

Agriculture.

SWAMP MUCK.

If the farmer had barn, pen and yard manure enough, no other would be needed. In this are all the elements of plants and all the properties suited to meliorate the soil, physically. With this, and a little lime to quicken its action and to neutralize the acidity of wet, sour soils, he could improve his land to almost any extent, and there would be an end of the manure question.

It, in the lack of home manure, he resorts to the portable mercantile manures, this is well, so far as mineral ingredients are considered, but there is a deficiency of organic matter. Manures must be in large quantity, as well as of good quality; there must be organic matter—animal or vegetable, or both, and there must be enough to affect the physical condition of soils—to render heavy soils light and open—so that the roots can penetrate easily and the air circulate freely, and to give light, sandy soils a loamy cast that will enable them to retain water. Hence, the value of swamp muck. If rightly manipulated and wisely applied, it will prove itself of considerable value, not solely as a feeder of plants, but mainly as a modifier of soils—making both sandy and clay soils easier to cultivate and more productive and that, too, somewhat permanently—more so, at least, than is true of most fertilizers.

All analysts agree that old, black swamp muck contains just about the same ingredients as the solid excrements of horned cattle, when hay grass fed, except that the soluble alkalies of the former—potash and soda and a little common salt—have been washed out, while they remain in the latter. This shows for swamp muck a very considerable value, since the addition of a little wood ash, very little common salt, and a little lime to neutralize its acidity—all costing but a trifle—make it almost precisely the equivalent of manure from the stable.

For gardening, farming and nursery purposes—to all of which it is well suited, better, perhaps, to the nursery than to the others—it should if possible, be dug the year previous to its use, as early as August or September, and in dry time. If thrown into high piles, the water will be drained out, and it will not again be saturated, and will be lighter to remove. As much as can be used, as an absorbent of the liquid excrements of the animals, should be carried to the stalls, folds, yards and pens in as dry a state as possible, to be used for that purpose. The salts in the liquid excrements will supply what the muck wants to make it as good as the manure heaps; and in this case no addition of potash, lime and salt will be required.

But if not brought to the barn and mixed with the barn manure by the feed of animals, it is well to mix with it one bushel of wood ash, one bushel of lime, and half a bushel of some cheap agricultural salt to each cart load. That will make it as good as the average of barn manure for corn grass, potatoes, or almost any other crop. For corn, it is excellent; for potatoes, nothing is better; it will insure a good crop, and a good quality, very little liable to the rot, if placed a small shovelful in the hill and covered, with the seed, four inches deep. If applied to grass land, the same addition as above can be recommended. But if to be applied to grass land, with no addition, and without composting with manure, it should be dug at least a year beforehand, and then spread on in the fall, to have the benefit of the winter frosts, snows and rains. The water from snow and rain always contains considerable ammonia; and swamp muck is one of the most powerful retainers of ammonia for the use of crops.

For Indian corn there is nothing better than barnyard manure, into which dry swamp muck, equal in quantity to the manure itself, has been thrown during the fall, winter and spring, and there thoroughly mixed and composted under the feet of animals. If applied while in a state of active fermentation all the better, as it will then bring up the seeds in a very short time and produce a most vigorous growth. In this way the contents of the yard are doubled; and, at the same time, the quality is fully sustained. We say this last as a result of our own experience, confirmed by the testimony of farmers in whose judgement we have entire confidence.

The best fields of corn we have

ever seen were grown by barn manure with an equal quantity of well prepared muck, 20 to 25 loads of this mixture to the acre, yielding in several cases within our knowledge, over a hundred bushels of shelled corn per acre.—Farm Journal.

SKIMMED MILK FOR HENS.—The editor of the Poultry World, finding that a neighbour whom he had furnished with milk had beaten him in eggs, inquired into the cause and gives the following explanation. To this we may add, that any kind of sour milk or buttermilk thickened with bran is very excellent for all kinds of poultry:

"They commenced laying in October and have been at it ever since, to the astonishment, if not the envy of the neighbors of the fortunate owner, who has been selling eggs for the past four months for forty-five cents per dozen and upward. Not one particle of meat or scraps is given and but the veriest trifle of vegetable food in the shape of a few boiled potatoes about once a week. An abundance of grain is allowed of various sorts, ground and unground, but not cooked, and plenty of unburnt oyster shells, pounded, are at all times accessible. They have a plentiful supply of skimmed milk every day, so that they can help themselves to what they want,—no other drink being provided. Skimmed milk and the white of an egg are very much alike, though the cream has been separated; undoubtedly the full allowance of Indian corn supplies the oily constituents of the yolks. Some farmers think they cannot afford to give milk to their hens, but must save it for their pigs. But if milk is worth one and a half cents per quart to feed to swine, it is worth three cents for poultry, if by its use winter eggs can be obtained and sold at good high prices."

