

Mr. Barnard—The fact that plaster of Paris has not a good effect in very dry weather may be explained by the fact that it requires a great deal of water to make it useful, and if applied when the plant is covered with dew, the action of the plaster will be quickly seen. In two or three days, when there is sufficient moisture, the clover field will change in appearance entirely.

Mr. Shutt—It is quite true that the presence of water in the soil is absolutely essential for the utilization of any kind of fertilizing material which plants have to appropriate through their roots.

Mr. Fisk—In the ripening of the apple, is there a greater draft on the potash than at other stages ?

Mr. Shutt—There is a disposition on the part of plant to store up in their seeds large quantities, comparatively speaking, of phosphoric acid, more particularly, and to some extent of potash. There is a migration as the season advances and the fruit matures, of these constituents to the seed, so that relatively a larger amount of these materials are contained in the seed than in many other parts. It is in the spring, however, when the greatest draft is made on the soil elements of fertility.

The meeting then adjourned.

HOWICK, 28th January, 1897.

The Society met at 10 a.m.

THE USEFULNESS OF BIRDS IN HORTICULTURE.

Mr. N. E. Jack, Chateauguay Basin, read the following paper :

There is not anything in nature more delightful to a lover of birds than their morning song, from the first sleepy chirp at early dawn to the full orchestra at sunrise. And while they give us this music without any ticket of admission, we give scarcely a thought to their great value in other respects, for it is to these feathered friends we are greatly indebted for ridding us of many insect pests while searching for their food.

Nor is it only the *morning* bird, for there are others that come abroad only during the night, or twilight, and satisfy their hunger. Swarms of insects are most active after dewfall, and the hour about sunset is the foraging time for the swallow, while later on the whip-poor-will and owl direct their attention to the larger beetles and moths.

The woodcock seldom ventures abroad in the daytime, but feeds on worms in the fields, though he has been observed scratching among the leaves for insects in the daylight when in the dense woods. The advent of the English sparrow has been a great drawback to the domestication of our native birds, as many condemn *all* birds on account of this quarrelsome raider, for though they