

CONCERNING MANURES.

The Importance of a Correct Knowledge of Their Properties.

Agriculturists acknowledge the importance of a correct knowledge of the nature and properties of manures, and that the art of preparing them in the cheapest and best manner, in adequate quantities, is still unknown.

Chemical science and art are enabled to point out some of the best methods that are within our reach, by ascertaining the composition of the substances and by showing how they may be converted into the most efficacious manures; while, at the same time, a knowledge of the soil will demonstrate the nature and amount of matters that are required for rendering it fertile.

Sometimes correctives and amendments are required for the removal of deleterious properties, or for the improvement of the texture of the soil.

Generally, it is easy to effect both purposes by means of a properly prepared compost.

By a knowledge of agricultural chemistry, the farmer may take advantage of the natural resources of his farm, so as to enrich the soil at a comparatively trifling expense, and while he draws from it his valuable crops, if he is skillful, he may still render the soil every year more fertile.

A liberal supply of manures, with attention to a proper rotation of crops, will supersede the necessity of leaving the land fallow for years, as was formerly practiced.

Although organic matters in a decomposed state form the basis of all enriching manures, they are often misapplied and extravagantly wasted, owing to a want of chemical knowledge.

A scientific agriculturist should always be careful, and not lose the valuable substances that may separate from manures in a gaseous or liquid form.

During fermentation various gaseous matters escape that ought to be absorbed by a covering of peat, swamp muck, sods or loam.

Liquid manures are too generally allowed to run to waste, when they could be easily retained and rendered valuable by absorbing them with dry peat, or any other absorbent vegetable matters.

Manures are too generally exposed to the action of rain, which dissolves their most valuable soluble salts, washing them away into the earth.

By due attention to those things the farmer may make a vast saving of valuable materials that will serve to enrich his land.—Andrew H. Ward, in Boston Globe.

GETTING OUT STUMPS.

A Simple Rig Which Does Its Work Well and at a Small Cost.

Many readers, no doubt, are working around stumps that can be easily removed, and others are working around those that are difficult to remove. A year ago the writer had an eight-acre lot that contained 120 stumps of the latter class, 110 of them being oak, and most of them white oak, having a large center or tap-root. These stumps were twenty inches to four feet in diameter. A year ago I let the job of taking out these stumps at 40 cents apiece. The contractor came, put up a shanty and commenced work, but before he finished the first stump he threw up the job. I did not blame him. When I mowed around those stumps last summer I decided that they would come out before another harvest, when the field would be in potatoes. No one seemed anxious to do it. I borrowed a rig which my neighbor had used successfully. With this rig and a team he extracted five stumps per day. We have already taken out 105 stumps at a cost of 18 cents each. After digging around them, the team would strip one out in four minutes, on the average.

The rig consists of a pole 30 feet long, 15 inches in diameter at the big end, which is securely bound to guard against splitting. There is a hole near this end, through which a chain was passed, fastening it securely by a large pin. This chain is 6 feet long, and made of 7-8 inch iron. At the other end is a grab-hook made of the best 11-2 inch square swede iron, but even then we sometimes break it. The end of this chain is put around an outside root and hooked. The pole is then tightly drawn around the stump, by the team. Three or four inches from the small end of the pole a groove is cut for a smaller chain, which is arranged so it will slip around, avoiding all twisting. This is the whole rig, and it costs only a trifling sum. We started in with three horses, but soon found that we needed but two. We have not yet found a tap root that two horses could not twist out. I have tried digging and blowing out, but find that this rig will do the job at half the expense.—J. H. Warn, in Ohio Farmer.

Greasing Fowls and Chicks.

Grease is destructive of lice, but it is also a substance for which fowls have a strong aversion, so far as outward application to their bodies is concerned. Grease is very injurious to chicks, and should be used on them cautiously. Kerosene should never be applied to the skin of a fowl unless diluted in some manner. A few drops of any kind of grease, applied on the heads, necks and vents of chickens, will destroy the large head lice, but not more than a drop should be applied under the wings. Pure lard oil is as effectual as the compounds of irritating substances often used.—Farm and Fireside.

—It is not by skinning the newspaper that a man can get the cream of its contents.—Binghamton Republican.

EXTINCTION OF A RACE.

Death, in 1876, of an Old Woman, the Last of the Tasmanians.

