

clude that it has altogether lost its natural character. The potato is the native of a clime which produces two crops per year instead of one; and there it is quite free from either scab or curl, nor is it anything like so watery as we have it here.

When the alarming extent of the disease became known last year, and the learned professors before-mentioned were doing their utmost to turn England and Ireland into large starch manufactories, I was induced to procure different samples of potatoes from various parts of the country, both diseased and healthy, with a view to ascertain whether they were equally productive of starch. This I found to be by no means the case; for instance, two samples of healthy red kidneys gave the following results; viz:—

Water. Starch. Dry Fibre, &c. Residuum.

First sample grown in Bedfordshire	73.94	16.75	7.50	1.81
Second ditto grown in Derbyshire..	74.56	15.09	8.03	2.30

The Bedfordshire sample was grown upon a red sandy clayed loam, which rested upon a red shaley subsoil. Two diseased samples of the same sort and growth gave the following results:—

Water. Starch. Dry Fibre, &c. Residuum.

Bedfordshire..	77.15	11.25	7.64	3.96
Derbyshire (badly di- seased)	78.10	10.75	7.65	3.50

The residuum I did not examine, but from its appearance, and being insoluble in water, I judged it to be vegetable gluten and caseine. These two experiments, however, clearly establish two important facts: 1. That diseased potatoes contain nearly four per cent. more water, three per cent. less starch, and leave nearly two-per cent. more residuum insoluble in water than sound ones. And 2. That the disease itself consists in excess of moisture and vegetable caseine. From these two facts we may infer a third—viz., that the disease itself is not in septic but epidemic. From this it must be understood, as our opinion, that the disease is not transferred from one infected tuber to another during growth, though we are of opinion that the disease may be propagated by using diseased seeds. If, then, the disease be epidemic, and not infectious, the questions which naturally present themselves are, when and how does it commence? To the first question, we give it as our firm opinion, that the disease commences from the very moment that the potato has arrived at full growth, and not before; this is borne out by one fact which has come to our knowledge—viz., a friend of ours planted some early kidneys for his own use, and as a matter of course, began to eat new potatoes at the same time as every one else. Previous, however, to finishing his crop of first earlies, he and his family left home for a few weeks, and, on his return, upon recommencing his potatoes where he left off, he found a considerable portion of them diseased, where before he had found none. This, so far as it goes, is proof that the disease commences as soon as the tuber arrives at maturity. In addition to this we have lately made another experiment, with a view to ascertain the relative amount of water and starch contained in ripe and unripe potatoes of the same sort, and grown upon the same land. The following is the result:—

Water. Starch. Dry Fibre, &c.

Albany kidneys (ripe)...	73.05	17.75	9.20
Ditto (unripe).....	60.50	17.25	14.15

From the above it will be seen that the ripe tuber contains more than 4½ per cent. more water than the

unripe one, while the quantity of starch is nearly the same: and it is also evident that the excess of dry fibre in the unripe sample is converted into caseine in the ripe one, which, being acted upon by the carbonic acid absorbed from the soil and atmosphere, causes acid fermentation, and hence decomposition. Under these circumstances it is wise to get your potatoes quite as soon as they are ripe, or a little earlier, if found diseased, to treat them in the manner recommended in my next letter. In preparing your land for the next crop, first well lime it, and in your trenches scatter gypsum and Epsom salts (the latter may be procured at 8s. 6d. per cwt.) in equal quantities over your seed, at the rate of four or five cwt. per acre. This treatment I have seen tried upon a small scale for the present crop, and as yet there is no appearance of the disease manifesting itself.

I am, gentlemen, yours faithfully,

O. P. Q.

QUALITIES OF MEAT.—Every country is famous, more or less, for some produce, so is every county; for instance for the best beef we are indebted principally to Scotland; the Highland ox, which if bred in Scotland, kept there until four years old, and fed twelve months in Norfolk, cannot be surpassed; those also that are killed in Scotland are likewise very commendable, but the connoisseur would give the preference by far to those that had undergone a change of atmosphere and pasturage. Norfolk produces excellent beef, as likewise does Herefordshire, which three sorts are ranked as best by the best judges. The Brighton downs are noted for producing sheep of the first quality, next to which may be ranked those of Norfolk downs; they are rather larger, more fleshy, and the meat sometimes a darker colour. Herefordshire also produces some very excellent. The Scotch mutton is also very good, and deservedly of high repute, but I rarely ever use it, as it is killed in Scotland, and hurriedly packed, which causes it not to look so well, and frequently bruises it; but that of Leicestershire is, in my opinion, quite the contrary, being coarse and very fat; I consider it unworthy of making its appearance on the table of a man of wealth. When residing at Milton Mowbray I tried several haunches, even after hanging a month in winter and then roasted to perfection; I could not find in them any savour worthy of the taste of any epicure; I consider it more as a useful nourishment than a delicate meat. The best Welsh mutton is fine, direct from its native mountains: the heath upon which it feeds gives a very rich flavour to the meat, which is very dark and without much fat: many are fed in the English counties; they are very excellent and much fatter, but do not possess the same wild flavour. The veal to be obtained in the spring time of year comes from the West of England, being rather small and white; but there is a ready supply of good veal from Surrey and Essex throughout the year. Although very fine veal may be obtained in this country, it is not to be compared to the quality we obtain in France; the veal of Pontoise, a little town about six miles from Paris, outrivals any; I would venture to say that one pound of that veal would make a better steak than double the quantity of veal procured here; no one can account for it, but such is the actual case; although there the quality of any other description of animal food is deficient, we have to doast of the excellent flavour, succulence, and of the excessive whiteness of our veal. House lamb may be had throughout the whole year, but there is no great demand for it before February: Grass lamb makes its appearance now much earlier than formerly: the quality much depends upon the winter season; if a mild winter, they may really be fed upon grass; but if the contrary, they must be fed with prepared food, which increases their size but diminishes their quality. Pork, for roasting, is best when about six months old, Berkshire and Hampshire producing the best. The size of a leg of pork should not exceed more than seven pounds, nor much less than six; I do not know why, but of late years pork has lost in a great measure its popularity, and but seldom appears on a nobleman's table; it is in the season from October to about March.—*Soyer's Cookery.*