

# The Agriculturist.

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### Poetry.

#### CASTLES IN THE AIR.

I sit here in the twilight gloom,  
The shadows flitting on the wall,  
And long-past hopes of bygone life  
To recollection I recall.  
They soon collect a number vast,  
A moral sad with them they bear;  
Our many prospects bright have proved  
But castles in the air.

As when, on some fair April morn,  
The sun shines clear, the sky is bright;  
But suddenly a storm comes on  
And all the scene is changed ere night,  
What in the morning looked so glad  
At night is desolate and bare,  
So youthful hopes too often prove  
But castles in the air.

A prize we fondly thought to win  
By study hard from learning's store;  
Unceasingly by night and day  
We'd gather gold from ancient lore.  
But looking at the past we see  
Little result from hopes so fair,  
Our aspirations only were  
Mere castles in the air.

Perchance we thought to gain renown,  
To climb to proud heights of fame,  
Others have done so, surely we  
Honor like theirs might justly claim.  
Alas, alas, we soon find out  
Failure was frequent, success rare,  
Our high ambition only gained  
A castle in the air.

The great enchantment's sure to throw  
A glamour round most eyes—but few  
Escape his magic, fever still  
Find that his promises are true.  
The God of Love impartial is,  
Nor rank nor fortune does he spare;  
How many victims he may build  
High castles in the air.

Fool hopes are better than no hopes,  
'Tis far worse to look low than high;  
Who aims at trees shoots lower than  
Who with his arrows seeks the sky.  
Although sometimes we fail, what then?  
Shall we of all our hopes despair?  
Nay, not so, some at least will prove  
Not castles in the air.

### Agriculture.

#### Early Amber Sugar Cane.

MR. EDITOR.—As promised in a former issue of your paper, I will now undertake to give the cost of cultivating an acre of cane, allowing a fair compensation for labour and material, &c. Expense of seed and cultivation, \$19; milling and manufacture, \$42.50, or a total cost of producing and manufacturing an acre of cane \$61.50. An acre of cane properly cultivated is allowed to yield 11 tons of cane, which with a good mill and proper pans for evaporating the juice, may be expected to yield 200 gallons of dense syrup, crystallizing 10 lbs. of dry sugar to a gallon of syrup, or 2000 lbs. (1 ton) of sugar. This, it is affirmed on good authority is an easily attainable yield in Minnesota.

The value of 2000 lbs. of sugar at 10 cents per lb. is \$200. Seed from one acre 1000 lbs., which is estimated to be worth 1-6 more than oats for feeding animals, or \$11.50 per acre. The leaves of this plant is estimated to be worth a good crop of hay as food for stock, and therefore might be safely estimated at \$10 per acre.

This, without taking into consideration the many profits to be derived from it while undergoing manufacture, such as food for hog fattening, vinegar, &c., would yield a net profit of \$160 per acre, after all expenses are paid at a fair value. In comparing this with almost any other crop, I think it will be found that the profits preponderate largely in favor of the cane.

It is asked frequently will the Amber Cane grow here? The question may be answered the cane grows in Minnesota until sugar is manufactured from it in large quantities, and that there exists in the two countries such striking similarity in their climates and the length of seasons that its growth here, in my opinion, is unquestionable.

Again I am asked, if it will grow here to what extent may it be cultivated? Let us see how far it might be reasonable to expect the domestic manufacture of sugar by the cultivation of the Amber Cane, in this Province, to meet the demand, and in doing so we will go to the Census Returns of 1871, and we will find that the population of this Province in that year was 285,594, which, by the rate of increase in the former decade, would make the population in 1877 about 305,718. Now by the Trade and Navigation Report, it will be seen that the molasses used in the Province in 1877 was 631,221 gallons, which, valued at 50 cents per gallon, about the price paid by the consumer, would amount to \$315,610; sugar during the same year, 5,299,909 lbs. at 10 cents per lb., would amount to \$529,990 or a total value of \$845,600. To produce this quantity of molasses and sugar by the Amber Cane cultivation, taking the lowest Minnesota estimate 150 gallons molasses or 1500 lbs. of sugar per acre would require 7741 acres planted, or one per cent of the land actually under cultivation in the Province that year, but few farmers have 100 acres under cultivation any

### and earth with a strip of oak, hemlock or alder bark, and if iron is present it will color the bark dark.

To determine the amount of gypsum or plaster of Paris, take 400 grains of the earth, mix one-third the quantity of powdered charcoal, keep it at a red heat in a crucible for half an hour. Then boil the earth in a pint of water for an hour, filter the liquor and let it stand for several days in an open vessel, when a white precipitate will be found which is the sulphate of lime, and its weight will show its proportion of the soil.