A letter from Hobart, Tasmania, to the Springfield Republican tells the story of the entire extinction of a race within the life-time of a generation. The natives of Tasmania, or Van Dieman's Land numbered about 7,000 when the island was colonized in 1803 and were a kindly, pleasant people, who were not cannibals like the inhabitants of the other islands, and asked only to be let alone. But when the crews of the sealers that infested the region made attacks on them and carried off their women and children, they naturally avenged themselves on the white settlers, whom they killed and whose houses they burned whenever an opportunity offered. The settlers made war in return, being greatly aided by a queer habit the Tasmanians had of keeping fires burning when they slept to frighten away spooks. These guided their white enemies to their hiding places, until the natives finally took to inaccessible fastnesses in the bush, whence they broke out in forays upon isolated farms. The Governor tried to bring them to terms by sending them proclamations setting forth his friendly intentions by means of pictures representing black fellows and whites clasping each other's hands, walking together, etc. As this did not work, a cordon of 3,000 soldiers was formed across the island which moved south with the intention of corralling all the natives in Tasman's peninsula. It was a tremendous undertaking, and when it was finished at a cost of \$300,000, the reward consisted of just one man and a boy, who had been caught while asleep; these were the only natives who had been seen during the whole operation. Then a Hobart bricklayer, named George Augustus Robinson, who had studied the language and customs of the Tasmanians, offered to go among them, acquaint them with the Government's disposition, and bring them in. Accompanied by a native man and woman, he undertook and successfully accomplished the task, though he spent three years in doing it, walked over 4,000 miles, and suffered from cold, hunger and thirst, narrowly escaping death more than once. But in 1835 he brought in every survivor, the number having been by that time reduced to 203. They were transferred to Flinders Island, within sight of Tasmania, and there cared for by the Government. But they rapidly pined away, from homesickness, apparently, for they would go in a body to the shore, where they could see their former home, and there sit and weep. In twelve years but forty-four remained, and in 1869 the last man died, King Billy, the cause in his case being liquor. In 1876 the race came to an end in the person of the woman who had accompanied Robinson on his mission.

—Washing faded carpets in a strong solution of salt water will restore their color.

—The yolk of egg alone is the better for invalids, and will be frequently relished when the white would be rejected.

—Old furniture that has a dull, greasy look should be rubbed with turpentine and then polished with any good polish.

—Bathe a sprain with arnica diluted with water, and bandage with soft flannel moistened with the same. A sprained wrist thus treated will grow well and strong in a few days.

—Umbrellas will last much longer if, when they are wet, they are placed handle downward to dry. The moisture falls from the edges of the frame, and the fabric dries uniformly.

—Never join the ends of thread in knitting by tying a knot. Lap the ends three inches or more together, and cut the distance with double thread, leaving both ends on the wrong side.

—Onions are about the best nerve tonic known. No medicine is really so efficacious in cases of nervous prostration, and they tone up a worn-out system in a very short time.—Green's Fruit Grower.

—An inflamed bunion should be poulticed, and larger shoes worn. Iodine twelve grains, lard or spermaceti ointment half an ounce, make a capital ointment for bunions. It should be rubbed on two or three times a day.

—To clean broadcloth from spots, grind one ounce of pipe clay, and mix it with a few drops of alcohol, and the same quantity of spirits of turpentine, rub the mixture on the spots, let it remain until dry, and rub off with a woolen cloth.

—For dyspepsia pour one quart of cold water on two table-spoonfuls of unslacked lime, let it stand a few minutes, bottle and cork, and when clear it is ready for use. Put three table-spoonfuls in a cup of milk, and drink any time, usually before meals.

—A writer in a home journal states that, after being troubled with heartburn, wakefulness, indigestion, etc., he adopted the practice of eating apples with each meal. It cured him entirely, his weight increased in two months from 130 to 160 pounds, and he felt stronger in proportion.

—Eggs and Apples.—Pare and slice apples, fry them in a little butter, take them up and stir in beaten eggs in the proportion of three or four eggs to a pint and a half of the fried apples. Melt a little butter in the pan, put in the eggs and apples, fry, turning over once, and serve hot.—Good Housekeeping.

