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

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From the Encyclopædia metropolitana.
THE NATIONAL ADVANTAGE OF
AGRICULTURE AS CARED FOR BY
NATIONS OF OLD.

From the great interest attached to its operations and results, agriculture, at a very early period, began to attract the attention of mankind. Even in the rudest state, wherever the human being is found to observe the institutions of social life, some care is bestowed on the improvement of the soil, and on the preservation of its produce. The wandering shepherd, whether in the wilds of Arabia, or in those of the Western continent, has some favoured spot on which he cultivates the natural grasses, and exercises his skill in raising such fruit or herbs as may supply to his household a little variety in their meals, or a remedy in their sickness. The maintenance of his herds, too, during the inclemency of the seasons, more or less incident to every climate suggests to him the manifold advantages which may be derived from adding to the fertility of the soil; and hence, the gradual transition from the pursuits of a pastoral society to the more improved habits of the agriculturist who enacts laws, fixes barriers around the claims of property, and establishes the grounds of personal rights. For this reason, Ceres, the Goddess of Agriculture among the ancients, was described as the first legislator, (*legifera*;) and the poet accordingly tells us—

Prima eres unco glebam dimovit aratro,
Prima dedit fruges alimentaque mitia terris,
Primo dedit leges. Cereis sunt omnia minus.

It is not surprising that the importance of husbandry to the comfort and advancement of the human race should have led the mythologists of the East to ascribe divine honors to those persons by whom its various processes were originally introduced. We are told, that the Kings of Persia in former days relinquished, once every month, the pomp of sovereignty, and the dainties of the royal table, and partook of the simple fare of the peasant; preserving thereby the remembrance of the primeval equality which subsisted among mankind, and affording a sensible token of the high estimation in which agriculture was held by their people. In modern times a practice somewhat similar is said to prevail among the Chinese: the monarch every year, at the commencement of spring, divests himself of all the ensigns of imperial dignity, puts his hand to the plough, and, offering up a solemn sacrifice, prays for a favorable season and an abundant crop.

Although the Hebrew tribes were in general devoted to the pursuits of agriculture, being by their religion precluded from commerce with the surrounding states, we are not supplied with such particulars in regard to their practice as might lead us to a just view of their system. The vine and the olive, which on the calcareous rocks of Palestine, yielded a plentiful return to the cultivator, occupied, it is probable, more attention than the corn which grew in the valleys. This last, watered by the streams which flowed from the neighbouring hills, or cherished by the former and the latter rain, arrived at a speedy maturity under the glowing sun of a climate approaching to the tropical; and, without the exercise of much skill or trouble, filled the barn of the husbandman with an increase of thirty or even sixty fold. The plain through which the Jordan carries its stream enjoyed in some degree the benefit conferred upon Egypt by the Nile, being partly covered by the annual inundation arising from the melting snows of the Syrian mountains. The septennial rest, too, secured for the land by the institutes of the Divine Legislator, would contribute in no small degree to recruit its powers, and thereby would supersede, to a certain extent, the means usually employed for reviving the strength of an exhausted soil. But it may be sufficient to observe, that the literature of the Jews, occupied with higher objects, has conveyed to us no record of the manner in which they ploughed and sowed their fields. We find nothing beyond the allusions to their rural habits and usages. The prophet Isaiah, for example, asks, 'Doth the ploughman plough all day to sow? Doth he open and break the clods of his ground? When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the fitches and scatter the cummin, and cast in the principal wheat, and the appointed barley, and the rye in their place? For his God doth instruct him to discretion, and doth teach him. For the fitches are not threshed with a threshing instrument, neither is a cart wheel turned about upon the cummin, but the fitches are beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod. Bread-corn is bruised; because he will not ever be threshing it, nor break it with the wheel of his cart, nor bruise it with his horsemen.'

It would appear, however, that agriculture was held in high esteem, even by their princes. The crown-lands, in the time of King David were managed by seven officers; one was over the storehouses, one over the work and tillage of the ground, one over the vineyards and wine cellars, one over the olive and oil stores and sycamore plantations, one over the camels and asses, and one over the flocks. King Uzziab, too, 'built towers in the desert, and digged many wells; for he had much cattle, both in the low country and in the plains; husbandmen also, and vine-dressers in the mountains, and in Carmel, for he loved husbandry.' We are informed, moreover, that Elijah found Elisha in the field, with twelve yoke of oxen, and himself with the twelfth. It is well known that both oxen and asses were used in ploughing; but Moses forbade the Jews to yoke an ass with an ox, their step or progress being different, and their labours of course unequal.

