

must precede the production of fuel from the lower beds of the sphagnum bogs. I very much fear that the want of success which has so far attended the working of peat bogs for fuel has been owing to the fact that the true nature of the upper parts of the "white turf" or "bastard peat" or moss litter as we call it was not taken into consideration. I am convinced that the way to success lies first in the utilization of the moss litter for sanitary and agricultural purposes. Even in speaking of that article I must, for want of time, restrict my remarks to two of its applications, both of which tend to the enrichment of arable land.

1. It is used in town and country all over Europe for bedding animals, and keeping the stables clean and inodorous. It is thus a substitute for straw than which it possesses better absorbent qualities. Its price is seldom higher than that of straw with which it competes vigorously. Here in Ottawa it sells at about double the price and consequently the trade in it is not very brisk.

2. It is used as an absorbent, deodoriser and disinfectant for all manner of domestic refuse, including human excreta and kitchen offal. It has also been found convenient to apply it in slaughter houses and factories, whose products are of an evil smelling sort. Anyone can easily convince himself of its deodorising qualities by mixing a little of it with kitchen refuse in summer time, by which means the latter is kept inoffensive until removed. Not only does moss litter, on account of its porous, spongy character, take up obnoxious gases, but it can also absorb from 10 to 16 times its weight of water. Drying by means of it, applied to organic substances, is one of the best plans for arresting their decomposition. (The lecturer next described the nature and constituents of moss litter the production of humus from it and the advantages of the latter in agriculture.)

It will scarcely answer in these days of steam and electricity to say that "there is nothing new under the sun," but so far as regards agriculture, the oldest of the arts, I believe that modern investigation reveals very little not previously known. Take the acquisition of the nitrogen of the atmosphere by the leguminosae, a fact now universally accepted by agriculturists, that seems to have been known to the ancients and a passage in Pliny shows that the Romans based their practice on it. Neither is there anything entirely new in the application of moss litter as an absorbent and deodoriser. When Professor Macoun was collecting his specimens of sphagnum