—Broiled Salt Pork.—Cut the pork in thin slices, lay them on a hot gridiron, and when they begin to cook dip the slices into cold water, return them to the gridiron, and so continue until they are sufficiently freshened. When nicely browned take them up on a hot platter, add a little butter, and serve very hot.

—Salt Fish with Cream.—Soak a pound and a half of fish over night. Simmer an hour and a half, then drain and shred. Melt one large table-spoonful of butter and mix in a table-spoonful of flour; then, add a quart of hot milk and the fish. Add the beaten egg and serve.—Good Housekeeping.

—To bleach Ivory handles of steel knives protect the steel with a coat of wax or paraffin and set the handles in a solution of chloride of lime one part, water four parts, for a day, more or less; then wash the handles with clean warm water, wipe and dry. If satisfactory, warm the metal part and wipe off the wax or paraffin.

—An excellent way to make a palatable dish of the remains of a ham is as follows: Take one and one-half pounds of ham, fat and lean together, and chop very fine. Boil a large slice of bread in one-half pint of milk and beat it and the ham well together. Add an egg beaten, put in a mold and bake a rich brown. This is also nice sliced cold.—Household.

—Granulated Wheat Gems.—Stir two and one-half cups of fine granulated wheat slowly into a liquid, formed of one cup of water and one cup of milk, seasoned with a salt-spoonful of salt; then beat rapidly until the arm is weary, and fill very hot iron gem pans, well buttered, giving the batter a beating while filling and bake immediately in a hot oven.—Boston Cook Book.

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USEFUL AND SUGGESTIVE.

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SCAB IN POTATOES.

Nature of the Disease and How to Prevent Its Appearance.

This is not a new disease, nor is it confined to our own country, but it also occurs in Europe and is the subject of many papers in German works on plant diseases. Notwithstanding its prevalence and the discussions it has elicited there is no settled agreement, either among scientists or agriculturists, as to the cause. By some it has been held due to fungi, while others attribute it to the depredations of worms in the soil.

In a recent article on the subject by the chief of the section of Vegetable Pathology it is said that it is now the belief of those who have given the matter a careful study that it is not, as a general thing, due to either one of the above mentioned causes, but is the result of certain physiological changes that take place in the tuber when grown under certain conditions. The outer covering of the potato consists of a thin, tough membrane, which serves as a protection to the tender parts within. This enveloping coat is made up of minute cells, by means of which an exchange of gases takes place between the interior and exterior of the tuber. When from excess of moisture or other cause the cells become enlarged and the skin is weakened decay sets in. In its efforts to heal the wound the tuber gives rise to new layers of cells beneath the diseased parts, and as the result of this dying of the outer cells and the formation of a new growth beneath a scab is produced.

There is a prevailing belief that extreme humidity favors the development of the disease, but what further influence the character of the soil has in producing it is not positively known. During the year 1887 a number of trials were made at the New York Agricultural Experiment Station, in which it was shown that an excess of moisture and the use of fresh stable manure increased the number of scabby potatoes. The data obtained are summed up as follows: (1) The scab is not primarily caused by a fungus. (2) It is not due to the work of insects. (3) In nearly every instance an increased yield was accompanied by an increased percentage of scabby potatoes. (4) Any marked change in the rapidity of growth, either an increase or a decrease, tends to an increased production of scab. (5) A continuous growth from the time of first vegetation until the tubers are fully matured, appears to be the condition least favorable to the production of scabby potatoes.

Extensive experiments with remedies for scab make it appear that special commercial fertilizers, while not infallible specifics against scab, are more or less efficient. Mr. E. S. Carmen says on the subject: "We have used as much as a ton of the potato fertilizer—which is strong in potash—to the acre, and yet we harvested clean potatoes, with smooth skins and without scabs. Not so when fresh farm manure is used. This with us almost always causes scab by attracting wire worms, which eat into the skin and give the potato the same corroded surface as the fungus causes." Those who were present at the harvesting of the Rural New Yorker's potato contest plot, where the fertilizer used was the potato manure, at the rate of 1,760 pounds to the acre, with a sprinkling of sulphur in the trenches, will remember that the large produce was singularly free from scab. Dr. F. M. Hexamer and Dr. Henry Stuart are numbered among other experimenters who have expressed the opinion that special commercial fertilizers are efficacious and to be preferred in potato culture to fresh farm-yard manure.—N. Y. World.

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CURRENT ITEMS.