In the latter period of their history, the Hebrews, like all other nations of long standing, connived at the possession of large landed estates, although one of their prophets denounced a curse against those who join house to house, and lay field to field, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth. In the earlier and more simple times, however, it should seem, that while some portion of the land was occupied exclusively by individuals, the greater part was held in common, or in a certain rotation, according to a practice not yet wholly extinct in some certain districts of Great Britain. This view is confirmed, not only by the regulations laid down by the Jewish Legislator as to herds and flocks, but also by the beautiful story of Ruth, who came and gleaned in the field after the reapers, and her hap was to light on a part of the field—that is, of the common field—belonging to Boaz.

The agriculture of the Egyptians and Assyrians seems to have taken its character from the peculiarities of the country which they respectively occupied. The annual floods which covered their land to a great extent saved the labour of tillage, and superseded the use of those instruments which in other parts of the world were necessary to prepare the soil for receiving the seed. The depositions left by the water formed so rich a mould, that the exertions of the husbandman were confined to the structure of dykes or the excavation of subsidiary canals. In Egypt the grain sown in the month of November was generally found ripe about the end of March; and during the remainder of the season pulse followed the grain, and the fruits were succeeded by new flowers. In seconding the liberality of nature, man was industrious, and the duty of agriculture was enforced by various maxims of religion. The care of tillage, as well as of all other momentous concerns, was originally under the inspection of the sacerdotal families, who had of old taught the people how to drain the marshes of the Delta; the smaller mouths of the Nile long bearing the most evident marks of the patient labour which had been necessary to open and keep them clear. Aristotle assures his readers that all the inferior channels by which the river finds its way to the Mediterranean were the work of men's hands.

From the London Farmer's Journal.
GENERAL AGRICULTURAL REPORT FOR AUGUST.

On the whole, notwithstanding the frequent fluctuations, which have occurred in it, the weather of the past month has been favorable to all out-door farm operations—the in-gathering of the crops in particular; and it affords us much pleasure in being enabled to assert, that, with some few exceptions, the accounts which have come to hand from most of our large grain districts, are to the effect that the produce of this year's wheat crop is a full average one, and of excellent quality. In some of the forward counties, nearly the whole of the wheat has been secured, and only a small quantity of barley and oats now remain in the fields, while, north of the Humber, a conclusion of harvest-work is expected by—if not before—the usual period. As respects spring corn, reports, as to yield and condition, are by no means satisfactory, and it is quite evident that the quantity produced this year is small. Both beans and peas have suffered materially from the effects of the drought in the early part of the season, and scarcely a sample of the latter has appeared on any of our markets without exhibiting signs of the ravages committed by the grub.

The supply of old wheats now in the hands of farmers is nearly exhausted; yet the large imports from abroad are rapidly filling up any deficiency in this respect,

to the great and manifest injury of home growers.

The heavy rains which fell in the month's early part had a most beneficial effect upon the pastures, which are now covered with abundant supplies of grass; hence the stocks is faring remarkably well.

We regret exceedingly to state that the most unfavourable accounts have reached us from our correspondents on the subject of the potato disease, which appears to be rapidly extending itself all over the United Kingdom, and to threaten the annihilation of the interests of the growers. Should the disease prove so general as is pretty generally expected, higher rates may be expected for oats and most other kinds of Spring corn. The disease appears, also, to have extended itself to the turnips.

The crop of seed-grasses is well spoken of, though we entertain great doubts of its proving a long one.

As will have been observed from the statements we furnish our readers week by week, the imports of live stock for our markets continue rapidly on the increase and of improving quality, especially as relates to the cows from Rotterdam and Hamburg, some of which have produced as much as £17 each. Owing to the warm weather having prevented the arrivals of country-slaughtered meat, the trade, in Smithfield, has ruled firm, and prices have been fairly supported. The large country fairs—which have been very steady, at, in most instances, very high prices.

Although very large supplies of foreign wheat and flour have been thrown upon our markets, the demand for all kinds of English wheat, in the course of the month has ruled very steady, at an advance of full 5s. per qr.; yet the sales, compared with those at many previous corresponding periods of the year, have not been large. Foreign wheat has moved off steadily, at a similar amount of improvement. The barley trade has ruled very inactive at unaltered quotations. The same observation may be applied to malt; but oats have risen quite 2s.—peas, 3s. per qr., with a very steady inquiry.

From the Worcester Guardian.
DISEASE IN TURNIPS.

