

**THE ISLAND OF ICHABOE.**—It appears from an interesting article in the *Glasgow Herald* of the 12th April, that it was through the information of the master of an American whaler, at the Cape of Good Hope, given to Captain Farr, an Englishman, that the first cargo of Guano was brought to this country, from Ichaboe, by the latter, who has since made a second voyage to the island, and pointed out the way to other ships, in accordance with a negotiation entered into with their owners. The writer in the *Herald* thus concludes :—

“At the time of Captain Farr's first visit, the island was covered with penguins, gannets, &c., but principally the former, in numbers which altogether defied calculation. They seemed to have no acquaintance with, nor fear of man, and, in fact, offered a resistance to his encroachment on a domain which had been pecuniary their own for thousands of years. Since the crews of so many ships, however, were located at the island, the birds have almost entirely deserted their former territory, and retired to fulfil the purposes of their nature in more remote and inaccessible shores. The specimens of the penguin from Ichaboe which we have seen are about two feet in height, and as a great portion of their time is spent in the sea, they are furnished with small flaps or paddles, instead of wings, which enable them to progress through the water with great velocity, though they are unable to fly. The female lays and sits upon one egg at a time, and a hole scratched in the deposit subserves all the purpose of a nest. In this way a succession of incubations go on for several months in the year, the young bird making its way to the sea as soon as it is able. It is the opinion of the seamen however, that vast numbers of them never reach their destined home in the waters, but are crushed to death in their progress to it, by the dense battalions of birds which have almost to maintain a struggle for bare standing room; and in this way the guano heaps are increased as well by the bodies of the birds as by their droppings. The bodies of seals are also found on the surface of the guano deposits, which leads to the belief that they may have occasionally taken shelter there from a storm or hurricane, and having been overpowered by the potency of the ammoniacal vapour, have been unable to return to the water, and died where they lay. The guano which is brought to this country is found under a loose covering of decayed birds, recent dung, &c., and it is so firmly imbedded that it requires to be dug out by the laborious operation of the pick-axe. When thus disengaged it is put into bags, and transferred, by means of a sort of rope ladder, from the island to a boat, which lies at the outer edge of the surf, and from thence it is daily emptied into the hold of the vessel, which is anchored at a short distance. Ten men will lift about 15 tons per day, but the operation is a very laborious one, and the sun is so powerful that few of the crews escape without having their faces and hands blistered so that the outer skin is peeled off. The trip to or from the island extends to from 55 to 70 days, or, including the time necessary to take in a cargo, the voyage out and home extends to from six to seven months. When Captain Farr left Ichaboe he estimated the guano deposit on that island alone to extend to 1000 feet in length, by 500 in breadth with an average depth of 35 feet containing, perhaps, from 700,000 to 800,000 tons. It is evident, therefore, that this supply will soon be exhausted in fertilising the soil of Great Britain and her dependencies; but it is to be hoped that vast stores of it yet exist, which have hitherto never been disturbed by man. On this subject we

quote the following cheering statement from the *South African Commercial Advertiser*, published at Cape Town in January last :—“On the rocky headlands, or on the rocky and unmolested islands on the west coast, where the sea-fowl, from a vast expanse of open ocean, come to breed, enormous masses of this manure have recently been discovered; and it seems probable that all the way up the coast into the Gulf of Guinea, and beyond it similar treasures await the agriculture of the world, by which means the sea will render back to the land much more matter fitted to form organised, that is, vegetable and animal substances, than the rivers carry down into its depths, or the fleets of the nations deposit in their course over its surface.”

The island of Ichaboe is situated in 26, 19, of south latitude, and 14, 50, of east longitude, four days sail north of the Cape of Good Hope, and fourteen degrees south of the Portuguese settlement of Benguela. It is a small rocky islet, about two and a half miles from the mainland of Africa, on which, at a distance of half a dozen miles, is a native settlement, and from the inhabitants giving the name of Ichaboe to the island, it has been retained by the same title in our own language.

**THE CULTIVATION OF THE PARSNIP** resembles that of the Carrot in every essential point. The land should be prepared as stated last week for the Carrot. Especial care should be taken in this, as in that case, to have a deeply cultivated soil. In the Channel Islands, where this root is largely grown, it is customary in the preparation of the land to use the large trench plough, and bury the manure—12 tons per acre of stable manure—12 or 14 inches deep. This is of course only practicable on deep soils and it is on such, whether light or heavy, that this root flourishes. Parsnip seed may be damped, mixed with sand, just as in the case of the Carrot, and drilled early in April at the rate of 4lbs. per acre, in rows on the flat, 18 inches apart. New seed only should be used. Colonel le Conteur informs us, in the *Journal of the English Agricultural Society*, that seed sown in 1838 would not vegetate in 1840, though soaked and sown in a greenhouse. The damping of the seed, though we have advantageously adopted this plan in the case of the Carrot, for the last three years, is to a certain extent hazardous. Seed thus sprouted, if sown on dry soil, is liable to be deprived of life. After having been thus treated it must not be sown till the land is damp. The summer culture of the Parsnip is just the same as that of the Carrot. An average weight of from 9 to 11 tons per acre is obtained of it in Jersey. We have not had much experience in the field culture of this root, but we are inclined to think that however superior it is to the Carrot in quality, i. e. per cwt., the superiority in the weight of this latter crop renders the Parsnip inferior to it per acre. It is most excellent food for Cows, imparting a rich flavour to the milk, and it possesses extraordinary feeding properties when given either to oxen or Pigs. It should be steamed for the latter; and when thus treated it is a nourishing food for poultry also.

**Pigs.**—The following will be found most effectual for curing pigs of the distemper :—One drachm of Tartar emetic in a spoonful of gruel, and two days afterwards four ounces of Epsom salts, and about the size of a hazel nut of nitre given in gruel; a string should be put round the upper jaw of the pig, and the head raised to prevent suffocation in giving the dose.—*Dublin Farmers Gazette*,