

## Agriculture.

## Improvement of Vegetables.

There is no vegetable now cultivated, which is not susceptible of almost indefinite improvement. Yet we see very little difference between the crops produced now, and the crops raised by our fore-fathers. Indian corn, beans, pumpkins, squashes, are the same, identically, as we were accustomed to see in our father's fields and gardens forty years ago, except that, in some instances, there is an obvious deterioration as regards both size and quality. This is the plain result of carelessness—a sin to which most cultivators will, we fear, be compelled to plead guilty, and of which they are annually, although some seem not to be aware of it, experiencing the fatal effects. The power of art over nature has already been most forcibly exemplified in the vegetable kingdom, and with reference to some of the very productions which, in this enlightened age, we are permitting to "run out."

Wheat is a factitious grain, exalted to its present condition by the assiduous culture. Neither rye, rice, barley or oats are at present to be found wild in any part of the world, if we may credit the assertion of Buffon; they have been altered by human care and industry from plants to which they now bear no resemblance. The acrid and nauseating *opium graveolens* has been transformed, by the magic of culture, into delicious celery; and the colewort, a plant of diminutive and scanty leaves, not exceeding half an ounce in weight, has been improved into the succulent cabbage, the leaves of which weigh many pounds!

The potatoe, the introduction of which has added millions to our population, derives its origin from a small, bitter root, indigenous in Chili and Montevideo. Similar results have attended the cultivation of other vegetables, fruits and flowers.

By carefully studying the habits and modes of nutrition and growth covered by the various products of the soil, and by selecting annually the best, most perfectly developed and most productive products of the field and garden, we may, in a very brief period, so modify and change them, as almost to remove them from their respective classes. The fine specimens of Indian corn which we see at our agricultural exhibitions, have all been improved in this way. The Brown and Dutton corn, in their original development, were not perhaps more productive than other varieties, but by carefully selecting the best ears, and continuing the practice for several consecutive years, the very habits and physical characteristics of the vegetable seem to have been changed. Wheat, also, has been greatly ameliorated by the same process, as have oats, and many of the culmiferous vegetables. But this improvement is merely local, whereas it should be general, to produce its legitimate effects upon our agriculture.

## Whitewashing.—A Whitewash.

This is a subject upon which our farmers require "line upon line and precept upon precept." Whitewash is one of the most valuable articles in the world, when properly applied. It prevents not only the decay of wood, but conduces greatly to the healthiness of all buildings, whether of wood or stone. Outbuildings and fences, when not painted, should be supplied once or twice every year with a good coat of whitewash, which should be prepared in the following way: Take a clean, water-tight barrel or other suitable cask, and put into it half a bushel of lime. Slack it by pouring water over it, boiling hot, and in sufficient quantity to cover it five inches deep, and stir it briskly till thoroughly slaked. When the slaking has been effected, dissolve it in water, and add two pounds of sulphate of zinc, and one of common salt. These will cause the wash to harden, and prevent its cracking, which gives an unseemly appearance to the work. If desirable, a beautiful cream color may be communicated to the above wash, by adding three pounds of yellow ochre; or a good pearl or lead color, by the addition of lamp, vine or ivory black. For fawn color, add four pounds umber—Turkish or American (the latter is the cheapest)—one pound Indian red and one pound common lampblack. For common stone color, add four pounds raw umber, and two pounds lampblack. This wash may be applied with a common whitewash brush, and will be found much superior both in appearance and durability, to common whitewash.—*German town Telegraph.*

There is growing in a parlor in New York a thrifty plant which sprung from a seed procured from an Egyptian mummy, entombed thousands of years. Though the seed had been injured, the germinating principle still remained.

For the Christian Messenger.

## A Sketch for Hearers.

"He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me."—*John xiii. 20.*

"Well-girls! what kind of a sermon did Mr. — give you?" asked gentle Mrs. Ellis of her daughters, as they entered the room of their invalid mother, after morning service on the Sabbath.

"It was perfectly horrible," exclaimed Kate the eldest, a tall, noble-looking girl,—with considerable emphasis, as she dashed her bonnet on the dressing-table; "not the slightest order or connexion to it, not a single fine thought in the whole."

"Ah! not quite so bad," said her sister Mary, lifting her pensive face to the speaker.

"I am sure," replied Kate quickly, "I don't know what else you could make of it; as old Mr. What's-his-name said, 'If the text had had the small-pox the sermon would not have caught it.'"

"It was rather irregular, to be sure," said Mary, "but then I thought that he made some quite striking remarks."

"Striking enough, I admit," added her sister. "He went through the entire bible in fifteen minutes, made a flying leap from Genesis to Revelations, modestly requesting us to accompany him in imagination; a request I, for one, was quite unable to comply with."

"Well," said Mary, trying to maintain her gravity, "I am sure there was a great deal of good, a great deal of gospel in it; and had there been any poor soul there, burdened with the weight of its sins, and anxious for a way of escape, he could have found it, if there were no thoughts sparkling with intellectual brilliancy."