These processes observed with care, will indicate very nearly—near enough for all practical purposes—the proportion of the essential ingredients in the soil, and the ingredients above named include most of those that exercise in any marked degree, an influence on the fertility of soils, and on their proportion, the goodness of any given soil largely will depend. When soils contain too much silica (sand or gravel), they are porous; if too much alumina (clay), they are retentive, and water will remain upon them for a long time after a rain. We would remind the young experimenter that it is often difficult to obtain a specimen of earth from a farm, or even from a large field, which shall truly represent the average quality of the soil of the farm or field, in which case the experiment might not be of so much value; so also in analyzing some soils, it may be almost impossible to determine the amount of materials available to the plants; for much of the ash of plants is absorbed from portions of soil which are continually becoming soluble, but which are present in such conditions, only in very minute quantities. Every farmer knows that the application of any fertilizer which corrects the physical condition of the soil, effects a marked improvement in its chemical condition and greatly increases its fertility. Different plants require different proportions of the essential ingredients, to mature a full crop, consequently some crops exhaust the soil much more than others do. In their demands upon the soil, cultivated plants have been classed as follows: Enriching crops, clover; non-enriching crops, peas and beans, and cereals when cut green; exhausting crops, cereals, when allowed to ripen, beets, turnips, potatoes and carrots; very exhausting crops, tobacco, hops, hemp and flax. This classification, so far as it goes, is not absolutely correct, though perhaps it is approximately so. These matters have been discussed over and over again, and many points are yet unsettled.

In the foregoing directions we have omitted the process of analyzing decayed animal and vegetable matter found in the soil, because the process is too complicated for the farmer, but these substances contain many of the salts essential to the maturity of our most valuable crops. The cereal grains will not come to perfect maturity in a soil which is deficient in potash, soda, magnesia, phosphoric acid and chlorine, and decayed animal and vegetable matter contains all these in greater or less proportion. Bones are rich in phosphorus and also contain magnesia, chlorine, soda and several other salts. These different kinds of plant food are all derived from the soil and enter the plant through the roots. The medium of their transmission into the vegetable organism is water which is assisted in its solvent action, by carbonic acid and ammonia. Bone is nearly one-tenth carbon, and when undergoing putrefaction or decay, its nitrogenous organic matter evolves a considerable amount of ammonia. Bone manure is therefore particularly adapted to the growth of cereals and clover.

What we denominate a good soil should contain in one hundred parts, from 65 to 75 per cent of silica or sand, 12 to 16 of alumine, from 4 to 8 of lime, and of the other salts such as soda, potash, magnesia, manganese, iron, phosphoric acid and chlorine, and of decayed animal and vegetable matter, a due proportion. This would be called a sandy loam. A clay loam contains less of sand and more of clay, and while in some respects it is more desirable than the former, in others it is less so. The sandy loam can be worked earlier in the spring, and in wet seasons produces better, but in dry seasons the clay or retentive soil has the advantage.

### AMERICAN GRAIN FOR EXPORT.

From America we hear that at Chicago there are waiting for export, 12,563,630 bushels of grain (chiefly wheat), against 12,572,227 bushels a week ago, and 2,767,707 bushels at the same period last year, and at Milwaukee 3,598,283 bushels of wheat, 25,072 bushels of corn, 174,388 bushels of oats, 154,505 bushels of rye, and 443,699 bushels of barley. The other Western grain depots reports like immense heavy stocks.—N. B. Agriculturist.

### A Word on Fowls.

It is very difficult to decide what breed of fowls it is most desirable to raise, but there is no doubt, that fowls of a good breed, well taken care of will make a profitable return to the farmer. An exchange wants the superiority of the "Brown White Leghorn" as egg producers.

These hens in the production of eggs, excel almost every other breed. They lay eggs in season and out of season, rarely wanting to set. They are handsome, hardy and productive. On account of their superior egg producing qualities, it is a common practice to set their eggs under some other breed, thus effecting a division of labor. As food, they are inferior to some other kinds.

There is nothing that a farmer keeps makes better returns for the care bestowed upon them than a good breed of hens. It is the practice with too many to give little or no attention to the wants of these useful fowls. They are obliged to shirk for themselves a large part of the year, and during the winter when they must be fed, little care is bestowed either upon the quality or quantity of the food. Under these circumstances, even, it is found profitable to keep them, and scarcely any family likes to be without them.

