

Agriculture.

To Improve Seed Potatoes.

Charles Senger of St. Louis recommends the following easily-tried method of improving potatoes, so as to restore them to the original soundness, richness, and mealiness of this valuable root:—"The plan is this: keep back some seed potatoes for six or seven weeks after the usual time of planting, say till the last week of June or the first week of July, and then plant and cultivate them the same as stock potatoes. They will grow until the frost withers the vines, when they should be dug. As they have not had time to mature, they will be quite small—not more than an inch or an inch and a half through; but they should all be carefully gathered, and kept safe from frost through the winter, and planted at the usual time of planting in the spring—one of the small potatoes being sufficient for seed in each hill. The result will be large sized, sound, mealy potatoes, as I have proven by actual trial. I hope that it will be tried by some of our farmers this year."—*Rural N. Yorker.*

Leaf Manure.

If you have a large pile of leaves, which you would convert into manure, adopt the following process:—Slake fresh lime with brine, till it falls to a powder. Turn your leaves with a fork, and sprinkle this powder evenly among them, at the rate of four bushels to a cord of leaves. Turn the heap now and then, and you will soon have a noble manure. Nothing is better applied to fruit trees.—*Horticulturist.*

Ground and unground Feed.

Those experienced and skillful farmers, the Lebanon (N. H.) Shakers, state that more than thirty years practice has led them to estimate ground corn at one-third higher than unground, as food for cattle, and especially for fattening pork. The same experience also induces them to put a higher value upon cooked than upon raw meal; and for fattening animals, swine particularly, they consider three of cooked equal to four bushels of raw meal. Until within the last three or four years, they have fattened annually, for thirty years, from forty to fifty thousand pounds, exclusive of lard and offal fat; and their constant habit has been to cook the meal.—*Granite Farmer.*

Activity of Birds.

The activity and industry of birds when they have young is most surprising. A gentleman in England, who had for some days watched the operations of a pair of tit-mice while feeding their little brood, gives the following as the result of his own observations: The parent birds began their labor of love at half-past three o'clock in the morning, and did not leave off till after three o'clock in the evening, after being almost incessantly engaged for nearly seventeen hours. Mr. Wier counted their various returns to the nest, and found them to be four hundred and seventy-five. Up to four o'clock, as a breakfast, they fed twelve times; between five and six, four times, and they continued at their work till the time specified, sometimes bringing in a large caterpillar, and at other times two or three small ones. The Germans are the finest appreciators of birds. It is a fact, that when the Prussian authorities, under pecuniary pressure, were lately about to cut down certain trees near Cologne, which were frequented by nightingales, the alarmed citizens purchased the trees in order to save the birds and keep their music.

How to cook Shad.

Shad are excellent, says the *Germantown Telegraph*, when baked, either on a board, which is the best, or by the following mode: Stuff them with a seasoning made of bread crumbs, butter, salt, pepper, and (if agreeable) parsley and spices. Put the fish in a baking-dish, with a cupfull of water and a lump of butter. Bake from three-quarters of an hour to an hour. Shad broiled is also excellent, but it is spoiled by frying, and it loses nearly all its fine flavor. This being a moist fish, it should never be boiled. Those who never ate a baked or broiled shad, know nothing of that excellence which we claim for this fish over all others.

The pleasure of doing good is the only one that never wears out.

Temperance.

The New Liquor Law in Maine.

We give below abstracts of this law. It is the measure by which Anti-Prohibitory Law men hope to prevent the ill effects of liquor-drinking. See how much Prohibition there is in it—what stringent clauses—what heavy bonds and fines! Does any other trade require such fetters? Is not this new law, imperfect and ineffectual as it must be—one long concession to the prohibitory principle?

The *Portland State of Maine* gives the following epitome of the bill, which comprises thirty-three sections:

Sec. 1. No person shall sell intoxicating liquor directly or indirectly, except as provided by law.

Sec. 2. No person shall manufacture distilled spirits without giving a bond in \$1000, that he will not sell any spirits except of his own manufacture, and without adulteration, or in quantities less than—gallons, to be carried away at the time.

Sec. 3. Any person manufacturing without giving bonds, to forfeit \$1000.

Sec. 6. City and town authorities to authorize persons to sell, as follows, in every town or city at least one, and not more than two; every town or city having more than 3000 and less than 8000 population, two additional persons; every city and town having more than 8000, one additional person for every 3000.

