

In our own practice, for many years, we have adhered to a method as nearly consistent with these principles as possible. There have been occasions when this was not possible, and we have endeavored to meet the needs of the case by top-dressing our wheat crop afterward. We must confess that it has been only when we have spread well-rotted manure upon the oat stubble, or in some cases upon the clover stubble after a crop of clover-seed, and have ploughed it in with a moderate furrow never more than four or five inches, and have cross ploughed and harrowed before sowing, that we have reaped our best crops. Top-dressing has been a failure in our experience, and the early starvation of the plants has never been remedied by this expedient.

For spring planting, whether for corn, potatoes, or turnips, it has been abundantly shown that no certain rule can be laid down. It depends greatly upon the character of the soil whether it is best to manure in the fall or the spring. Few farmers have any choice in this. It is the manure made in the winter that goes to make the spring crops. But we have found upon clay soils, which are retentive of manure, that it will pay to spread it as it is made, whether before the snow has fallen and covered the ground, or afterward. For early potatoes, or for garden crops, we have found it greatly the best to spread the manure in the fall and cover with the plough, leaving the land rough until spring, when the cultivator will quickly level the ground and mingle the manure with it. For later planted crops, manure spread as made during the fall and winter, even upon the snow, and left until the usual time for ploughing in the spring, has been the most effective with us. But upon lighter soils we have not found it advisable to spread manure for spring crops until a short time previous to ploughing for them. The only exception to this rule as to light soils, has been in the case of a clover sod which is to be ploughed for corn in the spring. Then the earliest application of manure possible produces a heavy growth of clover to be ploughed under, and a clover sod is the best fertilizer for corn that we know of. — *N. Y. Times*

Small Farms.

The reaction against the once dominant belief in the superior advantages of large farms over small is rapidly gaining ground. The large holdings are losing ground in a double sense. The French Revolution established the principle of peasant proprietorship so firmly in France that neither Bonaparte nor Bourbon has dared to disturb it. The principle has lately obtained some scant recognition in Germany. In Italy the vast estates of the Church have been sold under the hammer in many small lots, although each foot of ex-eclesiastical property is weighted with the Papal curse upon the purchaser.

In England the land question is a great one. John Stuart Mill was an earnest advocate of small farms. He traced the extinction of the English yeomanry, whose cloth-yard arrows won Cressy and Agincourt, to the absorption of small holdings by large. Many pages of his "Political Economy" are devoted to a reasoned eulogy of the peasant proprietorship of France. His praises have lately been justified by the enormous investments made by the peasantry, who hold half the soil of France, in M. Thiers' national loans. The corresponding class in England — so far as there is such a class — has not a penny in the funds. The strike of agricultural laborers has turned English opinion to this question again. Mr. W. T. Thornton has taken advantage of the fact to re-issue his "Plea for Peasant Proprietorship," first published in 1843. It is a strong plea.

Mr. Thornton shows by statistics that small farms yield better crops to the acre than large ones. This, indeed, is a dictate of common sense. The smaller the farm the greater care exerted upon it. Turner said he mixed his colors with brains, and therefore produced great paintings. The rule holds good with potatoes as well as with pictures. The average yield of an English wheat field is 26½ bushels. In the Channel Islands, which have a light soil ill adapted for wheat, but which have small farms, the average product is from 32 to 40 bushels.

The soil of Flanders was originally a coarse, rich, silty soil, particularly unsuitable for wheat. Nevertheless, the average product is 38 bushels. The small farms of Flanders yield 41 to 60 bushels of barley to the acre. The large farms of England yield from 33 to 36. Rome was once a prosperous agricultural centre. The people were "divorced from the soil," and Rome became "a vast pauper Warren." England has changed her yeomanry into paupers. All her poor could be maintained by agriculture, if the land were only to be got. On the other hand, in France, according to *The Spectator*, "in many parts of the country pauperism is almost unknown."