Hens require a mixed diet of vegetable and animal food, and a good supply of pure water. Mixed with their food should be a plentiful supply of egg shells or chalk, which furnishes the material for the new shell. Other things being equal, a hen supplied with these substances cannot fail of largely increasing her product of eggs. However nourishing the diet may be in other respects, unless she is supplied with the material for forming the shell, she can produce but few eggs, and if she put up and fed on substances free from the carbonate of lime, she would not lay at all.

### Renovating Fruit Trees.

The very great disparity of the fruit offered for sale in our market must proceed from some cause. There are offered in our market here for sale as choice fruits as are to be found anywhere on the continent, while there are exhibited in the same market fruit of the same variety scarcely worth a picking. This may, we admit, be partly owing to the soil and to the natural position of the orchard. But there is another reason for this disparity. When the fruit trees are properly cared for and supplied with a sufficiency of food, the fruit is almost invariably of excellent quality, good size and handsome appearance; when, as a neglected or starved tree, it bears wretched fruit. There are throughout the country too many farms, gardens and orchards in this neglected condition. Good healthy trees have been quite the exception. Starved, stunted, half dead trees are the rule. We have seen such orchards, planted many years, and not paying interest on the expenditure and ground rent for the site. Were there no other remedy than grubbing out the old trees and replanting, there would be some excuse for allowing the trees to remain as they are. But there is a remedy, easy of application for all.

In almost every instance the poor fruit is the result of starvation (the term starvation is as applicable to vegetable as to animal life). Their roots are extended in vain in search of food; the trees cannot produce such fruit as they would were they supplied with suitable nourishment. These trees might be healthy, and fruit-bearing abundantly, were they strengthened in time, and in our climate there is no season more suitable to do it than the present. Farmers have the means for renovating their starved trees. The farmyard furnishes all that is necessary. Spread over the surface of the fruit garden half decomposed manure, not merely around the trunks, but as far as the roots extend, and two or three inches thick. Leave the rest to the weather. The spring rains will bring the supplies of food within reach of the roots, and the trees will soon receive the needed nutriment. The deep hue of the foliage, the richer bloom, and the young healthy branches will give a promise of more abundant fruit and of a better quality.

### Beet Sugar again and again.

The following items show that the Beet Sugar enterprise is being taken hold of in several of the New England States:—

Best raising is attracting much attention since the sugar experiment has been entered upon in Maine. We understand that some of the leading farmers of Hampshire County in this State, sent a delegate to Portland to inform himself as to beet culture and sugar manufacture, and report as to whether the sugar beet can be profitably raised and sugar made in the Connecticut valley. The beet is already raised there in small quantities and there is a growing opinion that enough will be raised to run a sugar factory if the necessary capital is forthcoming.

This reminds us that the farmers of Rockingham Co., N. H., are also moving in the matter of beet sugar, and have made arrangements for a series of lectures on the subject by Dr. U. B. Blackwell of Maine. Large quantities of imported sugar beet seed have been received, to be issued to the farmers by the Portsmouth Grange for planting in this vicinity. This organization proposes to offer liberal premiums for the largest and best growths of the same.

Boston parties have been making inquiries as to the facilities offered for starting a beet sugar factory in the vicinity of Northampton, and whether the farmers could guarantee a sufficient supply of beets in case a factory is started at once. The farmers feel that it is not too late for that enterprise to succeed this year, and there are local capitalists who are ready to share in the investment in case the Boston men appear. A meeting of the Northampton farmers, to hear an address from Dr. Blackwell, on beet sugar making, was to be held at the town hall, April 12.

### Industry of Bees.

All know the lines of the hymn, "How doth the little busy bee, improve each shining hour." The following illustrations is given of their wonderful industry:—

"A approximately one hundred heads of clover yield 0.8 grammes of sugar, or 125 heads give one gramme of sugar, and therefore 125,000 heads contain one kilogramme of sugar. As each head contains sixty florets (125 x 60 = 7500), not less than 7,500,000 flower tubes must be emptied of their honey to obtain one kilogramme of sugar. The honey may roughly be estimated to contain seventy-five per cent of sugar; and hence we have one kilogramme equal to 5,600,000 flowers in round numbers, or 2,500,000 visits for one pound of honey."

### Dairy Management.

The first essential for profitable dairying is good feed and plenty of it. The next is pure water and plenty of that. Then comes warm, well ventilated stables. Then comes a good breed of dairy cows well cared for. And last but not least comes skill in handling and manufacturing its products, either of butter or cheese.

