

easy to estimate firstly their relative value, if protein alone, the only nutritive part, is regarded; and this is shown in the following table:—

	lbs.
1. Cabbages	1456.0
2. Beet	1020.0
3. Carrots	655.2
4. Jerusalem Artichokes	599.0
5. Beans	581.2
6. Parsnips	561.8
7. Turnips	442.4
8. Potatoes	433.7
9. Peas	399.4
10. Wheat	218.4
11. Barley	205.9
12. Oats	187.8
13. Buckwheat	177.5

In the next place, we ought to consider what they are worth if the other matters, which, although not literally nutritious, nevertheless render them fit for food, are taken into account. The following table shows their relative value, if organic matters of all kinds is taken:—

	lbs.
1. Beet	8332.5
2. Cabbage	5640.0
3. Jerusalem Artichokes	5487.0
4. Parsnips	5204.0
5. Carrots	3783.4
6. Turnips	3752.0
7. Potatoes	3487.3
8. Beans	1560.2
9. Barley	1520.1
10. Peas	1417.1
11. Oats	1403.5
12. Wheat	1402.8
13. Buckwheat	1120.0

The great value of a cabbage crop is here apparent; for it is evident that if land is planted with drumhead cabbages, two feet apart, and they can be made to weigh 8 lbs. each, a greater amount of food will be obtained than from any crop, except beet, which cabbages beat in nutritive matter, but give place to in absolute quantity. Beet, however, being less palatable and saleable, except for cattle, than cabbages, must rank lower. Then we find what enormous quantities of food may be derived from carrots, parsnips, Jerusalem artichokes, and beans, each of which ranks above potatoes in whatever way they are regarded. As to Jerusalem artichokes, they appear to be far beyond the potato in real value, although, perhaps, not equally palatable; for, in addition to the excellent quality of their roots, to which alone reference is made in these tables, they will grow in the poorest soil, require no storing during winter, and their coarse woody stems make excellent fuel, or may be employed for cattle food whether green or dry.

Mr. Forsyth, of Alton Towers, speaks thus of the Jerusalem artichoke:—

"I have grown the Jerusalem artichoke so as to produce a greater weight of tubers than the ash-leaved kidney potatoes generally produce; and in addition to this, it yielded of eatable stems a standing crop of 12 feet. It bears frost on the tuber with impunity; it is full of eyes, buds, or sets, more so than potatoes; it requires rich land and plenty of sun and air, as it is notoriously late in forming its tubers. I have cultivated it as food for game; pheasants devour it greedily in winter, and as the frost does not affect it, it requires no further attention than to be scattered in the covers. I have a good deal to say regarding the value of this plant for agriculture, but your columns are too crowded with the potato question to admit of its being entered upon fully—suffice it to say, that it is a wholesome vegetable of the easiest culture, not subject to any disease, although it never gets good usage, and I think there are few gardens of any note that could not supply a good stock of it, if it were locked up from the rubbish, among which its lot is generally cast. In growing it for the tubers, the stems must be topped at 3 feet, and it is only when young, that cattle could eat the stems; it is a sure cropper, and consequently may be relied on,

and can be used, (if better is not to be had) as food for man; and if it fails in this, it will fatten pigs, and feed milch cows."

Of course we would not have anybody crop his land exclusively with any one of these things; they will be most valuable when made to form the basis of a cottager's husbandry, as, for example, in some such manner as that proposed by Mr. Stratton, of Eastington, near Stroud, namely, that a part of the land be immediately planted with hollow-crowned parsnip and carrots, the remainder with early peas, reserving a small portion for the purpose of sowing as soon as possible, some Savoy cabbage, winter greens, &c. &c., so that when the peas are harvested, a portion of the land may be planted with the same, and the remaining part with turnips. The peas, he observes, will be nutritious food during winter; and should there be an objection as to boiling them, that may be overcome by first boiling them in water with a small portion of soda, from which they must be strained before using for soup. But these are matters which all intelligent cultivators can judge of for themselves, and to which we may perhaps direct attention hereafter.

THE POTATO DISEASE.

We wish we could this week say to our readers—there is not so much cause for alarm concerning the next potato crop, and the anticipations of its impending ruin are unfounded. On the contrary, every new fact which comes to light renders the danger more apparent, and we must repeat our warning that there is no certainty that any English or Irish potatoes will be fit for seed. That some will prove good is very probable; we do not in the least doubt that many persons will have again sound crops; but in the present state of our knowledge it is quite impossible to say who, because sound sets cannot be distinguished from unsound ones, and therefore the cultivation of the potato is literally reduced to a game of chance.

Mr. Barnes, of Apley-park, assures a contemporary that he has lost his ash-leaved kidneys, but he found watering with lime-water put a stop to the progress of the disease. Mr. W. Wicker, of Somerhill, near Tonbridge, has sent a young potato, of advanced growth, exhibiting the disease in some intensity. "It was grown in a potato-pit, the bed made of leaves in the usual way, with 10 inches of soil on the top (a compost made three years back for vine-borders.) The seed was saved from potatoes grown in frames last May, and packed securely before disease appeared."

Mr. Robert Fish, gr. to Colonel Sowerby, at Putteridgebury, finds "a sixth of his frame potatoes attacked;" they were once very vigorous and healthy; now the old sets are decaying, and the points of the leaves and stems are dying black. "All the sets had been greened previously to planting."

At Farnham Castle, in Surrey, Mr. Butcher has a pit of potatoes, 16 ft. by 8 ft., all destroyed by the disease of last year. The sets when planted appeared quite sound, and went on very promising till the stems were about one foot high.

Even those who have planted their potatoes in the autumn are, we fear, in no better position than their neighbours, for, although in some places the autumn-planted sets are sound at present, as, for instance, those in heavy London clay, and the "Silverskins," near Taunton, yet we have no guarantee for their producing healthy plants. On the contrary, Mr. Barnes' most recent observations show that near Sidmouth, the new crop in the open ground, all planted in the autumn "from selected sound seed, and one lot in a beautiful pulverised piece of ground where an old plantation had been grubbed up, where a potato has never before been planted," is so entirely attacked that Mr. Barnes failed to discover one sound shoot among hundreds that he examined in the forenoon of March the 2d. Every form of the mischief was showing itself "ten times more than among the forced potatoes." And in the latter from Bicton, many of which have been submitted to our inspection by the order of Lady Rolle, and were exhibited last Tuesday at the meeting of the Horticultural Society in Regent-street, the old sets were