name of a rising state! and which can only be acquired by each depending on and confiding in his own innate power, of securing a comfortable subsistence, and which, acted upon, must inevitably be followed by an increase of domestic comfort—an extension of the export and import lists, and a general augmentation of wealth, the acknowledged tests of national prosperity.

Agricultural Chemistry.—No. 3.

FROM LIEBIG AND OTHERS.

The action of plants on the air in the absence of light—that is, during night—has been much misconceived by botanists; the experiments of Ingenhous were in a great degree the cause of this; his observation that green plants emit carbonic acid in the dark, led others to new investigations, by which it was ascertained that under such conditions plants do really absorb oxygen and emit carbonic acid; but that the whole volume of air undergoes diminution at the same time. From the latter fact it follows, that the quantity of oxygen absorbed is greater than the volume of carbonic acid separated; for, otherwise, no diminution could occur. These facts cannot be doubted, but the views based on them can, and a knowledge of the chemical relations of plants to the atmosphere, proves them to be false.

The decomposition of carbonic acid is arrested by the absence of light, and most botanists have connected the emission of carbonic acid during the night, with the absorption of oxygen from the atmosphere, and have considered these actions as a true process of respiration in plants, similar to that of animals, and like it, having for its result the separation of carbon from some of their constituents. This opinion has a very weak and unstable foundation. The carbonic acid, which has been absorbed by the leaves and roots, together with water, ceases to be decomposed on the departure of daylight; it is dissolved in the juices which pervade all parts of the plant, and escapes every moment through the leaves in quantity corresponding to the water which evaporates.

A soil in which plants vegetate vigorously, contains a certain quantity of moisture which is necessary to their existence; carbonic acid is always present in such a soil, whether abstracted from the air, or generated by the decay of vegetable matter. Rain water invariably contains carbonic acid; plants, during life, constantly possess the power of absorbing by their roots moisture, and along with it, air and carbonic acid. Is it therefore surprising, that the carbonic acid should be returned unchanged to the atmosphere, along with water, when light (the cause of the fixation of its carbon) is absent?

Neither this emission of carbonic acid, nor the absorption of oxygen has any connexion with the process of assimilation; nor have they any relation to one another; the one is a purely mechanical, the other a purely chemical process. A cotton wick enclosed in a lamp, which contains a liquid saturated with

Oregon Spectator.

"Westward the Star of Empire takes its way."

Vol. I. Oregon City, (Oregon Ter.) Thursday, May 23, 1846. No. 9.

carbonic acid, acts exactly in the same manner as a living plant in the night; water and carbonic acid are sucked up by capillary attraction, and both evaporate from the exterior part of the wick—plants which live in a soil abounding in humus, or vegetable mould, exhale much more carbonic acid during night, than those in a soil wherein it is scarce; they also yield more in rainy than in dry weather.

There are other facts which prove in a decisive manner that plants yield more oxygen to the atmosphere than they extract from it; these proofs, however, are to be drawn with certainty only from plants which live under water. When pools and ditches, the bottoms of which are covered with growing plants, freeze upon their surface in winter, so that the water is completely excluded from the atmosphere by a clear stratum of ice, small bubbles of gas are seen to escape continually during the day, from the points of the leaves and twigs; they are very small at first, but collect and form large bubbles. They consist of pure oxygen. Neither during the night, nor during the day when the sun does not shine, are they observed to diminish in quantity. The source of this oxygen, is the carbonic acid dissolved in the water, which is absorbed by the plants, but is again supplied to the water, by the decay of vegetable matter in the soil. Now if these plants absorb oxygen during the night, it can be in no greater quantity than that which the surrounding water holds in solution, for the gas which has been exhaled, is not again absorbed. The action of water-plants cannot be supposed to form an exception to a great law of nature, and the less so, as the different action of aerial plants upon the atmosphere is very easily explained.

These facts point out the cause of the numerous contradictory observations, with respect to the effect on air by living plants, and also the false views deduced therefrom by botanists, whose talent and labor has been wholly spent in the examination of form and structure, without allowing chemistry and physics to sit in council upon the explanation of the most simple processes. Nature speaks to us in a peculiar language—in the language of phenomena; she answers at all times the questions which are put to her; and such questions are experiments. An experiment is the expression of a thought; we are near the truth when the phenomenon elicited by the experiment corresponds to the thought; while the opposite result shows that the question was falsely stated, and that the conception was erroneous.

