

When ready for harvesting it may be cut, either with the scythe or cradle; the cradle does best. It is then raked or gathered into small bundles, which are fastened by twisting the tops, and left to stand and dry on the field. It dries slowly, and should be quickly threshed, since there is danger of its heating. It threshes very easily. The chief value of the straw is for manurial purposes. It is a valuable addition to the dung-pit, or compost heap.

We must not omit to mention that buckwheat is very useful for bee forage. Its flowers contain a large quantity of honey, and though it is of inferior quality and dark coloured, yet coming as it does when bee pasturage is apt to be scant, it is of no small help to the bee-keeper in providing winter stores for his busy little workers. Every farmer should keep bees, and grow a small patch of buckwheat, if only for bee-pasture, in the fall.

The Value of Nightsoil.

We extract from the "Scottish Farmer" the following notice of the importance attached to this manure by the Chinese:

Dr Muecke has lately been writing to the *Adelaide Observer* in the following terms, on the value of nightsoil as a fertilizer:—

The second kind of manure is the nightsoil and certain parts of human or animal bodies. Davis, Fortune, and Hedde, say unanimously:—"It is quite impossible for Europeans to form an idea of the care with which the Chinese collect these excrements. To them this is the chyle to the earth, and to it alone they are indebted for the fertility of their country. The Chinese know nothing of private closets as we have them; but in the most convenient part of the dwellings they have earthenware vessels or cisterns, carefully lined with stoneware, and their ideas of usefulness entirely conquer their smelling organs. As Fortune says ("Tea Districts of China and India," vol. I, p. 24)—"That which is considered the greatest nuisance in every civilized city of Europe, is there looked upon with the greatest complacency by all classes—rich or poor and I am certain that nothing would surprise a Chinaman more than anybody complaining of the disagreeable odours arising from these cisterns. In large cities the excrements are condensed into powder and then formed into squares similar to bricks and forwarded to the most distant parts of the country. They are then softened in water and used in a fluid state like suds. The Chinaman does not manure the field but the plant, with the exception of rice. All animal or vegetable substances are collected carefully and turned into manure. Oily matters, horns and bones are valuable, also soot, and particularly ashes. The barbers save the shavings and cuttings from the beards and hair, and send them into the market, the quantity being very considerable from the millions of heads that are shaved and shorn daily. The Chinaman is also acquainted with the effects of gypsum and lime, and he often renews the flooring of his kitchen only to use the old as manure. (See Davis.) No Chinese farmer sows the seeds or cereals before it has been thoroughly soaked in suds and water, and has commenced to germinate. Experience has taught him that not only the development of the plant is thus advanced, but also that the seed is sheltered from insects. (See Davis.) During the summer months all sorts of vegetable shreds, chips or cuttings, &c., are mixed with grass, straw, turf, weeds, and soil, are then formed in heaps, dried, and ignited, so as to burn slowly for several days, and the whole is thus turned into a black mass. This manure is only used for the seed. When the time for sowing arrives, one man makes the holes, another follows and puts the seeds in, a third adds the black substance, and the young seed planted in this manner develops itself with such force that it is enabled to drive its roots through the firm soil and take up the elements it requires. (See Fortune.)

Eckeberg, in his reports to the Academy of Science in Stockholm, says the Chinese farmer sows the wheat in seed-beds, after it has been well soaked in suds from manure, very close, and transplants them afterwards to the fields. Sometimes the soaked seed is placed at once on the prepared fields about four inches apart. By this method they yield a hundred and twenty-fold corn and more, which rewards them amply for the labour and trouble spent over it. I can here close my quotations from China, as that which is already said is sufficient to explain and confirm my intention in describing a system of agriculture conformable with the laws of nature, so as to gain the highest possible produce, while the soil increases in fertility. The theory of manuring and the

truth of it are proved by the Chinese system perfectly just by this—that the acres of the Chinese farmer have retained their fertility undiminished and in lasting youth since Abraham, and the time when the first pyramid was built in Egypt, simply by giving compensation for the elements of fertility which have been taken from the fields by their produce with the help of a manure of which the greatest part is lost to our agriculture. "In Italy, especially in Nice and Genoa, the sewerage is sold by lodging-house keepers and house owners to the farmers at about five francs (4s) per annum per person. There is a difference made in the prices according to the mode of living of the various inhabitants. For the Protestants they have to pay one franc (10d) more than for the Catholics, and that of the monks of the Minorise Convent is not worth the carriage, because they live on very low victuals."

Facts for Farming.

