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Nec araneorum sane textus ideo melior, quia ex se fila gignunt, nec noster vilior quia ex alienis libamus ut apes.

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Agricultural Journal.

THE FARMER.

The following is the concluding remarks of Mr Biddle, in a speech made by him, recently, at a meeting of the Philadelphia Agricultural Society:—

Having spoken of the improvement of our farms, let us not forget a much more important subject—the improvement of our farmers. In the stirring competition of all classes around them—in the increased diffusion of knowledge, and the general activity of mind which now pervades all society, the farmers must maintain their standing by the same means. Unless they cultivate their minds—unless in the intervals of their labours they pursue the studies which qualify men for public usefulness, they will be distanced in the race of honorable ambition, and lose that high place in the public estimation and the public councils to which they have a right to aspire. And certainly, never was the advantage of their position more conspicuous than at the present year. In the general desolation which has swept over the country, the only interest which has not been visited by the sternest reverses, is that of agriculture. Undoubtedly, the people who have suffered least are the farmers, whose deep roots in the soil have enabled them to withstand the tempest.

The same gentle vicissitudes of the season have passed over them—the same abundance has blessed their harvests—and their industry has been rewarded by gains scarcely less in name and really greater than before. If they have not enjoyed the feverish excitements or the luxurious amusements of the dwellers on pavements, they have been spared many an anxious thought and many a heartache, not heard but not the less felt in the din of cities. Let these things reconcile farmers to their stations; let them enjoy in peace the repose, the abundance, the thoughtfulness, the sobriety of their own healthy existence, without wasting an anxious thought on their more active and ostentatious, but not more happy brethren—for we may now repeat with even more truth than the Poet Farmer of antiquity said nearly two thousand years ago:—
'Happy, too happy farmers, if they only knew their own blessings.'

From the Genesee Farmer.

Fall Ploughing.—The question is sometimes asked, is it best to plough land in the fall? and if answered in the affirmative, the reasons for such a procedure are demanded. We think that fall ploughing is desirable in most cases, and on most soils, for the following, among other reasons, that might be given.

1st. It is one of the established principles of philosophical agriculture, that the soil derives much of its productive property from the air, and that chemical changes and combinations are constantly going on, by which fertility is much increased. These alterative effects of the atmosphere, and these changes of the qualities of the soil, are the more active and

efficient as new surfaces are exposed to new action. For instance, much greater quantities of carbonic acid will be absorbed by a given surface of earth, if that earth is frequently stirred, than if it was allowed to remain with a single saturated surface. Ploughing, by exposing new surfaces to the action of the atmosphere, must be productive of essential benefit; and as fall ploughing generally takes place after crops which have partially exhausted the surface of some of its nutritive and absorbent qualities, its service in aid of spring crops is greatly enhanced.

2d. There is always on land more or less grass, weeds, stubble, or other vegetable matters convertible into mold by fermentation and decomposition, a process which is greatly aided by being turned under the surface of the earth. Fall ploughing renders such substances much sooner available in advancing the growth of crop, than they would be if left uncovered during the winter; independent of the great loss necessarily sustained by the wash-away of the lighter materials and dispersion by the winds.

3d.—Nothing acts more efficiently on moist soil in promoting vegetation, than high pulverization; and fall ploughing aids this operation most essentially. Lands that if ploughed in the spring only will remain in large cakes or lumps, defying the efforts of the farmer to reduce them suitably, will if ploughed in the fall be found loosened in texture, and fitted for early operations in the spring of the year. Frost is the most efficient disintegrator of the soil with which the agriculturist is acquainted, and he should avail himself of its valuable labours in all practical cases.

4th.—The earlier the ground can be prepared for the reception of spring crops, such as corn, spring wheat and barley, the better it will be found for the cultivator; and in nine cases out of ten, early sown crops are the heaviest, and most productive.

5th.—Ploughing land acts more effectually in destroying insects than any other mode of treatment, and fall ploughing for this purpose is preferable to any other. Those insects which produce the most mischief to the farmer, such as the fly, cut worm, grub, &c., cannot resist the frost of our winters, if prematurely exposed to its action by a fall ploughing. The cut-worm which accumulates in such numbers in old meadows and pastures, is thus destroyed, and crops planted on them saved.

Lastly—Our summers are so limited in duration, that unless the time allotted to vegetation is fully occupied by the growth and ripening of plants, the certain failure of crops may be anticipated. Hence the farmer usually is more hurried by his work in the spring than he ought to be, in order to avoid having his crops caught by the frost and snow. It should be the object of the farmer to have his necessary labour as nearly equalised through the season as possible, and thus avoid all pressures at inconvenient seasons of the year. Experience shows that the farmer in most cases, has more leisure hours in the fall of the year than at any other time, and he who would work it right, should employ

this time in advancing the next spring's work, for such fall ploughing emphatically is, and thus preventing the pressure of business then usually felt.

