

AGRICULTURAL.

INTERESTING TO FARMERS.

The following short history of the origin and process of the application of plaster paris, as a manure, may be important to the agricultural interest.

"The first discovery of the utility of Gypsum or Plaster Paris, for agricultural purposes, was made by a laborer, engaged in pounding plaster near Hilburn, in Germany. He noticed the extra growth of the grass along the route which he at different times travelled, across a meadow; supposing it to be occasioned by the fine plaster dropped from his clothes, he was induced to try an experiment, to determine the point; it succeeded beyond his expectation; and others tested its usefulness, until all became satisfied of its nutritious qualities; and thus the use of plaster in Germany, became general as a manure, wherever it could be obtained.

"In the year 1768, Jacob Barge, of Philadelphia, having learned the use of plaster in Germany, obtained some from a manufacturer of Burr stones, and scattered it upon a field of clover which proved perfectly satisfactory; in consequence of which, Messrs Hocker, Lancaster, Clifford, and David Deshler, all respectable farmers near Philadelphia, used the plaster in various ways, and for different plants, and were all equally well satisfied of its utility. The call for, and application of, the article increased; and hence the commencement of a regular trade, upon the seaboard, in the transportation of plaster from Nova Scotia, to all the southern ports; which has regularly increased from that period to the present time, and which has become a business as regular and permanent as any other in the United States.

"The directions for the application of plaster, are so various and multiplied, that it is believed no certain general rule can ever be adopted, for it has been found that on some grounds, one bushel to the acre, is better than six bushels; two bushels to the acre, however, appears to be the quantity required for the largest portion of the lands in Pennsylvania. No one should be discouraged, if no perceptible benefit should result from a trial, the first year; for it has been found, that the more slow in its effects, the more certain it is to be advantageous in two, three and even four years after its application. For clover, grass, &c it should be sown over the field, just before or after the grass or clover begins to grow in the spring. It is used in the same manner, upon wheat, barley, oats and buckwheat grounds.

"Another mode for grain of all kinds, is to wet the grain thoroughly, and then mix as much dry plaster with it, as will adhere to the kernel, and immediately strew and harrow in. For corn, throw upon each hill a small table spoonful, as soon as the leaves are formed. From the various experiments made in the Eastern States the fact seems to be well established, that a certain quantity of plaster, used upon all dry soils, and on low grounds in dry seasons, is of the utmost importance, and adds greatly to the growth of every kind of vegetable substance intended for the use of man or beast. The only sure directions, therefore, for using the plaster, is, for each person to ascertain, by experiments, the quantity required for the particular parcel or kind of ground, which it may be desirable to enrich and fertilize. On very dry grounds, it may be advisable to wet the grain and mix plaster, as above directed; and after harrowing, to strew on the top of the ground thus sown, in a dry day, about one bushel to the acre."—*Ohio State Journal*

RUEBARS.—This is one of the many plants which a farmer may have in his garden, and which may be made to contribute to the delicacies of his table, and to the health and comfort

of his family, with very little expense or labor. The plant is perennial, and resembles much in its habits the burdock, though the leaves and their stalks may be somewhat larger, in a good soil. A dozen plants will serve to supply a family. The leaf stalks are the parts used. The skin or cuticle is peeled off—they are then cut into quarter or half inch pieces, and used without further preparation, with sugar and spices, like unripe gooseberries, for pies and tarts, which fruit it very much resembles in flavor. It may be used in the spring, and till midsummer. Medical men ascribe to it a salutary influence upon health, particularly to children, when used in this way. The seed ripens in midsummer, at which time it may be sown.—*Conduct's of Cult.*

BUTTER.—To make as good butter in winter as in autumn and that it may be formed with as little churning, it is only necessary, according to recent experiments, to keep the milk and cream at the proper temperature. With cream at the temperature of 75 degrees, the butter will be ready to take out with from 10 to 20 minutes churning.

A French writer says that to procure butter of an exquisite flavour and extreme delicacy, after washing it with water till the water runs quite clear; you must finally wash it with new milk. The cream of the new milk is incorporated with the butter and communicates to it its sweetness and delicacy. Like butter that has some of the butter-milk remaining in it, however this will not keep well.

When your cream is taken from sour milk, or has stood so long as to become sour, add to it when it is to be churned a little milk just from the cow. The butter will be improved; but not so good after all as that made from fresh cream taken from fresh milk.

HINTS TO FARMERS.

