

AGRICULTURAL.

[From the New England Farmer.]

CULTURE OF POTATOES.

From some experiments which were made by J. Withlaw, Esq., given in detail in the N. E. Farmer, these two important facts were made apparent: 1st, Large potatoes are better for seed than small ones; 2d, It is best to cut off the butt and top end from each potato, and cut the middle pieces into quarters before planting.

Mr Knight, the famous English horticulturist, has found, that for a late crop small sets [seed potatoes] may be used; because the plants of the late varieties always acquire considerable age before they begin to generate tubers [new potatoes]; but for an early crop, he recommends the largest seed potatoes; and he has found that these not only afford very strong plants, but also such as readily recover when injured by frost, for, being fed by a copious reservoir beneath the soil, a re-production of vigorous stems and foliage soon takes place, when those first produced are destroyed by frost or other cause. He adds—"When the planter is anxious to obtain a crop within the least possible time, he will find the position in which the tubers are placed to vegetate, by no means a point of indifference, for these being shoots or branches, which have grown thick instead of elongating, retain the disposition of branches to propel the sap to their leading buds or points most distant from the stems of the plants of which they once formed parts. If the tubers be placed with their leading buds upwards, a few very strong and very early shoots will be produced; and not only the earliness but the quality of the produce in size will be much affected."—[Hort. Trans. vol. iv. p. 415.]

McMahon advises to cut seed potatoes a week before planting, in order that the wounds should have time to form a dry crust; for, if planted immediately after being cut, they imbibed too much moisture, many of them rot, and the rest are greatly weakened thereby. Some advise to wet seed potatoes, and roll them in pulverized plaster of Paris, immediately before planting.

Dr Cooper, in the last Philadelphia edition of *Witch's Domestic Encyclopedia*, observes "the best method [with regard to seed potatoes] appears to be this: choose your potatoes for planting of a moderate size, rather large than small, for there is no good reason to be assigned for breeding from diminutive parents; cut your potato into sets, two eyes to a set: throw away, without hesitation, into the hog-trough, all inferior and diminutive eyes, choosing your sets from the middle of the potato; do not cut the potato down the middle."

Dr Deane observes, that if dung be used in raising potatoes, it may be spread before the last ploughing, or else laid under the sets. The latter method will give the largest crop. Dung laid under the sets will produce more than if laid above them, as Mr. Wynn Baker proved by actual experiments. The feeding roots should go into the manure, not directly into the hungry earth below; and therefore need some loose earth to extend themselves into.

Mr. Loudon observes "the best manure for the potato appears to be littery farm yard dung, and the best mode of applying it immediately under the potato sets. Any manure, however, may be applied, and no plant will bear a large dose of it, or thrive on coarser or less prepared manure; even dry straw rushes, or spray (decayed leaves) of trees may be used with success."

The worm and grub attack potatoes. Loudon observes, that the only remedies against those destroyers are change of seed and soil. It has been said, however, that sifting quick

lime and unslacked ashes over the hills soon after planting, will preserve against these insects. Care must, however be taken not to apply either of these substances to the sets or roots when planted, lest they corrode them. It is recommended to scatter a handful of plaster of Paris over each hill, immediately after the first and second hoeing.

PASTURING STOCK.

Do not turn your cattle to grass too early in the spring. Dr. Deane was of opinion that the 20th of May was, in our climate (New England) quite early enough to permit cattle to go to pasture; and some farmers think it best to keep working oxen and horses to hay &c. at least till the first of June. It is not right to turn all sorts of cattle into pastures together. Milch cows, working oxen, and fattening beasts should have the first feeding of an enclosure. Afterwards sheep and horses. When the first lot has been fed off, it should be shut up, and the manure which has been dropped should be beaten to pieces and well scattered. Afterwards the second pasture should be treated in the same manner, and the rest in course, feeding the wettest pasture after the driest, that the soil may not be too much broken up by the cattle's feet.

Dr. Deane observed, that "something considerable is saved by letting all sorts of grazing animals take their turns in a pasture. By means of this, nearly all the herbage produced will be eaten; much of which would otherwise be lost. Horses will eat the leavings of horned cattle: and sheep will eat some things that both the one and the other leave."

