

already in so putrid a state that they could not be washed. Now, it is to be remembered that this is a case where the sets were apparently sound, having been prepared and selected with all the precaution which care and great skill could suggest; *that the crops did not show a sign of disease till very lately*; that many of the plants are still uninjured, although surrounded by dying companions; and that the evil is the same in all sorts of places, and under all circumstances. It rages in the open air, and has carried off its victims from the early peach house, second peach house, first melon pits, second melon pits, and hooped and matted beds. Manuring in various ways, and no manure, offer equally fatal results; and, as Mr. Barnes justly observes, although the decay of the potato may be prevented by skilful storing, yet *when restored to the open ground, disease once more makes its appearance in every form that has been written of.*"

It is in this impossibility of telling whether a crop is or is not to be diseased that the worst feature of the mischief now resides; for if we are to wait till the new crop is a foot or more high before we can tell whether it is safe, we not only lose the crop, but the use of the land for the season.

And now we must entreat our readers not to deceive themselves with the hope that disease has shown itself in Devonshire, only because it is a warm damp county, and that to the northward they will be safe. It must be remembered that it broke out originally in the warmest part of northern Europe, in the countries to the eastward, such as Germany, Holland, Belgium, and northern France; and that its westerly course was to all appearance connected with the state of the crops to be attacked. The appearance of the disease at Bicton, and in forcing-houses, is but a repetition of the phenomenon of last year. Moreover, notwithstanding the unwillingness of some sufferers to admit what is going on, the want of observation in others, and but a small part of this crop having yet been planted—nevertheless, we find proofs gathering around us in all directions. The following places have been already indicated:—

Cumberland.....1, open ground.  
Cheshire.....3, in forcing-houses.  
Anglesea.....1, in do  
Ireland.....3, Fermoy, Ballinglass, Portlaw, and report says more.

Norfolk.....1, in a house in the open ground.  
Hertfordshire 2, in frames.  
Middlesex.....2, in do.  
Sussex.....2, in do. and the open ground.  
Devonshire.....2, in do do do  
Shropshire...1, in do.  
Kent.....1, in do.  
Surrey.....1, in do.

But, if these facts are in themselves most alarming, how much more so do they become when connected with the evidence collected in the United States! From the first outbreak of the disorder among us, the attention of government was directed to the importance of obtaining information from other countries concerning the disease; and we have now been permitted by Lord Aberdeen to examine the whole of the consular returns relating to this object.

In Maine and New Hampshire it appears to have been first noticed in 1844, and to have become general in 1845. Mr. Peters, her Majesty's consul at Philadelphia, writes, December 30, 1845, that the disease was very general in Pennsylvania in 1843, and continued to prevail in 1844 and 1845, but only partially. Mr. Barclay, at New York, states, January 10, 1846, that the disease existed in that quarter in 1843, 1844, and 1845; and Mr. Grattan, the consul at Boston, reports it began in Massachusetts in 1843, increased in 1844, and became very general in 1845. So that if this murrain is to run its course here as it has in the United States, we have at least two years more to suffer its visitation; and, considering how fatal it proved last year, how early it appears now, and in how many different quarters, it is impossible not to dread that what is coming is worse than what has passed.

Nor does it appear, from the valuable documents now alluded to, that the Americans, with all their sagacity and scientific knowledge, have been able to discover any means of stopping its ravages. Lime, with them, as with us, has been much employed, and with no certain success.

Under these circumstances it is probable that in Great Britain, where land is too valuable to waste in great experiments, and people too closely packed to be able to bear the destruction of hundreds of acres of food for two successive years, potato cultivation will return to the gardens, and cease to be relied upon as an important source of food. And gardens are where it should have always remained. But while we feel it our duty to recommend that a better kind of crop should be substituted for the potato, we have also endeavoured to procure all possible information respecting the sources from which sound potatoes may be had; and we now produce, by permission of government, the following abstract of such European consular returns as elucidate this question.

An abstract of returns furnished to the Foreign Office by her Majesty's Consul in Europe, showing the state of the potato disease in their several Consulates.

Alicant..... No disease, but potatoes soapy, scarce, and dear.  
Bayonne.... Crop much diseased, unfit for use in many places.  
Barcelona.. No disease. Crop abundant.  
Boulogne... Crop diseased and defective to the extent of one-half or two-thirds.  
Brest..... do do do  
Bilboa..... Crop greatly affected.  
Bordeaux... Early crop sound. Later crop half lost from disease.  
Carthage... No disease: but carriage difficult and dear.  
Cadiz..... No disease: but none to be had.  
Cette..... do do do  
Christiana.. Disease partial, about Skin (Nov. 25.) Exportation prohibited.  
Calais..... Much disease; two-thirds lost.  
Corsica..... No disease. Good crop.  
Charente... Much disease in heavy lands; mostly sound in light sandy soil.  
Genoa..... No disease: none to be had.  
Galicia..... No disease: crop very abundant.  
Granville... Much disease; three-fourths lost.  
Havre..... Disease very general; half lost near Dieppe; nine-tenths near Rouen.  
Leghorn..... No disease: no supplies can be had now.  
Lisbon..... Crop diseased at Figueira and Coimbra. No appearance of it at Lisbon. Very few to be had Nov. 29. In the Figueira district disease so general that few proprietors have enough left for seed. The few potatoes affected in the neighbourhood of Lisbon were grown from seed received from England. Dec. 29.  
Marseilles.. No disease in Provence. Symptoms have manifested themselves in the neighbouring departments.  
Malaga.... No disease: few or none to be had.  
Nantes..... Disease considerable.  
Naples..... No disease; crop abundant and excellent.  
Oporto..... Disease in the districts near the Douro; thought to be contagious. In the Beira-alta, and neighbourhood of Oporto, an abundance; but now (Nov. 15), in many places of the Beira-alta, and Trás os Montes they are beginning to rot.  
Palermo..... No disease; none to be had; will not keep.  
Stockholm. Exportation prohibited.

It must be confessed that the prospects of potato growers are not improved by these important returns; for it is clear that no supply of seed can be expected at this season of the year from Mediterranean ports, where alone, with the single exception of Galicia, the crop is sound. No reliance can be placed on the Portuguese seed; and with the exception of north-west Spain, all the northern districts of Europe are evidently as badly off as ourselves, or worse.