It has been endeavored to be shown that the carbon of plants is derived from the atmosphere; we will next inquire what power is exerted on vegetation by the *Ammus* of the soil.

Rules for House-Wives.

When you rise in the morning, never be particular about pinning your clothes so very nicely—you can do that at any time. Never comb your hair, or take off your night-cap till after breakfast. When you begin your toilet, combing, washing, &c., you may do it before the window, or the front entry—but the most proper place is the kitchen. Never have any particular place for any thing in the house. Never sweep your floor, until you know that some one is coming in—they will then see how neat and tidy you are. When done sweeping, leave your broom on the floor—never brush down cob-webs. Keep your parlor and bed-room windows shut close in the dog-days, and your chaises in your bed-chambers. Never learn your daughters to mend or make any of their clothes, it might give them sore fingers. Never suppress the truth of a joke, for fear of hurting people's feelings. If you don't like your husband as well as you ought, cut with it, and convince him that you are not a respecter of persons. Don't try to keep your temper—let it off as soon and fast as possible, you will then be quiet as cider with the cork drawn nine hours.

For the Spectator.

May Morn'ing in Oregon.
Oh, well I remember those bright sunny mornings—
Those sweet lovely mornings in May!
With blackbirds sweet singing, and flowers gaily singing
Their fragrance in silence away.

The deer, from the forests, now ventures to call
To crop the new grass of the mead;
The wolves, tired of hunting, no longer will dally,
And for sleep to their dens quickly speed.

The farmer, his wheat which was sown in the fall,
Leans over his fence to admire;
"The ploughing and sowing is done for this spring;
Boys, the oxen drive rest do require."

Upsyde them and turn them adrift with the mules;
"Till harvest we'll not meet them again!"
Now see them released from their fetters and toil
Go bounding away o'er the plain.

The gardens, how fair! the green leaves just peeping
O'er the earth which the dew has refreshed;
Whose heart is not warm'd, when these beauties behold—
Has winter still lock'd in his breast.

One morning, like this, when the children assembled
To learn how to read and to pray,
From my window I saw two ladies departing,
To spend with a neighbor the day.

For a moment, the pleasure which they would receive
In inhaling the free fragrant air,
Brought a shade o'er my thought, and caus'd me to grieve
For release from confinement and care.

But quickly returning to my duty again,
I was able to keep on my way;
Feeling glad I was ever permitted to see,
And rejoice in the beauties of May.
February, 1844. M. J. B.

From the Rural Repository.
A Chapter on Kissing.

Kissing has come down to us from the remotest antiquity. It blended with the history of man, and has at different periods, assumed an important place as a civil and religious ceremonial. In this country it is merely considered as a salutation expressive of the warmth of affection. From whatever cause it may have originated, it would seem to be a very natural expression for the finer feelings of the soul; for even the inferior creation, in their own symbolic language manifest their affection for each other, and even for the human species, in a manner very similar. Hence its perpetuation: clothed as it is with all the veneration that we attach to age, and being in a measure, incited as it were, by instinct.

Linked as this custom is with our infantile years, we cannot well cast it from our memory. How well we recollect a mother's fond greetings, and the endearing embrace of our sisters! But passed are they in our boyhood years. Gone is that loved mother. Quietly sleeps that sweet sister beneath the clouds of the valley! Around the scenes of one's childhood it is ever delightful to linger; for then every thing was so joyous and innocent, so untouched by the cares and turmoils of the world. And truly, amid all those early recollections, nothing is more pleasant, and more holy than the memory of a mother's kiss. That man, however proud his estate, must be callous to those purer feelings of our nature, who does not pleasurablely remember the kiss of his mother.

But there is another kind of kiss, if we may use a qualifying term, a kiss which is the signet of affection between lovers, "a kiss of youth and love," emanating from hearts already indissolubly united. 'Tis not merely youthful fancy—'tis not the ebullition of a heated imagination; for who has seen the maiden's cheek tinged with the deep crimson of a blush, but that has justly thought that there was passion in that vibration of life's genial current—that kiss told of latent feeling—of passion's essence. As an emblem of pledged faith, as a token of the ardency of the lover's emotions, language wants in power to express the sensations it conveys to the heart.

