

Willamette Farmer.

SIMEON FRANCIS, Editor.

Salem, Saturday, May 14.

Fruit Culture.

THE FRUIT-GROWERS' GUIDE; or, The Cause of the Decline of the Fruit Tree, and a Remedy for the Same. By C. L. Blakeslee. Salem, Oregon: A. L. Stinson, Printer. 1870.

There is now, and has been for years, all through the Western States and in Oregon, great complaint of the early decline of fruit trees, more especially the apple, as that is the most useful fruit of the country. In the Western States, agricultural and horticultural societies and distinguished individuals have acknowledged the fact, and have sought in various ways for a remedy for the same. It has been attributed to wet soils, to late falls and mildew, cold weather, before the wood was in a condition to meet it, to varieties unsuited to the climate and soils, and many other speculative causes. Every year for the last fifteen years horticultural societies have published lists of the proper varieties of apple trees to be cultivated, and each succeeding year they have given a changed list. They seem to be as far from success now as ever. These being truths, we have examined the work now before us with great interest.

Our modern apples are supposed to be an improvement on the wild crab of Europe. In the wild state, the tree is as hardy as an oak. The constant improvements—changes from the original stock—have doubtless weakened its vitality, and though, with careful cultivation, and under very favorable circumstances, it may last many years, bad cultivation will soon be its destruction.

In early times, a century ago, in the Eastern States, chance apple seeds fell in headlands and in pastures, sprouted, and became enormous trees without cultivation—with regular and extensive heads, spreading forty feet, and the bodies measuring eight and nine feet in circumference. The trees, although the seed came from ameliorated fruit, was not many degrees better than the crab, though, if kept till the next June after maturity, they were quite eatable. We make this statement simply as an evidence that apple plants, started where they are to grow, the soil being in a proper state, are likely to make larger and longer-lived trees than the present practice of transplanting.

Mr. Blakeslee furnishes, in his publication, what he deems the cause of decline in the vitality of fruit trees, and presents what he deems a remedy for the evil. He begins by planting the seed of the apple where the tree is to grow. We have reason to believe that the system he proposes for its after culture will secure the object proposed by him, a perfect tree, without trimming, growing to good size, and forming a source of satisfaction and profit for

years. The causes which he enumerates as uniting to make an imperfect and short-lived tree, are worthy of the serious consideration of the fruit-culturist. To some extent, these can be avoided by discreet nurserymen, seconded in their labors by those who plant out orchards from the nursery. Mr. Blakeslee, perhaps, would not agree with us in this opinion.

Mr. Blakeslee's little work is written in very clear language—embraces original views—and is on a subject deeply interesting to pomologists in every portion of the United States. We do not think it fair to him to publish further to the world his remedy for the decline of fruit trees. He has been at much expense in making his experiments, and writing and publishing his work, which can, we presume, be found at all the bookstores. The printing is neatly done.

We repeat that the new views and suggestions—remedies, Mr. Blakeslee may call them, for "the decline of the fruit tree," are worthy of the profound consideration of all fruit-growers.

Dairies and Dairying in California.

The *Overland Monthly* for April contains an interesting article on the subject of "Dairies and Dairying in California." We are surprised to learn the extent and amount of dairying in that State. The largest dairies are found in eight counties, covering the Coast Range, and reaching into the interior a distance of twenty-five miles. The moisture brought into this district by the ocean air, gives to it a constant pasturage. The air is humid and cool, snow never falls, cattle thrive all the year upon green native herbage, and without shelter. Within the limits of these eight counties, there are 25,000 milch cows, subdivided into dairies of varied magnitude. The smaller, near San Francisco, furnish the inhabitants of that city with milk—the others are engaged in the manufacture of butter and cheese.—Shafter & Honan, in Marin county, have 60,000 acres of land in pasturage, protected by plank fence. Only butter is made here; and when the price of fresh butter is 40 cents, it is sold, and when below that, it is packed for market when prices are improved. The cows are of the Durham and Devon breeds—the best milkers being produced by crossing Devon with the American cow. The quantity of butter made on this ranch last year was 400,000 pounds. There are other enormous dairy establishments. That of Steele Brothers, in San Mateo and San Luis Obispo counties, is one of them.—Their pasturage is 45,000 acres—the lands and improvements supposed to be worth a million of dollars—the product of this ranch is first quality cheese. There are many other large and productive dairy establishments. The season of milking begins in December, and lasts eight or nine months. The milk is rich, but not in

great quantity. The product averages 175 pounds of butter and 275 pounds of cheese to each cow per season. The wholesale prices in San Francisco have been—beginning in the latter part of November, 70 cents for butter, they have dropped to 45 cents by the end of February; ruling through March, April, and May at 35 cents. On the approach of June, prices advance, going up steadily to seventy and seventy-five cents to the first of November. It is roughly estimated that 6,000,000 pounds of butter and cheese were made in California in 1869. There were imported from the East, the same year, into California, 30,488 firkins and 3154 kegs of butter. From Oregon, about 1200 packages were received, and the same amount of cheese from the Eastern States.

The products of the dairy have greatly fallen in price since the completion of the overland railroad.—Butter can be had in the dairy counties of New York for something like 20 cents per pound, and can be sold in San Francisco at 30 cents. While, therefore, the Railroad is benefiting Eastern dairymen, it is seriously reducing the profits of those of California. The low prices there, affect our market here. In California, it is expected that the reduction in the cost of labor will enable the dairymen to continue their business at a profit. They will seek a market for butter and cheese in Oriental markets. California, to some extent, found a market for butter and cheese in Oregon. That time has passed. We have butter makers and cheese manufacturers now, whose products cannot be excelled anywhere. Let them continue their business steadily, and their butter and cheese will soon drive out the foreign articles and the miserable grease and the white-oak cheese, by which our market is disgraced. Let our butter makers put up butter, of first quality, and "no mistake," in kegs, for family use, and they will find ready market in fall and winter at fair prices, and they, too, can look for an extension of their rates in Oriental markets.

OREGON AND NEW YORK DAIRIES.—Mr. T. J. Bussey, of Wayne county, *New York*, gives a statement of the cost of keeping and profit on four cows in 1869:

Sales of butter, calves, and pork	\$597 70
Cost of keeping, including purchase of hogs, &c.	80 00
Leaving profit of cows	\$517 70
Profit on each	127 42 1/2

In contrast with this, we give a statement of Mr. H. M. Humphrey, near Portland, *Oregon*, which we find in the *Rural New Yorker*. Mr. Humphrey had nine cows in 1869:

Sales of butter, calves, pork, &c.	\$1,271 00
Cost of keeping	108 00
Leaving profit	1,073 00
Profit on each	119 22 1/3

The *New Yorker* is a little ahead,—not much. The statement shows that Eastern dairies are little better than our own.

There are 57 persons under 21 years of age in the California penitentiary.

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And a
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References—Alfred Stanton, J. B. Richardson, of
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Salem, April 2, 1870.

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