—Four hundred and eighty-two works on theology and religion were published in the United States during the year 1888. Of these 339 were made in the United States.

—The clergyman in an English town, having published the bans of matrimony between two persons, was followed by the clerk, reading the hymn beginning with these words: "Mistaken souls, who dream of Heaven."

—Phillip Frank Thomas, of Maryland, and H. M. Waterson, father of the editor of the Louisville Courier-Journal, are the only two now alive of the 241 members of the House and fifty-two Senators who composed the Congress of 1839.

—A Kingston, N. Y., mini-tee married a couple one night recently, and when signatures were asked to the certificate it was found that neither the bride, groom, best man nor bridesmaid could write their names. They all signed by making marks.

—The Texas umbrella tree is becoming a favorite for shade and ornamental purposes in California. It is a large and beautiful tree, resembling an umbrella in the spread of its foliage, which is so dense that it affords perfect protection from either rain or sun.

—The iron grasshopper which for 147 years has marked the vacillations of the wind from his perch on the tower of Faneuil Hall, in Boston, and one day last month toppled down into the street, was restored to the scene of his glory with touching ceremonies. This ancient relic is very dear to the loyal Boston heart.

—Burls, used in making veneers with remarkable eccentricities of grain, are excrecences that grow upon various trees, such as the walnut, rosewood, mahogany, oak and ash. They weigh from 1,000 to 6,000 pounds, and the largest and best come from Persia and Circassia, and cost in the rough from fifteen to forty cents a pound.

—"Sixty or seventy species of goldenrod, and even more than this number of asters," says "Vick's Magazine," "are found all over our land." "No other flowers so abound and apparently claim possession as these. And grouped together they might appropriately be taken as our National flowers, emblems of endurance, vigor, light and freedom."

—A Dubuque newsboy lately got even with a dead-beat. The man owed the boy for papers and would not pay him. The boy wrote to his (the boy's) brother, who is attending school in Indiana, telling about the action of the customer, and one day last week the man received a box by express marked "C. O. D." The express charges amounted to several dollars, and upon opening the box it was found to be full of bricks.

—Referring to the proportion of college graduates prominent in public affairs, the Philadelphia News cites the fact that fifteen out of twenty-three Presidents, fourteen out of twenty-four Vice-Presidents, nineteen out of twenty-nine Secretaries of State, sixteen out of twenty-six Speakers of the House, thirty out of forty-one judges of the Supreme Court, and five out of the six Chief-Justices have received a collegiate education.

—The United States Consul at Marseilles, in a recent report, says that the olive oil industry of Southern France is suffering heavily from the almost universal practice of adulterating the native oils of Nice and Provence with various seed oils, such as sesame, peanut, poppy-seed, and especially cottonseed, which last, by reason of its cheapness, palatable flavor, and difficulty of detection, has of recent years supplanted all the others as an adulterant.

—A Crawfordsville, Ga., negro had a favorite cat that had been given him, and the feline would not stay with its dusky master. The gentleman of color inquired around for a remedy by which he could attach his cat to its new home; and finally this remedy was given him: Measure the length of the cat's tail with a common broom straw, smut the straw with soot from the family chimney, and place this—the charmer—under the doorsteps. This was strictly followed and the cat has not left the place since.

—A Vermont butter-maker, who is also a statistician, says that "the cows of the United States average only seventy-one pounds of butter per year. We eat 290,000,000 pounds of oleo and sell 200,000,000 pounds of butter for soap-grease. We can not ship good butter because we need it all to eat. England last year bought 227,000,000 pounds at twenty-six cents per pound, but we could not supply her, for our surplus was too poor. Relief from poor cows and low prices never comes from legislation. The heaviest tax the farmer pays is for his own ignorance. Let him learn his business and attend to it, and he will have no cause to rumble."

—A traveler who recently returned from Pekin asserts that there is plenty to smell in that city, but very little to see. Most of the show places, such as the Temple of Heaven and the Marble Bridge have one by one been closed to outside barbarians, who can not even bribe their way. The houses are all very low and mean, the streets wholly unpaved and are always very muddy and dusty, and as there are no sewers or cesspools the filthiness of the town is indescribable. He adds that the public buildings are small, and in a decayed and tumbled-down condition, and the nearest one can get to the emperor's palace is to climb to the top of some building outside the sacred inclosure and surreptitiously peep over the wall through an opera-glass. Even then he does not see much.