The habits of thrift inculcated by land owning have checked the reckless multiplication of families. Conservatism runs with land. The peasantry of France is the one anti-revolutionary element in the country. The system promotes avarice, but it is better for the poor to be misers than spendthrifts.

The proposal to allot an acre or two to each agricultural laborer at a fair rent, and allow him finally to buy the allotment at a fair price, has not been well received by English land owners. One of the Queen's Counsel, Mr. Rodwell, has denounced it as "the rankest possible communism." This is a curious thing for a man who lives within twelve hours of Paris to say. A very few land owners have put this frightfully communistic theory into practice. Lord Spencer has started his laborers with an acre a piece.

It is worth while for American farmers to consider whether they have not too much land on their hands. Too many of them have accumulated acres and mortgages together. By abandoning the foolish attempt to outstrip each other in acreage, and by concentrating their work on comparatively small areas, they might make more money in the end. If they cannot sell their surplus land, they might lease it to their present employees, and so aid others while aiding themselves. If they can get as much wheat from 76 acres as they can get now from 125, why should they carry the dead weight of the extra 50? — *Chicago Tribune*.

Fertilizers for Wheat.

No doubt many farmers are just now endeavoring to make up their minds what to use as a manure for wheat. Some have used their yard manure for corn and need something for the wheat, and others have used their yard manure for the wheat, but have not enough to cover the whole field, and are compelled to finish out with something else. To the latter class, my advice would have been to spread the yard manure all over the field and then follow it up by a light dressing of some kind of fertilizer all over the manure. To both classes the question arises, "Which will be the best for the amount of money expended?" For several years I have been experimenting with compounds of my own mixing, and have, in my own opinion, attained to a moderate degree of success. The past season I have demonstrated the action of the following mixture: Bonedust, 3,000 lbs.; sulphate of potash, 1,000; sulphate of soda, 1,000; gypsum, 1,000. With a common watering pot dampen (not too wet) the bone, and thoroughly mix the soda and potash with it; let this be done for five or six weeks before the mixture is needed, and have the pile shoveled over at least once each week; just before applying add the plaster; the caustic soda and potash will divide the particles of bone, and although I have no right to claim any chemical change, yet I have found the mixture not only cheap but also effective. — *Cor. Country Gentleman*.

GRANARIES. Do not forget to clean out granaries before putting in grain. Look out for mouse and rat holes, and secure all thoroughly from future depredations. A dollar expended now may save fifty. — *Ohio Farmer*.

DRAINING. Many places too wet at other seasons can now be drained without trouble. Sink ditches from two and a half to three feet deep, and make the drains of loose stone. Tiles, of course, are preferable where they can be had at moderate cost. — *Ohio Farmer*.

FFW FARMERS realize the value of soil as a manure. From experiments recently made by Prof. Kelsie, of Michigan Agricultural College, it was shown that there are more than a hundred tons of vegetable matter to the acre of heavy greenward. — *Ohio Farmer*.

WEEDS. These are rapidly ripening now under hot suns, and unless destroyed soon, will deposit their crop of seed to cause future trouble. In open spaces mow them down with the machine. Clean out the fence corners with a brush scythe. Nothing makes a farm look better than clean fence corners, and vice versa. — *Ohio Farmer*.

PROPAGATION OF POTATOES BY CUTTINGS. Potatoes of large size are said to be produced by a monk in France by cutting two side shoots from each stalk when it is five to seven inches high, and setting them in good, rich, mellow garden soil. In a few days they send out roots, and form tubers about as early and in as large quantities as the original stalk, while the latter does not seem to be injured by the moderate pruning. The experiment also seems to have been successfully tried elsewhere previously. The plan may be found especially serviceable for the propagation of new and rare varieties for seed.

FRANCE has produced a new potato, which is creating considerable excitement as being far superior to any other kind. It is called Rein Blanche or White Queen. It is early, large, rich and mealy, and will probably reach us soon in small packages at high prices.