Sec. 8. No person shall sell to any minor, Indian, soldier in the army, drunkard or intoxicated person.

Sec. 14. Three unlawful sales constitute one a common seller—and render him liable to a fine of \$100, or imprisonment for six months.

Sec. 15. (Entire.) No person shall keep a drinking house or tipping shop.

Sec. 16. A drinking house or tipping shop is any place, except an inn, where liquors are sold except as provided by this law.

Sec. 17. The keeper of such drinking house shall be fined \$200, or imprisoned one year.

Sec. 18. Persons having liquors to sell contrary to law, forfeit the same.

Sec. 19. Search may be made, on complaint of two credible persons.

Sec. 23. Any person selling to a drunkard shall be held liable for all injuries committed by him while intoxicated.

Sec. 25. Any one selling impure liquor shall be fined \$100.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

ENGLISH CORRESPONDENCE.

THE MAY MEETINGS.

DEAR SIR,

If I thought my letters were of sufficient value as to make delay in writing, of the least possible importance to you or to your readers, I would make an ample apology for the long suspension which has occurred this time. I think I could almost satisfy the most fastidious on the matter. Let it suffice that I have had you in my thoughts, though since I last wrote, I have been travelling hither and thither and attending public meetings and conferences, to an extent which I think would almost satiate the most avaricious devourer of public meetings.

This letter may, I think, fitly be occupied by some accounts of those meetings. I do not mean simply the meetings I have attended, but those which make the month of May in this land the most significant and memorable month in the year for all public religious societies.

What a strange, unparalleled, incomparable event is "The May meetings." From about the 23rd of April to the very end of May, an unbroken succession of religious meetings—or more properly of meetings connected with and embodying the religious sympathies of the whole country.

'Tis true that many of the Societies are not in the limited use of the word, religious—yet however secular their profession, however simply humanitarian in their aim, they are religious, and to an immense extent are originated and sustained by the more strictly religious portion of the community. For about five weeks every day, three, four and even five times a day, the public come together in some of its sections, in London, to hear advocated or to advocate, to sympathize with, or to express sympathy with some organization, aiming to mitigate human woe and animal suffering. Every phase of the infinite aggregate of sin-created suffering seems now to have its society for the

amelioration thereof; and all these societies contrive to force in an anniversary meeting during these weeks, and in the metropolis. Every phase did I say? Not quite every phase, for some new society, one or more, is added to the whole every year. If the increase continues much longer we must either have the "May meetings" and the "Autumn meetings," or we shall want the half of June, as well as the half of April, in which to embrace the series.

Those meetings have come to be almost an essential part of the religious agency of the country. The societies feel they can no more do without their anniversary, than the cause they represent can do without them. I do not endorse the feeling. I doubt its truth to fact. I question whether the gain is in all respects commensurate with the cost—whether the sum of the results will be found really to be gain or loss. But there they are, and as things go amongst us now, they are unalterable and necessary. And yet it is no unimportant feature in them, that in the very midst of the excitement, after the most enthusiastic meeting, we hear every where, a sort of complaint. People say "the meetings are not so interesting as they used to be"—or "people do not attend these meetings as they used to do," and so on. It is forgotten that there are so many more of them than there used to be; that the sympathies are divided amongst some any more societies, that these societies, i. e. the particular objects towards which certain societies are directed,—have all of them, their special friends and supporters, and of course they give their presence to those anniversaries rather than to others. When this is remembered; and also, that there is no one of the whole list, numbering many scores, which does not command its meeting of hundreds or of thousands, it will be felt and must be conceded that "the people do attend these meetings more than ever they used to do."

But it is time to say something about the meetings themselves. There is one word which seems to me to characterize the whole series, so far as I saw and have read, that is,—average. Every thing was about at an average with other years. The attendance though less at some meetings than usual was about the average. The speeches though very diverse, were about of the average, in length, in substance, and in influence. The collections though varying at different meetings were as nearly as possible at an average, and the weather though very party-coloured, was nevertheless about of an average of wet and dry, warm and cold, clear and dull.