A rich pasture with a fine turf and no weeds or brush is what every dairyman sighs for, and in it he wants an unending source of pure, sweet water. Ideal pastures are scarce, and I fear growing scarcer. We must take what we have, improve them as we can, and supplement their deficiencies by the best means within our reach. The best means we have found is the growing of fodder corn, of which every dairyman now raises a patch, and the patch grows larger every year. This is for feed when the dry time comes that comes most every year. But our best dairymen are not content with this. They want extra feed earlier than corn fodder will give it, and some for this purpose sow winter rye, spring rye, clover and Hungarian. To this our 500 pound butter men add a feed of meal (corn and oats or corn and shorts) morning and evening. As Henry Ward Beecher believed in driving a fast horse fast, so our best dairymen believe in running a cow for all there is in her, and think it pays. For the winter they are careful to provide plenty of hay, and to have it all housed before the middle of July—some before the fourth. To this they add some roots, and meal always, while the cows are in milk. Formerly the meal and milk feed was bought; but hard times have checked that, and now large fields of corn and oats are grown for dairy feed. For butter there is nothing better. For milk use bran or shorts. The fodder from the corn field is fed in connection with hay and the corn is bore. The oat straw is fed sparingly to dry cows, to young stock and horses, but much of it is used for bedding. A good dairyman lately said in a public meeting that he had heard much about cows doing well on straw. He had tried it, he said, without success, until the past winter, when he bedded them with it up to their bellies, and now his cows "did well on straw."

### The Backward Spring.

From the United States and Great Britain come reports of cold backward weather for spring work. The New England Farmer says:—

Sugaring has been very late in Vermont, as reported by readers in many sections. A correspondent at Green River, writing on the 1st of April, says the snow is two feet deep in open fields and good sledding. Another at Fairfax writes that the sugar season is very late. Another says the snow the first week in April was from two to four feet deep in the highways in Chittenden County, and that the winter has been the most unpleasant known for years, with no thaw since the first snow, and the roofs of buildings still covered with snow that melts very slowly. At this writing, April 11, fifty miles south from Boston, snow banks still lie on the fields, and the roads are in many places in the worst condition imaginable.

The North British Agriculturist of April 6th says:—

"Vegetation has made very little progress. Many farmers who were cutting early top-dressed grass about the middle of April 1878 can scarcely obtain, at the corresponding period of 1879, a veritable bit for ewes and lambs. The country is still bleak and bare—very, for the second week of April. After the moisture, however, a few days of mild temperature would bring up grass rapidly. For this there is much need, stall food for stock being almost exhausted. We do not remember a season in which there was so little second growth on the tops of turnips as has been the case this spring."

### Farming Depression in England.

As a result of the present depression and loss in farming circles in England, rents are falling. The North British Agriculturist, (April 9) says:—

In many parts of the south of England rents have recently fallen from 10 to 25 per cent. The decrease in rents is not confined to England—grass parks, nor in fact to arable corn growing farms. An unusually large number of farms have lately been let in the Border districts, and in the great majority of cases the new rents are lower than the old. Grass parks are this year again suffering a decline of 10 to 20 per cent.

Within the last few days we have received from various sources information which goes to show that farm rents are falling as opportunity permits, both north and south—on hill and dale. We have been informed that the farm of Woodhall, on the Thurston estate, in East Lothian, was let last week to Mr. Nelson, Skateraw, at £900 per annum, the first crop rent free. Some years ago a rent of £1400 was, we hear, offered and refused for this farm, while at a more recent period £1100 was offered by an excellent practical man, but it also was refused. Crossing the Border a little bit we have in our mind's eye a well-known farm which was given up less than two years ago at a rent of £1600. Shortly afterwards it was let at £1400, but this year again it was in the market, and though a really fine farm, we understand that it has been let at £1300, the landlord agreeing to lay out a considerable sum of money in improvements. A Roxburghshire farm was reduced in rent the other day from £1700 to £1500 to the present tenant.

Reports from the heaviest wheat producing counties in Kansas say that fine rains have fallen within a few days and the wheat crops, both spring and fall, are fully assured. The farmers are jubilant over the prospects for a great yield. Corn is being planted rapidly and the acreage will be large.

### Sugar from Beets.

The sugar trade of the United States amounts in value to \$81,000,000 annually. The first beet sugar was made in Germany in the beginning of this century. It has expanded very rapidly during the last thirty years. There are now about fifteen hundred beet sugar factories in Europe. Twenty square miles are planted with sugar beets in Germany alone.