As the potato disease is occupying the attention of the great bulk of the community, and its serious results upon the poorer class, allow me to mention that the same disease is now showing itself in the turnip in this neighbourhood. I have a crop of Swede turnips, which has excited great notice from its luxuriant and forward appearance, being drilled on the 22nd July, upon ridges, with a composition of a sulphuric acid and bones, night-soil, ashes, and gypsum mixed up together. From their first appearance, the plants looked healthy, they grew very rapid and strong, escaping that general scourge, the turnip-fly. I had them regularly horse-hoed between the drills, and struck out by hand to about 12 inches apart in the drills. Although no rain fell for at least five weeks, they never flagged in their growth. As the rain came on, the impulse given to the turnips was very perceptible; the land soon became covered and bulbing began, which has now attained a very large size, many of the bulbs weighing 10lbs. It always gave great pleasure when I visited them, particularly when the accounts of others were so discouraging. On Saturday week I was induced to go amongst the Swedes, from what I observed in some white stone top turnips (about half an acre), which I had drilled in the same piece, but which I now found to be all rotten, and emitting an effluvia of the most offensive kind. I thought as the white turnips had attained a very large size, they might have overgrown themselves, and decayed prematurely; but upon examining the sound ones, I found them perfectly sound, not follow.

Now the Swedes are certainly affected as above stated, but not so extensively as the white turnips. I found many putting on this appearance—the leaf a little mildewed, in the centre of the eye a dark appearance; in a word, in every respect

like the diseased potato. I could force it into some of them as much as a couple of inches; the smell from them was most offensive, a kind of matterly appearance, the same as the potato had last winter. I visited the same field last Saturday, and am sorry to say that nearly the whole of the white turnips are affected, and the Swedes to a much greater extent. Not feeling satisfied, I have visited several of my neighbours' crops, and can easily see the same disease amongst them, in the incipient state; being later in their growth, the disease has not yet developed itself so fully. One field I examined particularly, which had been transplanted in June, but they were affected. Not wishing to become an alarmist, I merely write this in the spirit of enquiry. Having carefully perused the different agricultural reports from your numerous correspondents, I cannot see in them any allusion to the disease; all concur that since the late rains, the turnips look much more promising. I wish when they write again they would pay especial attention to the crops in their several localities, and report thereon; for if the disease should prove to be an epidemic, the consequence to the grazier the ensuing winter will be very serious. Its being detected early in the season may be the means of enabling us to provide a substitute before the winter sets in.

THE POTATO EPIDEMIC.

TO THE AGRICULTURISTS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

Sirs.—A great deal of agitation seems again to exist as to the cause and effect of this injurious disease. Being a potato grower myself, of course in common with others I have felt its dire effects; in consequence of which, like many other difficulties that have arisen in my transitory life, now becomes again my peculiar pleasure to develop, and as it is pretty well known to all my neighbours, when I turn my attention to any subject that affects our interest, I always make it a rule never to relinquish it until I have explored cause and effect, with both of which I am now perfectly satisfied; and with as much perspicuity and brevity as the subject will allow, I shall be most happy to give it verbatim as follows:—

In the first place, be it understood, that all epidemic diseases, whether affecting the animal or vegetable world, first comes in the air; after which the disease arrives at its summit, whether in the decomposition of the plant or the emanation in the animal, as in either case emits an acrid virulent matter, the epidemic then becomes contagious by that virulent matter, and not till then.

Now, sirs, the atmospheric air in some peculiar seasons becoming overcharged with carbonic acid gas, the dew sometimes in such seasons becomes impregnated with acrid virulent matter proceeding from those gases, this matter alighting on the tender plant of the potatoe immediately turns it black and renders it in a state of decomposition, the matter proceeding from thence descends into the earth and causes a like decomposition on the potatoe itself; the most effectual remedy that I have yet discovered is to remove the top as soon as you perceive it turn black, then, if obtainable, sow a quantity of fresh lime over the piece—I will warrant this to pay at least one hundred per cent. for the trouble and outlay.

I have experimentally obtained, partly by chance, how the thing may in some measure, if not altogether, be prevented in future seasons, as in the spring of 1825, I appropriated three lands, a part of my home land for potatoes, one of which had been extraordinarily limed to destroy the twitch, a system of my own; the limed land, observe, although it lay in the middle of the other two, was not affected; the others so much so as to render them hardly worth getting; in consequence of which, I have set my potatoes this year on a piece which has been well limed, and as yet no disease has injured them, although all others in the same locality are much worse than they were last year. It is therefore very evident to myself, and I have no doubt will