

by Canadian farmers. We would caution, however, our readers against applying large doses of salt, or using it in an undiluted state. When so employed it is apt to injure vegetation for a time.

THE CAROB-BEAN: A NEW FOOD FOR CATTLE.

The algaroba bean, or carob-tree (*Ceratonia siliqua*; in Greek, *Κεραρία*), the fruit of which is sometimes termed "St. John's bread," at other times "locusts," "sweet pod," &c., is a very remarkable plant, growing abundantly in the south of Europe, and, indeed, in all the islands of the Mediterranean, and the countries skirting the shores of that sea. In Malta, it is said to be the only tree indigenous to the soil, its dark green foliage relieving the eye from the irksome monotony of the white stone inclosures which everywhere abound, and appears originally to have given the island its name. In all the countries where it grows wild, its fruit is eaten by the inhabitants. In a dried state, it is also largely consumed by horses. In this state, full-sized pods measure from four to five inches in length, about one inch in breadth, and three-eighths of an inch in thickness. When ripe, the pods are round, plump, and contain a sweet, nutritious pulp.

In medicine, its pulp, like that of the tamarind, is slightly purgative. In the form of a decoction, it is also exhibited as a pectoral in asthmatic complaints and coughs.

We have seen no chemical analysis of the carob bean; but it is said to contain about "fifty per cent. of sugar and gum; besides a large proportion of oily matter." This would point to its being used to most advantage for mixing with other food, so as "to season it," giving it a flavour, and inducing stock to eat more largely. In the generality of cases it would appear better adapted as food for milch cows than fattening stock, especially those disposed to run to fat, where sour food does not agree with their stomachs. A little may also be profitably mixed with the dry food of horses, in a pounded state; but from its purgative nature it is probably not so suitable for sheep, although they are extremely fond of it. In all these cases, however, experiment must be left to settle its value, whether as food for horses, cattle, sheep, or pigs.

At present we ought to thank the Great Exhibition at Paris for bringing it into fresh notice; it being there largely exhibited by Spain and several other southern states of Europe, from which a plentiful supply could no doubt be had. Where grown, the dried pods cost something under £3 per ton, and in London sell at about £8. 10s.

With regard to the many names which it has acquired, it is said to have obtained that of "St. John's bread," from its being supposed to be the fruit of the tree which yielded the wild honey eaten by St. John in the wilderness. Metaphorically, the two words *μέλι ἄγριον*—translated, *wild honey*—may have meant, in the figurative language of the East, the carob-bean, from its mellifluous smell and sweetness resembling that of honey, and have been eaten along with the locusts; or carob-beans, locusts, and honey may have more probably been the food referred to.

The term "locust," used by Mr. Melladew and others, in London, is obviously a misnomer, and therefore ought not to be used: for locusts were permitted by Divine law (Lev. xi. 21, 22) to be eaten, and were so by the Jews; while in no case does, or can, the word *ἀκρίδας*—translated *locusts*—mean the fruit of a tree. This gentleman, however, in his letter to the Council, is quite right with regard to the "husks which the swine did eat," referred to in the parable of the Prodigal Son; for the words *ὅτι τῶν κεραρίων*—translated *with the husks*—ought obviously to have been rendered *with carobas* or *carob beans*, meaning with the fruit of the carob-tree, which was used as food for swine, according to Columella, who may be said to have been contemporaneous with St. John the Baptist—*κεραρίων* being the genitive of the Greek name (*κεραρία*) of the plant *Ceratonia siliqua*, and not with the husks of the fruit, as translated. In short, husks is not the proper English name for the unshelled bean as given to swine, and as now imported.

"There is something in a name," it is said, and perhaps the best designation for this new edible will be *Carob-bean*. The practical question at issue is to give it a fair trial, as food for our different kinds of stock, mixing it in all the various ways which circumstances may dictate. In many cases, it may be given medicinally alone. It would also be desirable to have a more perfect analysis of it, as from its taste and smell it probably contains an aroma and tonic peculiar to itself, less or more affected in quality by season, climate, and management. Pliny tells us it grew abundantly in Syria in his time, and doubtless also it will be found equally plentiful throughout the whole of Asia Minor. Whether is the European or Asiatic the richest in quality? Is its sugar grape-sugar or cane-sugar? These and many other questions demand a chemical solution.