GRAIN WEEVILS. — Barns are not readily freed from weevils on account of the difficulty of reaching all their hiding places. But granaries are more easily rid of them. The walls and floors should be washed with boiling water or potash lye, and every crack thoroughly explored with a stiff broom dipped in it. Then the walls should be whitewashed with a thick coat, put on while hot. The windows should be covered with fine wire glass to keep out all insects.

AN INTERESTING AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT. — Agricultural readers will be interested in the result of the thirteenth year of an experiment in continuous corn growing upon a Hertfordshire farm. Mr. John Prouth, of Sawbridgeworth, has just sold his annual crop — straw, hay, grain, and all — to be taken off the farm, at the following extraordinary prices: — 324 acres of wheat, at an average of £10 17s. 7d. per acre; 60 acres of oats, at the rate of £9 15s. per acre; and 45 acres of clover, at £10 8s. per acre. There are, we believe, only three or four farms in England on which an attempt is made to grow corn on the same soil year by year, and it is important to note that Mr. Prouth has succeeded by means of steady cultivation and artificial manures in producing crops which are probably about the finest and most profitable in England, and that the farm under this system is said to have increased in value by more than 30 per cent.

EXTRAORDINARY YIELD. — As an evidence of the extraordinary productiveness of mountain soil, under intelligent cultivation, we state that Mr. Burwell, of Fiddletown, in this county, in the spring of 1873, planted the fifty-seventh part of an acre in his garden in onions, and gave them the same attention he did to other vegetables growing near by. From this small piece of ground Mr. B. gathered 1,540 pounds of onions, but few of them weighing less than one pound each. The crop was sold on the premises at 2½ cents per pound, being at the rate of \$2,194.50 per acre. The ground producing this extraordinary crop had nothing peculiar about it to distinguish it from any other soil in the vicinity, and, improbable as this statement may seem, yet its truth can be vouched for by every resident of Fiddletown. — *Andover (Cal.) Ledger*.

EXCELLENT MANURE FOR TURNIPS. — A correspondent of the *Loudon Times* writes from Alexandria: — "The other day, at Sakhara, I saw nine camels pacing down from the mummy pits to the bank of the river, laden with nets, in which were femora, tibia and other bony bits of the human form, some two hundred weight in each net on each side of the camel. Among the pits there were people busily engaged in searching out, sifting and sorting the bones which almost crust the ground. On inquiry I learned that the cargoes with which the camels were laden would be sent down to Alexandria, and thence be shipped to English manure manufacturers. They make excellent manure, I am told, particularly for Swedes and other turnips. The trade is brisk, and has been going on for years, and may go on for many more. It is a strange fate to preserve one's skeleton for thousands of years in order that there may be the fine Southdowns and Cheviots in a distant land! But Egypt was always a place of wonders."

POOR FARMING. — It is supposed that every man, be he farmer, mechanic, or merchant, conducts his business for at least a two fold purpose; first, to gain a comfortable living and surround himself with conveniences; and second, to lay up a competence for the future. We do not expect much of a mechanic whose tools are never in order, nor yet of the merchant who has little or nothing to sell. No more need we expect much of those farmers whose fences are down or overgrown with bushes; whose corn fields are grassy and unattended; who attempt more than they can do well; whose barns are open, and too soon empty; whose stock for the want of sheds and stalls have no protection except such as is afforded by the straw stack or barn, whose machinery rusts and rots in the winter storm, and who without thought seem to drift along, doing only that which seems to call loudest for their immediate attention. Year after year the same fields are taxed to produce the same crops until the life is worn out of them. Such men should consider themselves fortunate if their faithful farm afford them even a scanty living. Is this picture overdrawn? Cannot the reader recall the name of some farmer who is almost equally bad? In farming, as in any other branch of industry, success is insured only by constant care and intelligent forethought. — *Ex. Cor.*