

RYE IN A WILD STATE.

According to M. De Candolle, both history and botany agree in rendering it probable that wheat, barley, rye, and oats came originally from Asia, especially from the western and central regions of that continent. M. C. Koch, an eminent scientific traveller, affirms that he found Rye under circumstances, in Armenia, the Caucasus and Crimea, where it appears to be really spontaneous and native. On the mountains of Pont, at an elevation of 5,000 or 6,000 feet, he found Rye growing on a granite soil; it was thin and the ear about 1 to 2½ inches long, and no one remembered that it had ever been cultivated in the neighbourhood.

DEODORIZING POWERS OF CHARCOAL.

Charcoal, which consists principally of the chemical element, *carbon*, is known to possess a high power of absorbing gaseous bodies, and to act beneficially, in many cases, when applied to growing plants. Charcoal prepared from Irish peat, exhibits great disinfecting powers. One part of night soil mixed with two parts of charcoal, and ground together, as recently tried in London, yielded no disagreeable odour whatever. It affords an admirable means of disinfecting cess pools. It has been found successful after careful experiments with many different manures. This is a property which will doubtless be turned to good account, both as regards the public health of crowded cities and the interests of the gardener and farmer. Charcoal obtained from wood, in the usual way, must possess similar qualities, and in most parts of Canada possess the means of procuring it in abundance.

WHY ARE MEALY POTATOES MORE NUTRITIOUS THOSE WHICH ARE WAXY?

Because of the greater quantity of *starch* which they contain. Thus, a microscope shows a potatoe to be almost entirely composed of cells, which are sometimes filled, and sometimes contain clusters of beautiful oval grains. Now,

these little grains remain unchanged in cold water, but when it is heated to about the degree that melts wax, they dissolve in it, and the whole becomes a jelly, and occupies a larger space than it did in the form of grains. When a potatoe is boiled, then each of the cells becomes full of jelly, and if there be not a quantity of starch in the cells, it will not burst. But if the number of grains or their size be very great, the potatoe is broken on all sides by the expansion of the little masses of jelly; and mealiness is produced.

Frost-bitten potatoes are sweet, from the spontaneous conversion of their starch into sugar: the same effect takes place when potatoes sprout in the spring, and they are consequently of less value as food. Potatoes should be stored in the fall with a portion of earth adhering to them, or at least mixed with them; this keeps them a little damp, and prevents the action of the atmosphere from causing a too powerful evaporation.

COUNTY OF YORK AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY.

We make room for the following Address of the retiring President, E. W. Thomson, Esq., read at the Annual Meeting, as it possesses more than a local interest. Mr. Thomson was unanimously re-elected for the current year.

To the Members of the County of York Agricultural Society.

GENTLEMEN,—In laying down the office I have had the honor to fill during the past year, and for many previous years, I think it incumbent on me to make a few remarks relative to our advancement as a Society; and while I have to regret that there still exists a very considerable degree of apathy on the part of the farmers of the County generally with regard to the interests of the Society, I think I may freely congratulate its few zealous friends, who, with myself, have from its formation, taken a deep interest in the welfare of this Society, upon some degree of advancement, as well as upon the increased interest manifested throughout the country at large in the advancement of Agriculture. And although all that we wished has not been done in our legislative halls, some degree of attention has been awakened, and some progress made towards giving that prominence to the agricultural interest of our country, which ought to be awarded to it as the most important of all its interests. I allude to the act establishing a Board of Agriculture, to which act you will, I presume, give effect by electing (as far as the voice of this Society will go)