There are two particular items, to which I would call the attention of farmers, viz. to do every thing at a proper time and in a proper manner. Never to put of anything till tomorrow that may be done today, is an excellent maxim, and should be observed by every farmer: while he holds in everlasting contempt, that saying of the Spaniards, do nothing today that can be put off till tomorrow. Very much of a farmer's success will depend on a due regard to the observing of time. If his land is in good order to sow his seed he should never wait for the morrow, that the moon may change. I heard a respectable farmer "down east" ask another if he paid attention to the moon's phases, when he sowed his pens, he replied that he did not even let the moon know when he sowed them! You may smile at the old gentleman's remark, and I may say to such as do regard the moon when they sow their seed that I am astonished at their folly! But to return; a man can do much more work in season by a little regard to order. Generally speaking, every part of a farmer's work should be separated as distinctly as the ends of his fingers, though this rule will not hold good in every case. A farmer was asked how he got along so well with his business? he replied that he did but one thing at a time. Solomon said (and surely he ought to know) to every thing there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven, a time to plant and a time to pluck. But perhaps enough of that. Then let everything be done in a proper manner. It would be well for every farmer to remember what I many times heard an excellent farmer say, "if a thing is worth doing at all, it is worth doing well." This applies to every person whether farmer or mechanic. But to the farmer more especially. If his land is worth ploughing at all, it is worth doing well. It is too often that the farmer reasons thus: "If I expend ever so much labor and money upon this piece of land, it will yield but little, therefore, I

will not take much pains with it." He might as well say of the best piece of land he has, if I sow or plant this, and the corn or wheat should do well, it might be destroyed by mildew or some other means, therefore, I will let it lie. This is in nothing more necessary than in making fences or building house. For instance notice the fastening of gates or driving stakes. One stitch in time or manner will save nine. By doing one thing well another thing may be preserved, and much property saved. But one more hint, after a farmer has committed his seed to the earth, it is his duty to pray to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, that he may have an abundant harvest. Have the prayers of every man been answered to the restraining or giving rain to water the earth? Who is it that gives us fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with gladness?—*Poughkeepsie Telegraph.*

STEEP FOR WHEAT, BARLEY, OR OTHER GRAIN.

Put a peck and a half of wood ashes, and a peck of unslacked lime, into a tub that will hold forty gallons; then add as much water as will slake the lime, and render the mixture into the consistence of stiff mortar. In this state it should remain ten or twelve hours; then add as much water as will reduce the mortar to a pulp by thorough stirring. In this state fill the tub with water, and occasionally keep stirring for two or three days. After which, draw off the clear lye into an open vessel, and gradually put the grain into it: skim off the light grains, and after the corn has been steeped three hours, spread it on a clean floor to dry, when it will be sufficiently prepared for drilling or sowing. The lye will retain its full virtue and may be repeatedly used.

Remark.—It has been doubted whether steeps are of any use, except so far as they facilitate the separation of the light grains, and wash off the seeds of the parasite plants, which are thought to occasion smut &c. In the best cultivated parts of Scotland, seed wheat is steeped in stale urine, or in a brine made with common salt, which, by increasing the specific gravity of the water, floats the unsound grains. The seed is well washed, and then dried by mixing it with fresh slacked lime, and rubbing it briskly with a wooden shovel. The quick lime and rubbing is thought to assist in cleansing the seed, but, independent of that, the mere drying the seed quickly is convenient.—*Family Receipt Book.*

INSTRUCTIONS FOR RAISING POTATOES TO ADVANTAGE.

The earth should be dug twelve inches deep, if the soil will allow it; after this, a hole should be opened about six inches deep, and horse dung, or long litter, should be put therein, about three inches thick; this hole should not be more than twelve inches diameter. Upon this dung or litter, a potatoe should be planted whole, upon which a little more dung should be shaken, and then the earth must be put thereon. In like manner the whole plot of ground must be planted, taking care that the potatoes be at least sixteen inches apart. When the young shoots make their appearance, they should have fresh mould drawn around them with a hoe; and if the tender shoots are covered, it will prevent the frost from injuring them; they should again be earthed when the shoots make a second appearance, but not covered, as, in all probability, the season will be less severe.

A plentiful supply of mould should be given them; and the person who performs this business should never tread upon the plant, or the hillock that is raised round it, as the lighter the earth is the more room the potatoe will have to expand.

A gentleman obtained from a single root, thus planted, very near forty pounds weight of large potatoes; and from almost every other root upon the same plot of ground, from fifteen to twenty pounds weight, and, except the soil be stony or gravelly, ten pounds, or half a peck, of potatoes may almost be raised from each root, by pursuing the foregoing method.—*Id*

TO PRESERVE SEEDS, WHEN SOWN, FROM VERMIN.—Steep the grain or seed three or four hours, or a sufficient time for it to penetrate the skin, in a strong solution of liver of sulphur.—*Id*