

our own is likely to be formed, and will certainly be judged of by the world. We ought therefore to be slow and cautious in contracting intimacy: but when a virtuous friendship is once established, we must ever consider it a sacred engagement.—*Dr. Blair.*

**THE HABIT OF READING.**—Young men should always cultivate a habit of reading, for it may be to them not only the means of information, but the principal source of many of the finest and highest enjoyments of life. They who make good books their constant companion, will never want good and faithful friends in their prosperous days, or their seasons of reverse. There can be no blank in the lives of those persons who from active love hold daily fellowship with the wisest and best of the race. We think we could hardly be tempted to exchange our habit of reading for any other friend it may be our fortune to find on earth. And we are sure that any young man who will make this habit his friend, will ever esteem it among the wisest steps of his life; and so we counsel the young from our own experience, among all other gettings in this world, to get the habit, the love of reading—and always to have at hand a good book with which to fill up every leisure hour. In this way they come at last to know that the gems of life are found in its waste places.

Theory without practice, does not often carry much weight in it; and on the mind of the farmer, generally speaking, it acts with less force perhaps than with most other classes in the community; for unless an array of facts, or good evidence, is adduced to inspire confidence, he is slow to change, the more so, when he knows that even a partial failure in a single crop, from experimenting, will be sensibly felt in his slender income, and perhaps for a year to come. This feeling, to a certain extent at least, is all right and proper; for experiments, to test the new theory, are best undertaken on a limited scale; time may be lost thereby, but money may be saved in the end.—*Col. CAPRON.*

**ALUM.**—The uses of alum are manifold and important; incorporated with paper it presents a hard smooth surface, fit for writing upon; furriers employ it in the preservation of the hairy covering of skins; it retards putrefaction in animal substances; and hardens the tallow used for candles. Its astringent properties are valuable in medicine, and its caustic properties as calcined alum in surgery. But it is in dyeing that the use of alum is most important and most widely diffused. It is here that coloring matters present any affinity to the substances to be dyed; most of them would disappear with the first washing, were there no medium by which they could be fixed. The substance employed for this purpose is called a *mordant* or *biter-in*; and in this respect alum holds a pre-eminent rank. This mineral is also made subservient to other less praiseworthy purposes; bakers use it to give a good color to bad flour, and to swell a comparatively small lump of dough into a large loaf; iced ginger beer and lemonade, offered for sale at railway stations and other places in England, if narrowly inspected, will be found imbedded in lumps of alum, which pass very well for ice.

**HOW TO WHITEN LINEN.**—Fruit-stains, iron-mould, and other spots on linen, may be removed by applying the part, previously washed clean, a weak solution of lime or of soda, oxalic acid, or salts of lemon, in warm water, and often it may be done by using a little lemon-juice. The part which contained the stain, or spot, should shortly after be thoroughly rinsed in clear, warm water (without soap), and immediately dried in the sun. Linen that has acquired a yellow or dingy color by careless washing, may be restored to its former whiteness by working it well in water to which some strained

solution of chloride of lime or of soda has been added, observing to well rinse it in clean water, both before and after the immersion in the bleaching liquor. Never attempt to bleach unwashed linen, and avoid using the liquor too strong, for in that case the fabric will be rendered rotten.

**“OUR DIFFICULTIES—THEIR CAUSES.”**—The *Pilot* has a communicated article under the above head.—Causes assigned: the failure of the lumber trade for three seasons; the losses on produce in 1847, amounting to £250,000 by the Montreal and Quebec merchants alone; the disastrous effects of the present bankrupt law; our position as regards the balance of trade against us in England and the United States, and the want of domestic manufactures. It appears that during the year ending 1st November, 1848, the commissions in bankruptcy issued at Montreal numbered 103, of which 25 filed no statement; the remaining 84 filed statements showing total liabilities £395,729; total assets £398,329, out of which there were paid during the year dividends amounting to £9,920.

**LOSS OF THE IRISH POTATO CROP.**—It has been calculated that the loss sustained in Ireland by the failure of the potato crop between 1845-8, amounts to the enormous sum of *thirty-seven millions sterling*; to which must be added for the rise in the price of seed, an additional sum of six millions, making a total of *forty-three millions*! In Thom's Almanac for 1843 it is stated, that 2,457,409 statute acres were under potato culture.

**THE CHELTENHAM SIX-ROWED BLACK-SKINNED, OR AFRICAN BARLEY.**—This is a new variety, which has been recently imported into this country from Abyssinia, and was first propagated in the neighbourhood of Cheltenham, from which place its name is derived. Since 1843, the year of its introduction, it has been grown, we are informed by several gentlemen, by way of experiment, and the result has proved it to be a hardy and prolific variety; it has been reared during severe cold and extreme drought—in the hot house, and then transplanted during frost; but such appears to be its hardihood that it was unaffected by these changes. A gentleman in the immediate vicinity of Lewes sowed last February 17 grains, which produced 383 ears, and 17,235 grains—above a thousand fold; a few of these ears are at our office, Lewes, for inspection. They present a very dark grey appearance—almost black, and the beard is extremely strong, but the grain itself breaks extremely white, and we are informed will make good pale ale. So highly are its qualities spoken of to us, that we think it desirable a perfectly fair trial should be made of its capabilities.

**INOCULATING SHEEP FOR SMALL POX.**—A farmer, being alarmed at the prevalence of small pox in his vicinity, was desirous of having his sheep inoculated. His shepherd remonstrated with him upon the subject, and said that the sheep at present were in a healthy and thriving condition, and that it would be very imprudent to introduce among them a disorder which might be attended with dangerous consequences, and which otherwise they might avoid. Unfortunately his master refused to listen to his advice, and the operation was immediately performed. The effect of the proceeding was that the disease raged violently amongst the flock, 95 of them died in a very short space of time, and many others are in a very perilous situation.

**DRINK AND DISEASE.**—It is remarkable that all the diseases caused from drinking spirituous liquors are liable to become hereditary, even to the third generation, and gradually increase, if the curse be continued, till the family becomes extinct.—*Dr. Darwin.*