There are some things in farming that are established, namely:

That manure must be applied, not only to get up land, but to keep it up. That wet soil must be drained, either by ditching or otherwise. That subsoiling is good. That grain should be sown earlier than it generally is; that it should be harvested earlier than it is done; that grass should be cut when in blossom; and never when ripe, unless for seed. That our soil is not sufficiently worked, especially in hood crops; that stirring the soil and keeping it well pulverised, is a partial guard against drouth. That the most advantageous grain for horses is the oat; that it improves fodder to cook or steam it. That warm shelter in winter saves fodder, and benefits stock. That the best blood is the most profitable. That there is much advantage in selecting the best seed, the earliest matured and the plumpest. That in-and-in breeding is not good in close and consecutive relationship, but must be carried on by foreign infusion of the same blood. That warm quarters and good treatment are necessary in winter to produce eggs from most hens. That top-dressing grass lands should be done with fine, well-rotted manure, applied close to the ground. That it is, in general, best to sell produce as soon as ready for market. That blackberries require rich soil; strawberries and raspberries vegetable mould—such as rotten leaves, chip manure, &c. That more lime should be used. That salt, in some cases, is good for land—also plaster, the phosphates, guano, &c. That fall ploughing is the best for clay lands; that land should not be ploughed wet. That young orchards should be cultivated. That compost heaps are a good institution. That clay and lime, rather than animal manure, be employed in raising fruit. That manure should be rotted before it is used. That agricultural papers are an advantage to the farmer. That a cultivated mind is requisite to high farming, and that a good reputation exerts a good influence on the farming community.—*Rural World*.

The Manufacture of Manure.

Many of our farmers complain that they cannot make enough manure, and I never yet have found a good one who has had too much. Now I think that if a farmer has hay enough there need be no difficulty in obtaining enough manure.

We see many of our barnyards constructed with escape holes in the wall along the lowest side of the yard, and from these holes a passer-by can scarcely fail to notice the very essence of the manure escaping. The most valuable portions of the manure are those which are soluble, and of course these are taken up by the water in its passage through the manure and out of the yard.

Not long since I was arguing with one of my neighbours upon the propriety of stopping up these holes in his barnyard wall, when he met my objection with the assertion that he could not keep his yard clean enough to keep cattle in. A farther investigation showed that his barn was not supplied with rain spouts, and consequently there was more water in the yard than fell there in direct descent. Yet this same farmer would complain that he "could not make manure enough," and this too when the most valuable portion of what he did make was escaping into the public road and into his neighbours' land.

If no more water finds its way into the yard than that which falls into it, there should be no difficulty in keeping it clean with the materials found on a common farm, such as coarse grass from the swamps and lowland, sods from the road side, tussocks from the meadows, whose removal, while it benefits the manure pile, also improves the appearance of the meadow. If these are all used up, then it will be time enough to complain of the difficulty of not being able to make enough manure.—*Cor. Germantown Telegraph*.

Lime as Manure.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER:

SIR,—Conversing the other day with a farmer from Berwickshire, he decried the use of lime as a manure, pronouncing it to be a myth; I have certainly seen the benefit of it when applied to sour land; as in Cornwall, on many farms, the fields were very much divided by great earth banks on which hedges were planted; hundreds of these fences were pulled down, and though the earth was beautifully fine, "fit for a parsley bed," as the saying is, yet from a rising ground you might trace the sites of these rugged fences; all that attempted to grow there were sickly, the land was sour; but when lime was applied, it became fertile. As I have no lack of limestone, and a super-abundance of hemlock on my farm, and as other manures are scarce and expensive, I would gladly avail myself of the experience of any one, who would write to THE CANADA FARMER, the result of his experiments in the use of lime as a manure. The facts to be come at are, on what soils will it be of most service; the quantity required; and if possible, the manner in which it acts? I have read a good many articles on the use of lime, but have never seen the results proved satisfactorily. T. S.

GEORGINA, Dec 1866.

SALT FOR PRESERVING FENCE POSTS.—A writer in the *Prairie Farmer* recommends the use of salt to preserve fence posts from rotting. He mentions the case of a neighbour whose fence posts, erected in this way, showed no signs of decay at the end of twenty-five years. He also adduces another instance, where two lines of fence had been put up as nearly alike in all respects as possible, except that in one case the posts were salted, and in the other they were not. At the end of eight years, these two lines of fence presented a marked difference, those posts which were not salted leaning in all directions, while those which were treated with salt stood firm and erect. The writer referred to gives the following directions for the process:—"Bore two holes in each post with an inch auger—one so that it will be about six inches under ground when set and the other about a foot above the surface—all the holes nearly full of salt and plug them up with short pins. To have the greatest effect posts should be salted and set while the timber is green, so as to prevent the sap from souring, which I think is the start of decay." As a further illustration of the preservative effect of salt on timber, he adduces the durability of old salt barrel staves, which may often be seen lying about for years, and seem almost indestructible.

PROTECTION TO WINTER WHEAT.—It is suggested by a Western farmer, says *The Maryland Farmer*, that wheat fields may be protected from the severe weather of winter by sowing oats with the wheat, or rather sowing oats first and covering them, and then follow in a day or two with wheat. It is thought the oats will help protect the wheat during the winter, disappearing, of course, in the spring. Another plan is to mulch the wheat, late in the fall, with fine manure, or lacking this, with a coating of straw. What effect either of these plans may have in protecting the wheat from the severity of the winter, we do not know. One or all of them might be tried on small lots of ground, and their comparative merits be tested at a trifling expense. As the country becomes divested of the forest trees the wheat fields are exposed to increasingly severe trials from wind and frost. Less snow falls now than formerly, and what does come is borne from the wheat fields by the winter blasts, which career over them since divested of the protection of surrounding forests.

Good fences always pay better than lawsuits with neighbours.

Query.—If you give two persons a seat in a cornfield, can this proceeding be called "setting them by the ears?"—*Punch*.