"Ah, yes, of course," replied Kate, somewhat modified; "I have no doubt the man was sincere, and anxious to do good, but I must say I think he has mistaken his calling, and would probably be more useful in a less public sphere."

Here the conversation ended, and the subject was apparently forgotten by the sisters.

One evening, about a month after, Kate was startled from a twilight reverie, by hearing a timid voice behind her, saying, "Jennie Lane is dying, Miss Kate, and her mother wants to know if you would be so good as to come down."

"Dying! is it possible! I did not know she was ill. I will be there in a moment;" and she darted up stairs to explain the cause of her absence to her mother and sister.

She soon reached the humble cottage, and found the lamp of life was barely flickering in its socket.

Jennie Lane was a poor lame girl, the daughter of a humble farmer who lived not far from Mrs. Ellis's dwelling. The sisters had not heard of her illness, as they went out but little, most of their time being devoted to the care of their invalid mother.

"It's the fever, Miss," said the weeping Mrs. Lane in reply to Kate's eager enquiry, as she met her at the door; "it seems almost more than I can bear; but oh! she is so happy, Miss Kate, so changed, so anxious to go home; and now that I see the prayers of many years answered, in seeing my dear child a Christian, I feel that I ought not to say one word: but come and see her, she can't stay long."

Kate was greatly shocked to see the change so short a time had wrought in poor Jennie. Her long bright hair was falling around her thin face, that would have been marble pale, but for the fever-light on either cheek; but there was a light in her large blue eye that fever never gave, a light that caught its radiance from the other shore. Jennie seemed to gather all her remaining strength for one effort, as Kate came near her bed-side, and took her thin hand in hers, on which the cold dew of death was beginning to gather.

"I am so glad you have come, Miss Kate, I wanted to see you so much before I go; I wanted to tell you all about —, but I can't now, I am so weak," and she sank back panting on her pillow.

"Don't exert yourself, dear," said her mother; "cannot I tell Miss Kate what you wish to say?"

"Oh, I must tell her, mother, it is so wonderful. You know," she added, again addressing Kate, after a few moment's pause, "you know I've been a sinful child all my life, I was a poor weak cripple, and I felt angry at God for making me so, and thought he did not care for a weak sinful thing like me; but oh! dear Miss Kate, he sent that good minister of the gospel, Mr. — here about a month ago, and I heard him preach, and with the blessing of his Holy Spirit I saw then that Jesus did love me, and that he died for me, and oh, I cannot tell you half, I am so happy; I've lived all wrong, but Jesus has forgiven all. I am going home. I've

been a weak, helpless cripple," she added, after another pause, "but I'll be a happy angel, and have a crown in my Father's house; mother dear don't cry; you will come soon. I'll watch for you by the river, and we will rest in his love forever. There are many mansions there, you know, many mansions;" and she repeated the words dreamily, as she lay on her pillow.

Long ere she had ceased speaking, Kate's head was bent upon the bedside, hot tears were falling, and sob after sob shook her frame. It seemed to distress Jennie, who, unconscious that her words had sent a sharp arrow of conviction to her conscience, said, "Ah! don't cry dear Miss Kate, I want you all to feel as happy as I do, and if ever you should see Mr. — again, I want you to tell him for me, that he was the means, through Christ, of leading me to glory."

The pride of genius was completely humbled by the side of that lowly couch, and Kate saw then as she had never seen before, how far superior to the finest intellectual taste, was the simple faith with which poor Jennie received the message, she had so proudly condemned; and there craving forgiveness for the past, she prayed for humility to receive the humblest effort made in sincerity and truth, which, however simple, might have in it a message from the court of heaven to some weary soul. She remained all night at the cottage, and in the dim gray light of early dawn, the happy and purified spirit of Jennie Lane went forth from the frail clay tenement, to dwell forever amid the un fading bloom of the immortal Paradise.

IRENE.

Hillside, June 8th.

## Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

## English Correspondence.

From our own Correspondent.

Manchester, June 1st, 1860.

MR. EDITOR,

THE CONSTITUTION.

