

## AGRICULTURAL.

[FOR THE BEE.]

Mr. HORTON.—SIR, A general cry is beginning to prevail throughout the county of another failure in the potatoe crop. This is discouraging to the husbandman. He toils several weeks in preparing the ground and depositing his seed in it, and finally his farm denies him a return. But we should never despair, and instead of magnifying our little losses, let us compare our condition with that of those in older countries, and we will discover many, very many comforts enjoyed by ourselves which are wholly denied to others.

The primary cause of failure in the potatoe crop is *unripe seed*. Secondary causes frequently operate to hasten its destruction after the seed has been deposited in the ground; such as planting the seed on unfermented manure, or in *very* wet land, but more frequently when planted in *dry* sandy soils. To go into particulars, to prove the position I have taken, would be merely a reiteration of facts formerly advanced in support of my theory. I shall however, hastily explain a few circumstances which seem to perplex many persons in attributing the failure to diseased seed.

One man will tell you that after cutting a large heap of seed, he plants a portion and leaves the remainder until the following day; the result is, the former day's planting grows, and the latter fails. Why? Because by cutting the seed and placing it in a heap, he accelerated fermentation, which must inevitably destroy its vegetating qualities.

Another person says one end of his field grows, while the other produces nothing. Where this is the case the end that succeeds is more moist than the other, which causes vegetation to commence immediately. In the part that fails, the potatoe is placed in a dryer soil, and receiving no immediate moistness from the earth, the disease is not impeded, and the seed quickly putrefies.

Another individual will tell you that he put his seed on the ground when dry, but left a portion of it uncovered until the following day. A heavy dew fell during the night, and the result was, the first day's covering failed while the second vegetated. The cause is similar to that in the last mentioned case: the dew moistened the soil which effected immediate vegetation.

Where there is a *partial* failure over a field, the manure is frequently instrumental, in producing it, as fermentation will be accelerated in the seed when placed on fermenting manure. In some cases however, a partial failure will arise from the varied state of the seed when planted; some sets may rot immediately, while the more sound ones will vegetate, although they are never very vigorous.

Other instances of total or partial failure frequently occur, which lead superficial observers to disconnect the cause wholly from the seed, and attribute it to some other source; but I have never known an instance of a failure that could not be traced in its primary cause to the diseased state of the seed when deposited in the ground.

The reader will ask why the potatoe is not as ripe now and as fit for seed as formerly? and in answer to this, I may state that it is not permitted to remain in the ground long enough to come to maturity. Although it requires as much time as formerly to come to maturity, this vegetable is generally two or three weeks later planted, and nearly as much sooner gathered in the fall, than it was ere failures were known. This is all that is required to prevent it from being ripe; and although the coldness of the winter season preserve the potatoe from undergoing any change

then, yet, on the approach of warmer weather, it speedily ferments, and finally putrefies.

Many failures, however, might be prevented by a proper management of the seed. Those potatoes that appear ripest when gathered in the fall, should be selected for seed, and instead of being placed in a large heap in the warmest part of the cellar, deposited in a dry, cold apartment—not so cold however as to cause the potatoe to freeze, which it will do much sooner than if perfectly ripe. Let them remain here until spring, and plant them *without being cut*, as early as the season will admit. The advantages of planting whole seed, as has been recently fully proved in Scotland, are not only a surer growth, but a much more abundant return than is obtained from seed that has been cut. MILVILLE.

P. S. It would afford me both pleasure and profit to hear "Old Rusticus" on this subject.

[From the New England Farmer.]

## FARMERS' WORK.

MANURE.—The celebrated Lord Erskine, in a speech delivered at one of the annual sheep-shearings at Holtham, in England, made the following remarks.

"If we consider the subject of manure, we shall perceive one of the most striking beauties and benefits of divine ordination, and of that wisdom with which we are blessed a thousand ways without knowing it. This very substance, had it been useless, must have accumulated in heaps intolerably noisome and perpetually pestilential, but by the blessings of Providence it is every man's interest to remove those otherwise perpetually increasing mountains of filth, and by decomposition, in various ways, in a great measure concealed from us, it gives increase to our fields, and adds to our means of industry, and the reward of the husbandman."