EXPERIMENTING WITH HENS.

In the Poultry World, Isaac Lynde, of Ohio, gives the result of an experiment with different breeds of pullets in laying for six months, and cost of their feed. On Sept. 1st he took ten pullets of each of the breeds mentioned below, about six months old, gave them a yard 40 feet square, with a comfortable house, and kept an exact account of eggs and feed, as follows:

The Dark Brahmas ate 369 1-2 quarts of corn, oats and wheat screenings, laid 605 eggs, and weighed 70 pounds. The Buff Cochins ate 406 quarts, laid 591 eggs, and weighed 73 pounds. The Gray Dorkings ate 309 1-2 quarts, laid 524 eggs, and weighed 59 1-2 pounds. The Houdans ate 214 1-4 quarts, laid 783 eggs, and weighed 45 1-2 pounds. The Leghorns ate 231 1-2 quarts, laid 807 eggs, and weighed 36 1-2 pounds.

To make this experiment more complete, and to show which lot gave the most profit, including both eggs and flesh, we have supposed the fowls to be dressed and sold at the end of the six months at 20 cents per pound; also that the eggs worth 24 cents a dozen (two cents each), and that the cost of the feed was 2 1-2 cents per quart, or 80 cents per bushel. The figures would then be:

Table with 5 columns: Breed, Cost of feed, Value of eggs, Total value, Total profit. Rows include Brahmas, Cochins, Dorkings, Houdans, Leghorns.

The greatest profit on the investment is thus in favor of the Houdans, with the Leghorns next and the Dorkings least. It would have been interesting, however, to know the weight of the eggs laid by the several varieties to see what actual difference there was in the amount of food furnished by them, and its value at a fair estimate by weight. On such a basis it is quite probable that the Brahmas would have shown the greatest profit. And another item to be considered by investors is, that where the fowls must be confined a four-foot fence will answer for the large breeds, while for the light-bodied breeds eight or ten feet will be necessary, and even then their wings will have to be clipped. In addition, it is the general verdict that the large breeds bear confinement the best, and are more easily kept in good health and from those vicious habits of plucking each other's feathers and eating their own eggs. But all breeds will give trouble enough in confinement if not furnished with plenty of employment, water and food.—Country Gentleman.

Forgiveness is rarely perfect except in the breasts of those who have suffered.

HALIFAX, N.S., DECEMBER 4, 1872.

WEDNESDAY EVENING.

DECEMBER, 1872.

First Quarter, Dec. 7th, 7h. 22m. morning. Full Moon, " 14th, 5h. 30m. afternoon. Last Quarter, " 22nd, 9h. 57m. afternoon. New Moon, " 30th, 2h. 22m. morning.

Table with columns: Day, SUN. RISE, MOON. RISE, High Tide. Rows for days from Sunday to Saturday.

FUR TIDES.—The column of the Moon's Southern gives the time of high water at Parrsboro', Cornwallis, Horton, Hantsport, Windsor, Newport, and Truro.

High water at Pictou and Cape Tormentine, 2 hours and 11 minutes later than at Halifax. At Annapolis, St. John, N. B., and Portland Maine, 3 hours and 25 minutes later, and at St. John's, Newfoundland 30 minutes earlier, than at Halifax. At Charlottetown, 2 hours 25 minutes later. At Westport, 2 hours 45 minutes later. At Yarmouth, 2 hours 20 minutes later.

FOR THE LENGTH OF THE DAY.—Add 12 hours to the time of the sun's setting, and from the sum subtract the time of rising. FOR THE LENGTH OF THE NIGHT.—Subtract the time of the sun's setting from 12 hours, and to the remainder add the time of rising next morning.

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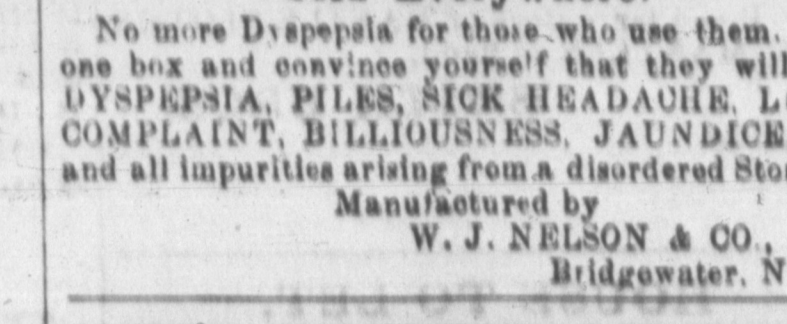
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