



FACTS FOR THE FARMER.

MECHANICAL CONVEYANCE OF MANURE.

Manure is as necessary to successful farming as the engine to a steamship, or as fuel to a locomotive; and the amount of discussion on the economy of saving the materials and manufacture of manures, shows that their importance is well understood by intelligent cultivators. There is one part of their management and application, however, that seems in a great measure to have been overlooked, or at least underrated, and this is the saving of *mechanical labor* in its conveyance, while preparing and applying it.

Drawing manure is one of the heaviest and most costly of farm operations. The farmer who draws twenty loads of wheat, or thirty tons of hay, laborious as this may seem, performs but a small task in comparison with what he would yearly accomplish in the conveyance of manure; for every farm of one hundred acres will yield at least two hundred loads of the best manure if properly managed, and some may be made to double this amount. Hence it is no wonder that we often see huge piles of this life-element of farming, wasting in barn-yards through the summer unapplied.

But the farmer who makes manure in the ordinary imperfect manner, that is, by merely casting out into his yard the cleanings of stables mixed with the litter, added to the droppings of the cattle running at large, obtains but a small quantity in comparison with the skillful manager, who saves every thing by a large admixture of absorbents. If then, the more empty heap occasions too great a labor to draw out and apply, how important it becomes that the most careful management be devised, to economise as much as possible the cost of handling and carting the increased accumulations of the most improved process.

On small farms, where the fields to which the

manure is applied lie quite near the barn-yard, it may do to manufacture the compost heap in the stable-yard. But in most cases this will be a most expensive practice. The largest amount and the best manure must be made by not only collecting all the solid droppings mixed with straw or litter, with the liquid portions saved and added, but a large portion of peat, turf, loam, and other absorbents of a more solid character should enter largely into its composition. Now to cart a hundred loads of turf into the barn-yard from a remote part of the farm, and then to draw all this heavy bulk back again into the fields, is causing a vast amount of labor. Again,—the shovelling over and mixing of the compost heap, which is practiced with so much advantage by Europeans, cannot be thought of for a moment by our farmers who pay the present high wages. The intermixture resulting from drawing and spreading the heap, may generally be sufficient, but a more thorough execution of this work would be better.

The question therefore occurs, How may this labor of conveyance be reduced as much as possible?

We have found a most important means of saving labor, by forming the compost heap in the field where the manure will be required. Loam and turf are absolutely essential for the absorption and retention of the ammonia. Large quantities of turf may be obtained from fence corners, where otherwise it would be of little or no use; but on large farms, the more mucky portions of pastures may be obtained at less labor, by first plowing the sod. Let the manure from the yard, as it accumulates, be drawn out and spread a few inches in thickness, in a long and narrow strip, say from a few feet to a rod in width according to its quantity, and then be covered with a layer of turf (or loam) at least equally thick. A second layer of manure is applied and a second layer of turf until gradually