"Let the stock of a farmer be greater or less, he should always have at least four enclosures of pasture land. One enclosure may be fed two weeks, and then shut up to grow. Each one will recruit well in six weeks; and each will have this time to recruit. But in the latter part of October, the cattle may range through all the lots unless some one may become too wet and soft. Feeding pastures in rotation is of greater advantage than some are apt to imagine. One acre, managed according to the above directions, will turn to better account, some say who have practised it, than three acres in the common way."

An English writer says, in turning out horses to grass in the spring, it is usual to choose the forenoon of a fine day to do it in; the natural consequence is, the horse fills his belly during the sunshine and lies down to rest during the cold of the night, thereby probably exposing himself to disorders. In some parts of Yorkshire, a better practice prevails; the horse is turned out at bed-time: the consequence is, he eats all night, and sleeps in the sunshine of the next day."

It will not be proper, when you have turned your cattle to grass, to overlook or neglect them. You should see every animal every day, if you rise an hour before the sun for that purpose.

The bottom of an old hay stack is said to be excellent manure for pasture land, as besides the nourishment it affords it contains a quantity of grass seeds, which furnishes a new set of plants. It should never be suffered to mix with manure for grain, or corn lands, as it will cause them to be overrun with grass and other plants, which though useful in a pasture, are weeds in arable land.

Prepare seeds for Planting.—Not only Indian corn, but peas, oats, buckwheat, and probably most other seeds are benefitted by wetting them in water, and then rolling them in plaster of Paris previous to planting.

Pasture for Swine.—A lot of land well seeded down to clover is wanted by good cultivators for pasturing swine. The quantity of

land should be so proportioned to the number of swine that they may keep grass from going to seed. This will prevent waste, and the shorter the grass is the sweeter it will be, and the more pleasant food to the animals for which it is destined. The pasture should have a good supply of water, and running water is to be preferred to still water, but the latter is better than none. Hogs should not be permitted to run in their summer pasture till about the first of May, and they should be well ringed, or the gristle of their noses shaved off before they are allowed that liberty.

Potatoes for Swine.—Select a warm early piece of ground, near your hog-pen, of about a quarter of an acre, more or less, and having made it rich with hog or horse manure, plant it with early potatoes, which will probably answer to begin to dig in July. These will, especially if steamed or boiled, be found useful in bringing forward fattening hogs before Indian corn is ripe.

From the Yankee Farmer.

BUGGY PEAS.—Several farmers have informed us that they have completely destroyed bugs in peas by pouring on them a sufficient quantity of boiling water to cover them, and letting them remain a few hours before sowing. The peas will be injured if they remain long in the water before they are sown. The hot water will cause the peas to vegetate much sooner, and on that account it may be well to apply it to peas that are not buggy, when it is desirable to forward their growth. Peas that are not buggy, or those in which the bugs are destroyed, and sowed near others that are buggy, will, from that cause, be liable to be injured by bugs. Some would suppose that boiling water would destroy the vital principle of peas, and so it probably would if a few peas were put into a large quantity of boiling water; but if there be barely enough to cover the peas, they will cool the water considerably before it penetrates the peas.

BOTS IN HORSES.—SYMPTOMS.—Stamping forcibly on the ground with either of his fore feet and frequently striking at his belly with his hind ones. Belly projected and hard—shows symptoms of uneasiness, such as groaning and looking back towards his side laying down, &c.

Cure.—Take of bees wax, mutton tallow and sugar, each eight ounces, and put them into one quart of new milk, then warm the composition until it is melted. Then put it into a bottle, and give it just before the wax begins to harden. About two hours after give physic. The bots will be discharged in large numbers, each piece of wax having some of them sticking to it.—*Barre Gaz.*

CHEMISTRY APPLIED TO AGRICULTURE.—It is stated that the celebrated chemist Lavoisier cultivated 230 acres of land in La Vendee on chemical principles, in order to set a good example to the farmers.

His mode of culture was attended with so much success, that his crops amounted to a third more than those which were produced by the usual method: and in nine years his annual produce was doubled. Yet the generality of our yeomanry would as soon think of studying Hebrew as the elementary principles of chemistry.

VITAL PRINCIPLE OF SEEDS.—A small portion of the Royal Park of Bushy was broken up some time ago, for the purpose of ornamental culture, when immediately several flowers sprang up, of the kinds which are ordinarily cultivated in gardens; this led to an investigation, and it was ascertained that that identical spot had been used as a garden not later than the time of Oliver Cromwell, more than one hundred and fifty years before.—*Monthly Mag.*