

FARM AND FIELD.

SAVING BARN-YARD MANURES.

As the season is now at hand for accumulating manure for next season's use, a few suggestions will at least be timely; and if but a single one will lead to more care than heretofore in preventing the washing and leaching of those in the open yard, one of the unnecessary wastes on the farm will have been stopped, and some good accomplished.

Any farmer whose barn-yard (in which the straw is stacked and stock is fed) is located on a steep slope, and the water from the roof of the barn is not conducted away by eavetroughs, but rushes down through all parts of the yard and flows away to the nearest stream of water, coloured and enriched with the most valuable part of the manure, may be a very neat farmer in many respects, but were it not for his clover sod, he would soon be compelled to "sell out and go west." A level barn-yard, with raised and water-tight sides, would add immensely to the value of the yard as a manure-making and saving device. Better that the water from the roofs and sheds be conveyed into a cistern for the use of stock and moistening the manure in the yard, when necessary, than that its unnecessary use should rob the manure of its soluble and most valuable elements.

A much better plan, where barns are ample and sheds surround the open yard, and have eavetroughs to convey away the water that would otherwise wash away the wealth of the yard, is that of Mr. Von. H., the owner of large estates in Bohemia, who obtains the most profitable results in the following way: "The manure is not removed from the stables or sheds in which the cattle are kept until it reaches the height of about five feet. The straw for the bedding is cut into lengths of about five inches, and thus it more readily absorbs the liquid portion, and facilitates the distribution of the manure in the furrows. The entire mass is constantly compressed by the weight of the animals, and thereby kept moist, while the air and consequent putrefaction are excluded, so that the air in the stable is never tainted by exhalations injurious to the cattle. After about three months the manure is conveyed to the field, and is immediately covered in the furrow. It then quickly decomposes, yielding all its strength to the soil, being fully double its usual value." With the exception that the wheat or other straw is not cut, this method has been and is practised to a considerable extent in western New York, with the most desirable results.

This method is not suited to the horse stable, as the manure would be likely to heat and become fire-fanged and spoiled. This heating tendency of horse manure can best be utilized, as manures are usually cared for, by mixing it with that of the cattle, for then decomposition will be hastened. Ordinarily, the best method is to have the floor of the horse-stable made water-tight and slightly inclined to the rear, so that a gutter will conduct the urine to a sunken barrel or hoghead. To prevent decomposition and loss of ammonia, a little sulphate of lime (land plaster) should be added every few days, as it will prevent the escape of ammonia. As the urine of the horse is rich in nitrogen and potash, and deficient in phosphoric acid, a small shovelful of some commercial manure, containing sulphate of lime and phosphoric acid, can be substituted, in which case it will not only fix the ammonia, but will, by the addition of the phosphoric acid, become a complete fertilizer.

Manure, in some form, must be put into the soil, if we expect to get out grain. The more of the kind of plant food needed the more grain.

Manure is the life of the land, and that method of farming is the best, in the grain-growing States, which involves the production of no crops that will not be directly available in fattening stock. This is the best and most practical method of condensing the grain and root crops into the smallest compass, thus returning to the producer the most money for the least outlay. It is by the adoption of such a system that the farm and the farmer are alike enriched. The soil must be studied and experiments made, in order to determine its wants, and then-if other special fertilizers are needed in addition to rich, barn-yard manures, they can be supplied without loss. Study and experiment can alone settle such questions. "Guess work" is of no avail; for the foundation of profitable farming is accurate knowledge.

W. M. K.

THE SPARROWS.

The individual who in ignorant pursuance of a hobby introduced, or helped to introduce, the English sparrow into America may comfort himself with the idea that he has brought upon his country an infliction which will cause his name to be held in detestation by every farmer in the land. When this wicked, tyrannical, noisy, mischievous and destructive bird was first introduced, I tried in vain to utter a warning through a popular agricultural journal. But as that would have been going against the current of popular feeling, just then, my suggestions were suppressed, and instead the little pest was praised and puffed and good points attributed to him, which he did not, and never did, possess, while all his evil habits were ignored. It is almost certain that the only service which he was believed to have performed was in no case his work, but the result of natural agencies, which are always operative to reduce the number of insect pests when they, at times, become unusually numerous. The sparrow was brought here to destroy the mousuring worms which infested the trees of the Eastern cities. He came, and the worms went. And it was supposed the sparrows devoured them. The present year we have had a perfect deluge of worms, and the trees have been so overwhelmed with them, that thousands have been deprived of their leaves. These are the fall web-worms, which leave their webs when fully grown and spread everywhere. They devour the leaves of elms, poplars, willows, plums, cherries, apples, Virginia creeper, and other trees and plants, and they have swarmed over houses and into them, so as to have been swept out with the broom. But nary a sparrow touched a worm.