For successful beet sugar making are required, first, the best varieties of seed; second, good tillage; third, proper fertilization. Under these conditions success is possible over all the northern States. A good sugar beet should contain at least twelve per cent, sugar, and as little else as possible. A mellow, deep, rich sandy loam is the best for sugar beets. A heavy clay soil is unsuitable, also a rich virgin soil, full of vegetable matter in an undecomposed condition. The beets should not grow too large, a weight from one to one and one-half pounds each is the best. The best yields of sugar run up to six, seven and eight thousand pounds to the acre. The average yield is from eleven to seventeen hundred to three thousand pounds of sugar, besides molasses. The molasses is not fit for human food, but it is either fed to stock or distilled; after distillation the residue is evaporated and potash salts extracted, one factory alone in Germany making two hundred thousand pounds of saltpetre from this waste material. The leaves of the beets may be packed in pits, covered over, and kept for winter feeding. Their value is estimated at about six dollars per acre. In addition to this the beet-cake from the factory, left after extracting the sugar, amounts to about four thousand seven hundred pounds per acre, worth for feeding purposes about sixteen dollars. With a proper rotation of wheat, beets, fodder corn, barley, wheat and beets again, with moderate fertilization, for the wheat and fodder crops, the land is kept in a good heart and the fertility increases. A sugar factory can be built for \$25,000 capable of producing fifteen thousand pounds of refined sugar a day. Sugar beets at a distance from a factory can be dried by artificial heat at a small cost, and will then keep any length of time without injury, and are transported at a cheap rate.

### OVERFEEDING.—Some men overfeed because they over-estimate the capacities of their cows. They try to make a cow which is capable of yielding not more than eight or ten pounds of butter per week produce from twelve to fourteen pounds. If they would adjust the load to the strength of the team instead of trying to whip up the team to move a load altogether beyond its strength they would make more real progress and keep their teams from the injury which they now sustain. Up to a certain point liberal feeding pays. That point is determined by the capacity of the digestive organs and the power to assimilate the digested food. Beyond that point there is danger that the health of the cow will be injured and the quality of her product impaired.

### BROOD MARES.—Although I have not convenience for breeding horses I bear much about them, and know how many are, even in this neighbourhood, the losses at foaling time. It is observed that successful horse-breeder take care not to put their mares between shafts, either of carts, waggon, or drills, for at least five months before parturition, but can work them at plough or harrow safely up to a late period, the whippersnappers preventing pressure on the body. A farmer who has many mares in this country, arranges to have a man night and day attending to them at the expected time, when nature may require assistance.—J. J. Mechi.

### AGRICULTURE IN NEW ZEALAND.

The following statistics regarding the agriculture of New Zealand are interesting:—In the colony there are—Sheep, 13,069,338; cattle, 595,430; horses, 127,768. Beside the natural pasture there are 3,523,277 acres of English sown grasses upon which to feed them. There are 26,203 holdings in the colony, and the land cultivated extended in 1877 to—wheat, 226,354 acres; oats, 204,234; barley, 21,795; potatoes, 18,875. The crops for the present year promise well, and indicate a return of about 14,000,000 bushels.

Cows which have an abundance of fresh air, and regular exercise, will eat, and digest, more food than they would if they were kept closely confined in their stables. Regularity of feeding, and plenty of pure water, also tend to keep the cows in good health and allow them to use a liberal quantity of food without injury.—E. E.

### WHERE TO LOCATE AN APIARY.—The best first point in going into the bee business is the location of the apiary. There are several points that should be considered. Perhaps we should say water comes first, because it is something we cannot get along without. There is a great quantity used by the bees on a hot day, besides the combs from melting brood in the latter part of the season. When the wind blows from the east, hot and dry, I have known bees to use a pond a day to the hive, allowing a sufficient quantity for evaporation. A bee's life is governed, we might say, by the work it does, and if it has to fly a long way for water, it cannot during his life bring the honey to his owner, it could if the water was handy. Wet sand is the best for bees to suck water from, for none are drowned.—E. E.

### GERMAN OPINION OF BRITISH AGRICULTURE.—The Berlin Post says:—

"The increasing decline of English agriculture may have in the future political and social consequences which may seriously threaten the British State fabric. England's colonial possessions diminish, it is true, the danger of the position, but at the same time she cannot save her agriculture, because the price for doing so is the surrender of her dominion in the industrial world. Germany, however, can protect her agriculture without raising the price of its produce."

### Strawberries have made their appearance April 9th., in Paris, but they are as yet extremely dear. The larger description bring from one franc to one franc and a half for a little pot containing only eight, while 'wood' strawberries are sold at from seven to eight francs the small basket.

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