

legumes helps explain why they act as renovating crops, the loss in the case of the oats suggests a possible reason why they should appear to be an exhausting crop.

'Practical inferences:—The ability of legumes to gather nitrogen from the air helps to explain the usefulness of clover, alfalfa, pease, beans, vetches and cow pease as renovating crops, and enforces the importance of these crops to restore fertility to exhausted soils. The judicious use of mineral fertilizers (containing phosphoric acid, potash and lime) will enable the farmer to grow crops of legumes which, after being fed to his stock, will, with proper care, collect and preserve all manure, both liquid and solid, enable him to return a complete fertilizer in the shape of a barn-yard manure to his land. A further advantage of growing these crops is that the nitrogenous material, protein, which they contain in such great abundance, is especially valuable for fodder.'

From the foregoing it seems that, in the present condition of our knowledge, the conclusion may be drawn that the atmosphere stands ready to furnish the farmer, gratis, with all the organic constituents which his crops require, provided always that he, on his part, will exercise a sufficient amount of skill and intelligence in appropriating and retaining on his farm the fertilizing materials, and especially the nitrogen. If he does this, all that is necessary for him to provide, in order to replace the losses which his farm sustains from the sale of stock or produce, are the inorganic or mineral constituents of these, and especially the phosphoric acid and potash. There is much in all this to remind one of Sprengel and Liebig's teaching of fifty years ago, according to which a plant cannot thrive if its soil does not contain all the substances which are to be found in its ash.

UTILIZATION OF SEWAGE.

The losses in fertilizing material which are sustained, as above mentioned, on account of the neglect or unscientific treatment of barn-yard manure, are very trifling when compared with those which the community suffers in the almost total loss of the nitrogen, phosphoric acid and potash contained in human excreta. The utilization of such always becomes a subject for discussion when the question is raised as to how a cheaper class of manures than the artificial fertilizers can be obtained for use in agriculture.

Where the water carriage system of removing sewage and excrement has been introduced, nothing is to be hoped for in the recovery of their fertilizing constituents. Even in cases where, at large expense, establishments have been erected for the treatment of sewage by precipitation or similar methods, the products have been found to be entirely destitute of agricultural value. The greater part of the fertilizing constituents of sewage are in such a soluble condition, and have been diluted with water to such an extent, as to render their recovery economically impossible. It has been attempted in the neighbourhood of many cities in England and on the continent of Europe to use the sewage for irrigation and as liquid manure, but this method of utilization has been found to be in the highest degree imperfect. At Berlin, it has been proved, that of the nitrogen contained in its sewage, at the very most only 13·8 per cent is found in the agricultural products of all the magnificent farms irrigated by it in the neighbourhood of the city. When the use of water for removing house refuse is excluded, and ordure and urine are removed as manure in their natural state, their utilization is possible, and is made a source of revenue in such towns as Stuttgart, Groningen, Greifswald, &c. But the systems of this class which are in use have all their disadvantages, as is proved by the tendency which municipal authorities constantly show to adopt the water carriage system. The greatest disadvantage under which these systems labour is the difficulty caused by the offensiveness to sight and smell of the material with which they have to deal. This has been entirely met by the use of moss litter as an absorbent, deodorizer, and disinfectant.

MOSS MANURE.

The first public mention of the usefulness of moss litter as a deodorizer and absorbent seems to have been made by Dr. Ludwig Happe, in Braunschweig, in December, 1880, since which time its application for the purpose has gradually increased until now, when the system has been introduced into several towns in Germany, and is also prac-