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The Price of Fertilizers.

A correspondent writes: "Since I have been reading your excellent articles on the fertilizer question, I have wondered that so little has been said and written upon this most important subject long ago. Just think of it; these fertilizers, made from the waste of slaughter houses and gas-works, mixed with cheap minerals and the cheapest of all mineral acids, are yet sold to the farmers at higher prices per ton than steel rails, and at as high a price by the car load in barrels as very good brands of flour! Something is wrong, something is rotten in Denmark," when such a state of things can long endure. I understand that Bradley is very rich, and that Bowker, who graduated a poor boy from the Massachusetts agricultural college a few years ago, has already acquired a great fortune."

REMARK—The large majority of our farmers, (having no instruction in our common schools in anything relating to their trade—neither in botany that they may know about plants, nor in mineralogy that they may know about soils, nor yet in chemistry that they may know about fertilizers and manures), are necessarily at the mercy of the fertilizer makers until they can acquire information in some other way. As few of them purchase agricultural books, and as the agricultural papers do not like to offend such heavy advertizers

as the fertilizer makers, this information has been slow in getting to them. And now, as we learn from Mr. Ward, these makers are striving to control the market for fertilizer material, in order to prevent the farmers from getting them at reasonable prices. By doing this they hope still to make us pay two prices for their goods. But we do not think they can establish such a monopoly.—DR HOSKINS.

The South Carolina Phosphate Rock.

The first discovery of what is now known as the "South Carolina Phosphate Rock" was made in 1844 by persons digging for marl—the green sand or potash-bearing marl being in great request as a fertilizer at that time. The parties engaged in digging pits to reach the marl often passed through a layer of clay filled with nodules of rock weighing from four or five to twenty pounds, or more. This layer was from ten inches to three feet thick, but usually about sixteen inches, and the rocks were packed in quite closely, embedded in yellow clay. They were not considered of any value at that time, but were known to exist over a large area of territory, mostly near the surface. The composition of these rocks was not ascertained until the summer of 1867, when one of them was analysed, and was discovered to be very rich in phosphoric acid. This analysis was made by Dr. N. A. Pratt of Charleston, and efforts were made to raise the capital to dig and prepare the rock for market as a fertilizer. Not being able to do this in Charleston, capitalists in Philadelphia were induced to engage in the speculation, and the "Charleston Mining and Manufacturing Company" was organized. A large capital was employed, lands bought, wharves and buildings prepared, and machinery devised for cleansing and grinding the rock. The analyses made at different times were found to vary considerably, yet nearly all of them showed a rock equal to or exceeding bones in phosphoric acid. These analyses run from twenty-five to thirty-five per cent of this acid, equivalent to from fifty five to seventy-five per cent of bone phosphate of lime. The first cargo of one hundred tons was shipped April 14, 1868, and the excitement, as soon as the value of the rock became known, was almost equal to the coal oil furor.