

to attach little importance to this reasoning, I would put the question—where would you go for seed potatoes if you should be troubled with curl? I answer, without fear of contradiction, that if you are at all conversant with the subject, and have no fresh land that you can conveniently break up, you will either send to an exposed hilly district, or to a peaty moorish soil. Here, then, we see that experience guides us to the cold, wet soils, to those places, in short, which are highly unfavourable to early maturity and from which we have a good chance of obtaining unripe seed.—2nd, Change of soil. In spite of the numerous valuable suggestions which the farmer has already received from the man of science, agricultural chemistry is still too much in its infancy to be able to specify the exact proportions and combinations of the various elements of vegetable life which should exist in a soil to enable it to bring to the greatest perfection the crop with which it is to be sown; and accordingly we find that no chemical combination of manures that has yet been tried has produced a compound in which plants grow with so much health and vigour as they do in fresh (i. e. uncropped) soil of good quality. This fact is admitted on all hands; but let us examine a little more in detail. To say that uncropped soil will grow most (if not all) plants in greater perfection than land that has been in tillage, is tantamount to saying that in our ordinary routine of cropping some element or elements are removed from the soil which we do not restore to it in the manures which we apply.—Hence it follows that the longer we continue such a repetition of crops and manures, the greater will be the deficiency of the substance which we fail to supply, until at length some one crop, more dependant than others on those particular elements, fails to grow with its accustomed vigour, and is attacked with disease and parasites previously unknown. If all land were of similar quality, and had been treated alike in every respect, this falling off of certain crops would have been simultaneously remarked in its first occurrence; but with the infinite variety of soil, mode of cropping, and manuring, which prevail on different farms, and even on different fields of the same farm, the question is so complicated as to remain still doubtful. The remedy for this unavoidable (because as yet undefinable) deterioration of soil, is to resort occasionally to fresh land for seed, and to make use of every available variety of manure, until the advance of science shall enable chemists to point out the deficiency and suggest the remedy in each individual instance.—3rd, Change of practice. Another cause to which some little weight in due is the decidedly improved practice observable amongst the farmers of the present day. They have better teams, superior implements of husbandry, and, stimulated by the more enterprising of their class, are less in the habit of dawdling over their seed-time, and think it of little importance whether they sow or plant a month earlier or later. It is rare now to see a man planting potatoes in the middle or latter end of June, though even yet I may occasionally see an instance of it, and am told that a generation back it was by no means uncommon. Potatoes planted thus in the middle of summer on undrained, perhaps unenclosed, land, would, in ordinary seasons, be taken up unripe; on the occurrence therefore of failure in the crop of a good stirring farmer, it would be easy for him to get seed from a neighbour whose potatoes grew well because they were late planted and badly ripened, and thus for a time the curl would be stopped.

The foregoing remarks will make it sufficiently plain that the principal remedy I propose for the potato failure is the use of unripe sets. As, however, there are two ways of procuring unripe sets—one by planting late, the other by taking them up early—it may be well to point out some reasons for preferring the former plan. Potatoes that are taken up early have so great a tendency to vegetate during winter, that it is scarcely possible to prevent their being weakened by premature growth before the time of planting arrives. By planting late we not only avoid this evil, but have the additional advantage that after the turnips are sown, a hand or two might easily be spared in the month of June to dig or fork out the sides of hedges, corners of fields, young plantations, &c.,

which are frequently mere nurseries for weeds, and by planting a few bushels of potatoes in these out of the way places, a supply of seed of superior quality will be procured without interfering with the regular crops. They should be taken up while the tops are still green. It is easy to see when a potato plant is done growing, and then without any loss of time, and before a single yellow leaf appears, the plants should be lifted. If it should be practicable to expose them to the sun for a few days before they are put up for the winter, they will keep better and grow more vigorously. I am quite at a loss to explain this fact, but I have been told by several gardeners that they have followed the practice for years with uniform success, and it has occurred to myself more than once to observe a particular luxuriant chance plant, and on taking it up to find that it had sprung from a green potato which had been thrown aside when the crop was harvested. In conclusion, I would beg to remark that, should my supposition as to the causes which make ripe potatoes bad sets prove incorrect, there is, at least, no doubt as to the correctness of the facts; and whilst the researches of philosophers are slowly but surely demolishing all erroneous theories and confirming true ones, we farmers may possibly turn to account the practical suggestions deduced from several years' careful observation.—York, March, 1845.

### DORKING FOWLS.

Since spring opened we have received so many letters of inquiry about Dorking Fowls, that we have concluded to give what follows as a general answer to them.

At our special request, Capt. Morgan, of the London packet ship *Victoria*, made an importation of a dozen of these superb fowls last October, for distribution among some of our friends. Only five, a cock and four hens, survived out of the twelve.—These were large and fine, and evidently highly and carefully bred. Being so few on arrival, Capt. Morgan very kindly sent the whole to Mr. L. F. Allen, of Black Rock, to cross with the produce of those we brought home from England in 1841.

As Dorking fowls are likely to be in vogue now, we think it advisable to caution all those who wish to possess good ones, to be very careful what they purchase. Choice birds are extremely difficult to be had, as we found to our cost when in England, and it was only by special favour we procured some at last. Capt. Morgan has been upwards of two years endeavouring to obtain this importation, and finally succeeded only through a worthy clergyman, Mr. Courtney, of the town of Dorking, a passenger with him on a recent voyage home from the United States. He accompanied them by a note, apologizing for the high price he had to pay for them, and further saying—"The chicken-breeders of Dorking have adopted a sort of principle, that they will sell away no birds *alive*, except capons, as they desire to retain them as much as possible amongst themselves, in which, by caponizing, they carry on quite a profitable trade, and they can only be had, by a particular favour. They have very much improved them of late years. The old *white* sort is altogether bred out, and the speckled and grey varieties are now all the rage. They are also larger, and better formed now than they formerly were, and altogether are perhaps the best barn-door fowls, in existence—at least these people so esteem them."

To the above we will add, that there are plenty of Dorkings for sale in the London market, of an inferior and cross breed, some of which have been recently imported to supply the American demand. Every five-toed chicken is also picked up now in