Custom also tolerates kissing among friends, where there are neither ties of consanguinity, or of affection, merely as an expression of friendship. This kiss, so far as it emanates from sincerity of heart, is commendable; but

where it is only performed through cold formality, and then, in every meeting of neighborhood friends, is truly nauseous. So hallowed a thing as a kiss, should not be sacrificed to the hollow-heartedness of the world.

However, of all others, the "stolen kiss" is the most ecstatic and soul-stirring. An amateur could describe it. We can say nothing of it except by its effect. To drink in its rich melody, imagine, the pouting of those ruby lips—the bewitching black eye, that half looks angry, half good humor—a countenance half chagrined, half pleased, putting on at the same time a deeper and more lovely hue; and then, the object, one that you had almost dared to love, and you have it. This kiss is often perpetrated through wantonness, or a species of fabled gallantry, and the donor depends solely upon the charity of the recipient for pardon; which to the honor of those species, is ever granted, unless it is too often, and unconsciously performed. The kind and generous hearted maiden, will not impose a very heavy penance for so slight a sin. We think the poet undoubtedly alluded to this kiss when he said:

There's something in a kiss,
Though I cannot reveal it;
Which never comes amiss—
Not even when we steal it.

The virtue of a kiss evidently depends upon the motive. It should be guarded with vestal care and never sacrilegiously offered up on the altar of impunity, or palmed by the icy touch of blind formality.

As a custom indicative of the fervency of the affections, it should ever be tolerated; for whatever tends to keep them alive, perpetuates some of the noblest characteristics of the human family.

A War with England!

Hear what a stump orator has to say upon the subject of Oregon and a war with Great Britain:

"Whar, I say whar, is the individual who would give up the first foot, the first outside shadow of a foot of the great Oregon! There aint no such individual. Talk about treaty occupations to a country over which the great American Eagle has flown! I scorn treaty occupation. Who wants a parcel of low land, 'outside barbarians' to go in cahoot with us, and share alike a piece of land that always was and always will be ours? Nobody. Some people talk as though they were afraid of England. *Who's afraid?* Hav'n't we lick'd her twice, and can't we lick her again? Lick her! yes; just as easy as a bar can slip down a fresh peeled saplin. Some skeery finks talk about the Navy of England; but who cares for the navy? Others say that she is the mistress of the ocean. Suppose she is—aint we the masters of it? Can't we cut a canal from the Mississippi to the Mammoth Cave of Kentucky, turn all the water into it, and dry up the d—d ocean in three weeks? Whar, then, would be the navy? It would be no whar! There never would have been any Atlantic ocean if it hadn't been for the Mississippi, nor never will be after we've tamed the waters of that big drink into the Mammoth Cave! When that's done, you'll see all the steam ships and their sail ships they splurge so much about lying high and dry, founderin' like so many turkies left ashore at low tide. That's the way we'll fix 'em. *Who's afraid?*"

There is such a thing as a practical conundrum, which is not amiss. 'Look a hee, Sam,' said a western negro one day to a field-hand over the fence in an adjoining lot; 'look a hee, d'you see dat tall tree down dar?' 'Yas, I does.' 'Wal, I go up dat tree day 'afore yea'day to de bery top.' 'Wat was you a'tax, Sam?' 'I was a'ter a Coony an' wen I'd chased 'im clar out to t'odder end o' dat longes' lin', I hearn sum'da drop.' 'Wat you guess 'twas, Sam?—d'you give 'm up?' 'Twas dis foolish nigger! E-yah! e-yah!

AROSTOOK COUNTY, Mo.—There are now in Arostook county, 600 families, with an average of 6 persons to a family—making a population of 3600. The number of farms is very large. The people generally live in comfortable log-cabins, erected as temporary dwellings, until the owners themselves are able to build more beautiful and convenient houses. There are many and well-constructed framed barns, showing that the people have regard to the economy of good farming. They are generally very industrious and diligent in business, and, as a consequence, rising to respectability.