On the contrary, they have been engaged in their natural work, which is grain-eating. They have broken down the wheat and rye, and devoured the grain; they have flocked upon the shocks, and have torn the grain from the ears; they have torn open the corn-husks, and have devoured the milky grain, and now that the corn is in shock, they may be counted by the hundreds in the corn-fields still stealing the grain. This is their old trick, and English farmers have been used to hire boys with guns and men with nets to destroy the pests by thousands to save their crops. And we must soon do the same thing.

Legislatures have passed laws protecting these pests, urged thereto by persons of the same type as those misguided and ignorant ones who have procured laws by which farmers are prevented from selling pure sweet skimmed milk, under any circumstances in the cities, to the infinite loss and detriment of thousands of poor children who would find in it a wholesome and cheap article of food. The farmers should insist upon having these laws abolished. Sparrows are not insect-eating birds. They devour the buds of trees in

winter, and in summer devour fruit, grain and seeds. They are, therefore, out of the list of useful birds. They are, however, very good eating. They are always plump and fat, and are as good game as the reed birds. They are sold in the English and French markets, and are accounted a delicacy when entombed under the crust of a pie. It would be a pity to turn them to this use here, and as farmers are undoubtedly justified in saving their crops from the despoilers, they can not only do this but secure an agreeable variation from the frequent pork and bacon by shooting and trapping them, and having them served up in pies, or roasted in the oven.—*Cor. N.Y. Times.*

HOPS AND BEER.

The hop crop is short, and the price of hops has risen within a few months in a most remarkable if not unprecedented way. A year ago they were to be had in this market at 16 to 22 cents per pound for choice, and 10 to 15 cents for yearlings. In March of the present year the quotation for first-class was from 20 to 24 cents, and in June last it had not gone beyond 21 to 22 cents for medium, and 26 cents for choice. At that time the rise began. July sales were made at 30 cents, and dealers were asking 35 cents in July, 40 in August, and 40 to 47 in mid-September, while at the end of that month, owing to intelligence of a short crop everywhere, 50 cents was the going price for No. 1. In October the price offered on this market reached 60 cents per pound, and it was thought that prices had been forced too high, and that a reaction must come. Still the article rose, and sales have been made here recently at 75 cents per pound, while in New York the quotation for finest quality is \$1.10, and cable bids of £25 and £26, per bale, were received from London up to last Monday, without takers, and 19,271 bales have been shipped this season to England. The market is bare of them here, because the growers will not sell, and speculators who have secured any are holding them still higher.

Bavarian hops advanced in price in a still greater ratio. This state of things, as was natural, has affected the price of ale and lager beer. A combination was formed among the Toronto brewers to advance prices in October, and Halifax brewers followed suit, advancing the price of XX ale and porter to \$20 per hhd., XXX ale and porter to \$24 per hhd., "to enable them to meet the extra cost of material rather than reduce the quality of the beer." Shortly afterwards, says the *Acadian Recorder*, the Toronto compact was broken, and so the newly settled Halifax prices could not be maintained. In spite of the keen competition between Canadian brewers, however, so marked an advance in the cost of hops could scarcely fail to enhance prices of beer.

While on the subject, we cannot help referring to the numerous cases of which we have heard, wherein country hop-growers or holders have broken faith with hop-buyers in this city and elsewhere in respect of contracts made before the rise. One dealer contracted with a grower in September for hops at 40 cents, and with a manufacturer to sell the same at an advance of 10 or 12 cents. The grower refused to deliver, and the dealer had to pay 7 cents per pound more than he sold for to keep faith with his customer and fill his order. For this excess, suit has been properly entered. In another case, an extensive brewer agreed with a grower for a large lot of domestic. The time being up and no delivery made, he set enquiry on foot, and found that the grower had sold his hops to another brewer at some cents per pound advance. A third case is instanced to us in which a bargain made, and money paid by the