Now Mr. Editor, between you and me, this average state of things is not by any means the most desirable, but it is the most difficult of all to improve upon, both in societies and in churches. Let a society or a church get down, down, down, right down into the slough, and some friend, somewhere will become conscious of the state of things in such a way, as to work and pray till it is mended. But let the state be just comfortable—a nice easy moving state, even though it be the movement of a pendulum, and it will be next to impossible to get up a case either for oneself or for any one else, and I confess I do not expect to see these May meetings much changed for the better, beyond what they have been this year. They will continue about the average, thro' your time and mine, which, by the way, may not be for long.

But do not think that this is a note of mourning. The meetings were very good. The speeches were very good. The collections were pretty good. The weather was tolerably good. Here was one feature in the societies which interested me very much, and which speaks well for our country. We have had a very heavy drain upon us this last year,—very heavy,—in the way of taxes for the war, and consequent high prices of all the chief eatables. It is therefore a doubly pleasing fact that almost every society reported an increase in its funds as compared with the previous year. Our Baptist Society for Foreign Missions reported an increase in contributions of £1307, in addition to above £700, which were contributed by a few friends to clear off the debt standing over from the last report. The Home Missionary Society, in addition to keeping up its regular income, cleared off, nearly, if not quite, a debt of some £600, by special contribution from the friends. The Irish Society rather purposes to do in the future, than reports having done much in the past.

The passing away of a whole year, short as it is in the casual retrospect, becomes a long period, when its detailed history is written and every year makes some changes in the list of those whose names and faces are familiar to us. One name familiar to immense numbers in the old world and the new, is thus this year struck out of the list,—I mean Enstace Carey. Others less widely known have passed away from these public lists. But the number seems to be less this year than in many previous years.

The Report of the Baptist Union is not yet out, and therefore the details of this society as well as those of all the other societies, must be left for another letter. The report does however, state that the increase in the denomination during the year, is two per church. I expect to find when the statistics are analyzed that this is a most unfavorable view to take of the results of the year's service. The Session of the Union was opened by a most able address, from the well known and universally esteemed and loved president of Horton College. The subject was in accordance with his position,—A vindication of the ministry against the theory of "The Brethren," who repudiate the regular ministry, and against the Millenarians who preach the necessity of Christ's re-appearance in order to the conversion of the world. The address was generally regarded as eminently worthy of the position and reputation of Dr. Ackworth.

There is always one meeting in this series which commands the sympathy of 'the Brethren.' That is the breakfast and dinner, as the case may be, of the ministers educated at the various Colleges. This year it was a breakfast. I was not fortunate enough to be in London in time to be present, but a numerous company assembled, and had a most pleasant conference, upon matters affecting the colleges and the ministry. Our colleges are just now in a rather moveable condition. Both Bradford and Stepney, are seeking for themselves a new home, but where that home shall be, is not quite decided for either of them. Money in large sums is to be expended, and the appeals have been—at least, for us, liberally responded to.

There remains yet one particular in "our meetings"—The Sermons. We had three,—one from Mr. Stovel which I heard, very eloquent, abounding in most important, vital truth, for the churches and the individual christian; but almost entirely ineffective for want of definiteness. A second Sermon was preached by Mr. Haycroft, of Bristol, and a third by Mr. Chown, of Bradford, to young men. These I did not hear, and therefore do not speak.

There remains yet one other society,—the Bible Translation Society, which sustains its character and its work, and, in both, there can be no doubt has contributed very largely to advance the cause of correct translation of God's word in India. A movement is on foot. I sincerely hope it will be successful, to induce the Bible Society to rescind the resolution which compelled our churches to take up this independent position. The friends by whom the society were urged into passing that vote, never committed a greater mistake, and as I think never acted in more positive opposition to the great leading principle of all our Protestantism. The errors of good men, of all sects, are a fine proof of the comprehensiveness of God's grace. In spite of them even by our instrumentality, He is carrying out the purposes of His love in us personally and in the world generally.

There are some meetings of deep and abiding interest and importance, not denominational, upon which I will give you some information, but not now. Adieu, and believe me,

Very truly yours,

June 3rd, 1856.

H. S. E.

For the Christian Messenger.

The American and Foreign Bible Society.

The first monthly meeting of the Board of Managers at the Anniversary, was held in the Bible House, 117, Nassau Street, New York, on the 5th inst., and the Board organized for the year, by choosing the proper officers.

On the day of the meeting, drafts from Germany to the amount of \$4000 had been presented and paid, so that the treasury was reported as overdrawn about \$5000. Only seven therefore of about forty applications were appointed as new Colporters in addition to the