On the question of the Repeal of the Paper Duties Bill the House of Lords have dared to challenge the House of Commons. Much has been said on the exclusive privilege of the House of Representatives to determine what taxes should be granted for the wants of the State, and to fix the mode by which that amount should be raised. So firmly had this notion been fixed in the popular mind that everybody considered that privilege to be one of the firmest pillars of the Constitution. But what is the Constitution we should pride ourselves in? The aristocracy are willing enough to raise an alarm when it suits their own purpose, that the constitution is in danger, yet that class ever avoid publishing any kind of definition or description of what the constitution is. We are left therefore to look upon it as a mysterious something, which we are all bound to support. We are perfectly prepared also to look with indignation on such a revolutionary agitator as John Bright, when the nobles denounce him as an enemy to the Constitution. We find now, however that the constitution is made up of a bundle of customs, a volume of precedents, which can be altered and amended at the pleasure of either branch of the Legislature, provided the other two branches make no objection. We need to say, the Lords cannot tax the people; that is the exclusive privilege of our representatives. The Lords now say that that privilege is not exclusive, for the Commons can only do what the Lords are willing they should do. We are obliged to confess that the Lords have a right to prevent the repeal of the Excise Tax on Paper, thus in effect taxing the nation to that amount. But the exercise of that right has been in abeyance for so long a period that it might have been gracefully waived on this occasion. If all abstract rights were practically employed, our constitution would soon be a ruinous heap of inconsistencies. The Queen has a right to make any number of Peers, and to take them from any grade of society; how completely could she destroy the dignity of our nobility by a free exercise of this right. It is optional with the Queen to retain or dismiss her ministry, but to insist on retaining her advisers against the expressed feeling of the House of Commons would create a serious difficulty, which they have a right to do, and so all government would come to a stand still. Now, I think the friends of the Lords have made a decided mistake in standing on their Constitutional right to have carried or rejected that Bill. The right to do it was theirs no question, but it was far from wise to exercise that right. A

large party in this country have taken this adverse vote of the Lords as a menace. The very large advance of the Manchester School in political influence during the past year or two seems to have created considerable ill-feeling amongst the nobility. The "Times" has been most bitter against the principal man of the progress party,—John Bright; beaten in argument, it has been obliged to resort to vilification, a sure sign that its cause is hopeless. In one sense it is a good thing that the present liberal government has been so sharply dealt with. The Lords have asserted their rights and proclaimed their power. The people now know who are their rulers, and have a tolerably clear notion of the determination of the Lords to lose none of their power or privilege without a struggle. The very general criticism of parliamentary doings by the whole press, indicates that the people are awake to their position and are not unprepared to make a struggle also. In such a quarrel we know very well which party will be victorious. The most the Lords can do is to hinder their own degradation. Come it must in time. Their own conduct is the very best to give force to the movement.

A "Constitutional Defence Association" has been organized by the Reform party to the no small chagrin of the Tories. I am sure the House of Lords ought to be the first to encourage this association. Its objects being purely conservative it will not entertain any movement for change, or reform, but simply to preserve intact the principles of our excellent constitution; of course this association considers Lord Derby's recent conduct in interfering with our taxation to be a revolutionary innovation.

PROSPECT OF GOOD CROPS.

The Whitsuntide recess this week changes the course of conversational topics from political to social. A terrible storm of wind raged on Whit-monday. The losses of shipping and lives have been tremendous on the coast of the German Ocean, East and West. The crops were not sufficiently matured to be harmed by its fury. The farmers are in good spirits about the future, a show of abundant crops, and excellent prices for produce dispel anxiety. I never before found such general contentment amongst all classes of producers. A few fine weeks have brought up the vegetation quite in advance of ordinary years. We really seem the better off for having had a long and late winter.

EMIGRATION FROM IRELAND.

It is singular that in the face of such general well doing, there should be so many farmers and labourers emigrating from Ireland. The papers describe some districts in Connaught as deserted, and the roads, ports, and shipping, as well populated with the out-going thousands. Last year the agricultural counties of England suffered great inconvenience in consequence of the diminished influx of Irish harvest-men. Harvest wages were enormous then. I don't know what we must do next harvest. Employ machines perhaps. Why not?

GARIBALDI.

In foreign affairs we are still confined to the Mediterranean Islands. Sicily holds a large place in the history of the past month. The successes of Garibaldi are still to be described. We hear only a little, and that little has to be verified before we can feel safe to appropriate any part of a tale to the bundle of facts. The official telegrams have been so ludicrously untrue that no degree of faith is given to whatever we hear from Naples in an official manner. There is no doubt the noble leader in this struggle for liberty has achieved great successes over the royalist troops. The people of Sicily are very unanimous in their support to Garibaldi. As high a number as 40,000 has been named as the amount of his forces. In Palermo the people have exhibited great reluctance to endure the presence of the garrison, and would be glad of an opportunity to welcome the insurgents. We hear that on Sunday last, May 27th Garibaldi had forced the king's troops back from their lines into the city of Palermo. It is probable that he had followed them into the city, for by another account it appears that the city was being bombarded on the 28th, I suppose by the Neapolitan ships.

KING OF NAPLES.

The King of Naples must be in a great strait to know what to do with himself. He is scarcely safer in Naples than he would be in the island of Sicily, for by all accounts the population only await the appearance of a brave leader to arise in their might and crush the reigning despotism. Nor is there any chance of foreign aid for the infamous tyrant. Lord John Russell declaring a few nights ago that the great powers of Europe will not interfere with the internal dissensions of Naples. Even Spain finds an excuse to decline to lend any troops.