These reasons we think sufficient to justify the practice of fall ploughing; and unless in cases where the deep silicious or porous nature of the soil seems to forbid its use, we cannot doubt that our farmers will find it turn to their account in adopting the practice. If any, however, are doubtful on the subject, they can easily bring the matter to the test of experiment, and govern themselves accordingly.

From the same.

Brief hints for commencing winter.
—Cattle and all domestic animals should commence the winter in good condition.

Do not undertake to winter more cattle than you have abundant means of providing for.

Let every farmer aim to have next spring, instead of thin, bony, slab sided, shaggy cattle; fine, smooth, round, and healthy ones, and to this end, let him spare no pains; and

First, let the cattle be well fed;
Secondly, let them be fed regularly;

Thirdly, let them be properly sheltered from the pelting storm.

Proper food and regularity of feeding will save the flesh on the animals back, and shelter will save the fodder.

All domestic animals in considerable numbers should be divided into parcels and separated from each other, in order that the weaker may not suffer from the domination of the stronger, nor the diseased from the vigorous.

Farmers who have raised root crops (and all good farmers have doubtless done so) should cut them up and mix them with drier food, as meal, chopped hay, straw or corn stalks, and feed them to cattle and sheep.

Cow-houses and cattle stables should be kept very clean and well littered. To allow animals to lie down in the filth which is sometimes suffered to collect in stables, is perfectly insufferable. By using plenty of straw or litter, the consequent increase in the quantity of manure, will much more than repay the supposed waste of straw.

All stables should be properly ventilated.

Mixing food is generally better than feeding cattle on one substance alone.

Cattle will generally eat straw with as much readiness as hay, if it is salted copiously, which may be done by sprinkling brine over it.

A great saving is made by cutting not only straw and corn stalks, but hay also.

Sheep, as well as all other domestic animals, should have a constant supply of good water during winter. They should also be properly sheltered from the storm, for a great point in the secret of keeping them in good condition is to keep them comfortable.

From the Conn. Farmer's Gazette.

Manures.—The manufacture of manure, is the most important part of the farmer's business. It requires a knowledge of the component parts of vegetables, and the chemical properties of the various kinds of manure.

In the hilly country of New England and several other States there is scarcely a farm to be found but like the human intellect, contains abundant resources for its own improvement, and they are to be found in every swamp, pond, basin or valley. Alluvial deposits, muck, or animal and vegetable decomposition, are the natural consequences of an uneven surface. All our creeks, and harbors on the sea coast, contain inexhaustible beds of these deposits; but most of them having lain long excluded from the atmosphere and sun, in a state of rest, have imbibed an acidity, which requires the application of alkali, which is contained in lime, ashes and potash to remove it. These decompositions, aided by fermentation, thus become manure, or a proper medium to attract and retain the gases and salts necessary for vegetable nutriment. Every element which enters into the formation of vegetables, must be in a state of solution, or a gaseous form, as neither the roots nor leaves of vegetables are capable of imbibing or absorbing the insoluble portion of manure, designated by chemists by the name of geine or humus. The kind of humus, or earth, best calculated to attract and retain the gases combined with atmospheric air, are clay, gypsum, chalk, muck, and others of similar character. An open, sandy soil, will attract or retain them very imperfectly, and therefore a mixture of muck is necessary to render such soils productive.

A great portion of vegetable nutriment is no doubt derived from the gases contained in the atmosphere. The powerful effect of gypsum, charcoal, &c., can be accounted for on no other principles. Nitre and salt operate as powerful manures, from their tendency to attract and condense atmospheric vapor, and bring the nutriment they contain into contact with the vegetable. Sal ammonia, commonly called spirit of hartshorn, is ascertained to be the most important manure known, and is contained in great abundance in urine. It is the essence of all manures, and forms the chief ingredient in poudrette and urate. Gypsum, pulverized charcoal, muck, ground oyster shells, lime and ashes, saturated with urine, form a highly concentrated manure by extracting the ammonia and preventing its escape in a volatile state. It then undergoes a solution by water, in which it is transmitted to the roots of vegetables, and enters into their composition. Thus a continual change is going on in the vegetable kingdom, from organic life to death, from death to decomposition, by which the by which the same gases are reproduced, which are again required to re-organise the same species of vegetables into new life, or to enter into new combinations necessary for animal or mineral production. The animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms are composed of some of the same elements, but in different proportions. It becomes the farmer, therefore, to understand the nature and relative importance of them all, in the preparation and supply of manures. We know of no work from which he can derive more useful information on these topics, than the excellent lectures of Johnston, of the