—Salt dissolved in alcohol will remove grease spots from cloth.

CHING LUNG SURPRISED.

A Chinese Mandarin Tells What He Knows of Western Women.

A traveled Chinese mandarin who has lately communicated his impressions of the West to his countrymen deals with great particularity with the position and treatment of women in Europe. These surprised him beyond measure. Thus the notion of husband and wife walking arm in arm in public places fills him with amusement. "Nobody smiles at it," he says, "and even a husband may perform any menial task in his wife's presence, yet no one will laugh at him." Then, again, the notion of men standing aside to let a woman pass, and the code of politeness which requires men to make way for a woman, are to him incomprehensible.

In China when the men are gorged the women dine off the scraps; but in the West "at meal-time the men must wait until the women are seated, and then take one after another their places, and the same rule must be observed when the meal is finished." Western women have curious notions about dress and appearance. "They set store by a large bust and slender waist, but while the waist can be compressed, the bust can not naturally be enlarged; the majority have a wicker contrivance made which is concealed under the bodice on either side, and is considered an adornment. If a woman is short-sighted, she will publicly mount spectacles. Even young girls in their teens pass thus along the streets, and it is not regarded as strange."

As for low dresses, he observes in bewilderment that women going to court regard a bare skin as a mark of respect. He is greatly exercised how to describe kissing; the thing or word does not exist among Chinese, and accordingly he is driven to describe it. "It is," he says, "a form of courtesy which consists in presenting the lips to the lower part of the chin and making a sound"—again, "children, when visiting their seniors, apply their mouth to the left or right lips of the elder with a smacking noise." Women as shop attendants, women at home, women with mustaches, then engage the writer's attention, and he passes on to "at homes," and dances. "Besides invitations to dinner there are invitations to a tea gathering, such as are occasionally given by wealthy merchants or distinguished officials. When the time comes invitations are sent to an equal number of men and women, and after these are all assembled, tea and sugar, milk, bread, and the like are set out as aids to conversation. More particularly are there invitations to skip and posture, when the host decides what man is to be the partner of what woman, and what woman of what man. Then with both arms grasping each other they leave their places in pairs and leap, skip, posture, and prance for their mutual gratification. A man and a woman previously unknown to one another may take part in it."—London Times.

—The talk turned the other day on the roughness of life in the West in the early days, and as a contribution to the facts of the case a lady who has traveled much in the newer portions of the United States told of a little experience of her own.

"I have never had any very unpleasant adventures," she said, "but some of the things which happened to me were at least unconventional. One of the drollest of them was only an unexpected manifestation of kindness. We were at a small station where the train stopped for water, and the passengers were allowed the privilege of going to eat uneatable things at an enormous price. A cup of black brew that they called coffee was in front of me, and I was waiting for it to cool a little and trying to make up my mind to swallow it. A big, clumsy, not over-clean ranchman stood close to me, and seeing that I did not taste the beverage, he supposed that something must be wrong. He knew that we had only a few minutes to wait, and that whatever was to be swallowed must be made away with at once; so in the kindness of his heart he was moved to help me out of my difficulty. 'Wants to be stirred, don't it?' he remarked, evidently supposing that I was waiting for the sugar—which, by the way, I never take—to be dissolved. 'Here, I'll fix it.' Suiting the action to the word, he whipped out a dreadfully dirty jack-knife, opened the biggest blade, and with it gave my coffee a vigorous stirring. Think of it! And he meant to be so kind, too!"

"And did you drink it?" asked one of her listeners.

"Drink it? I would have drunk poison rather than hurt the feelings of that great, blundering clown who thought he was doing me a favor, and was generous enough to have thought to spare for others in a place where every body else was solely intent on making the most of his time for his own advantage. Of course I drank it!"—Boston Courier.

—A soldier who had been taken prisoner had a wife and children living in New Jersey. A good minister, learning that there was soon to be a general exchange of prisoners, and wishing to relieve the anxiety of the wife, called and told her that her husband would probably be exchanged in a short time. "Well," said the poor, broken-hearted woman, "I love John, and the children love him, and if he isn't so handsome as some men, I don't want to exchange him; and I won't have a rebel for a husband, so now!"—Detroit Free Press.