One of the principal indications of a good farmer may be found in the skill and diligence which he displays in saving and making the most of every substance which will improve his soil, and increase his crops by furnishing food for his plants. The following from the Farm Reports of Kyle, in Ayrshire, Scotland, will shew what attention is paid to collecting and applying the farmer's indispensable, by enlightened cultivators on the other side of the Atlantic:

"To increase the manure raised on a farm is a constant aim. A large portion of the straw is consumed by the cattle and horses, and no hay is ever sold. A considerable quantity of vegetable matter is collected from plantations and waste places, and with this, and the refuse of straw, the farm court and the approaches to it are kept littered so as to collect the droppings of the cattle and horses. The whole is occasionally carried off to the dung heap and new litter applied. It is surprising how much dung may be produced by constantly collecting all refuse, which if allowed to lie would soon disappear. The horses are never allowed to pasture from the first of June to the end of October; they feed in the house on green food—red clover, rye and vetches. The calves which are raised are also fed in the same way in a yard, and in the course of the pasturing season convert a great deal of vegetable matter into excellent manure. There are always too at this season a few pigs fed entirely on whey; and by this means much is made even in summer. There is no danger of dung made by animals in yards overheating in the warmest season, but without considerable precaution stable litter will then be very soon consumed away. For the purpose of preventing its rapid fermentation, peat moss was for some years used and regularly mixed with layers; but earth of any kind, or road scrapings, will be found to effect this pur-

pose, and in winter the gleanings of cow houses will be found to answer the purpose. What is made in spring and summer is taken to the field as often as possible, put up into heaps over which the horses and carts pass, and then well covered over with earth."

"Farmers might make valuable additions to their manure by digging a hole at a convenient distance from their kitchen, about three or four feet deep, and sufficiently wide to form a common receptacle for the various matters originating in and about the house, extending a paved gutter from the kitchen to it, to conduct soap suds and other useless slops into it. When it becomes offensive, the offending matter should be covered with earth. That which was thrown up in digging the hole may be applied as long as it lasts. Care should be taken to prevent the water from without from running into it. The receptacle may be hid from sight by placing an evergreen hedge around it, leaving an opening at the back for putting in and taking out the contents."

LAMBS—Lambs should always be left at home when sheep are to be washed, as they are saved much fatigue where the distance is considerable, and many accidents incident to the pen, crowded as they are at such times; besides the advantage of having the sheep go directly home without any trouble, after washing. Ticks are very injurious to sheep of all ages, but more so to lambs, as they have the trouble of them in summer; the ticks leaving the old worms for a more secure retreat on the lambs. To destroy ticks, I take 10 or 12 lbs. of tobacco stalks for one hundred lambs, (which I buy of the tobacconist for as much pence,) and at the time I shear sheep, put it into a tub sufficiently large to dip them in, and fill it with water, and let it soak six or eight days, when I get up my lambs, mark, dock, and alter them, then dip them into the tobacco juice; this not only kills the ticks, but is serviceable to the wounds made by docking & altering, and is all the remedy I ever apply to such wounds. Dipping the lambs in that way two successive years, will destroy all the ticks in the flock.

The method of docking lambs by taking hold of the tail and cutting it off while the animal is struggling to escape is very cruel, as it leaves the bone longer than the skin, which not only makes it very sore but induces the flies to work at it, which endangers the life of the lamb. My method is, to have a man take up the lamb, and place the tail bottom upwards on the square edge of a block; then with a large knife I crowd the skin which is loose up to the body, and strike the knife with a hammer, which leaves nothing to impede the shears, more than corduroy, and is attended with less trouble. Lambs that have much wool on them, should be sheared about the pouch to prevent the blood and wool from becoming so hard as to obstruct the discharge of matter from the wound. Lambs should be weaned the last of August, and have a good chance for feed till November; then oats in the bundle two or three months, as their condition may require. Vermont Chronicle.

HEALTH PRESERVING PRECAUTIONS.—Decayed and rotting vegetables, particularly cabbages, beef-brine and other similar substances in cellars, &c. are often the unsuspected causes of disease. Every housekeeper, especially at this time of the year, should carefully inspect his premises, and see that nothing offensive or unwholesome is left to pollute the atmosphere in or near his residence. The carcasses of dead lambs, cats, rats, &c. instead of being suffered to poison the atmosphere, and introduce disease and death into the family of the farmer, should be covered