

CULTIVATION OF WASTE LANDS.—EMPLOYMENT OF LABOURERS.—A paper recently presented to the Council of the Royal Agricultural Society of England, by Lord Portman, is likely to engage the attention of many great landowners, inasmuch as it tends to prove the compatibility of improving tracts of sterile or stubborn soil without any large outlay, and with certain prospective benefits; whilst by the introduction of an extended system of spade husbandry, abundant work may be provided for the unemployed agricultural labourers, and thereby insure a corresponding diminution of the poor rates. The substance of Lord Portman's communication is as follows:—His lordship, who has large estates in Dorsetshire, found that a tract of land, called "Shepherd's-corner," about 200 acres in extent, was wholly unproductive, yielding a nominal rent of 2s. 6d. per acre. About 15 years ago his lordship resolved to make an experiment with this land. He accordingly gave directions to his steward that it should be laid out in six divisions, representing so many small farms, in the cultivation of which such of the labourers as could not obtain full work from the neighbouring farmers were occasionally employed. For the three first years there were no returns, the ground having been merely broken up with spade, and the surface soil exposed. In subsequent years this land was sown chiefly with turnips, fed off by sheep, until it was found in sufficient heart for the reception of grass and corn seeds, the crops from which were at first scanty and indifferent, but sufficient, however, to pay for cultivation. At the expiration of 15 years, the expenditure upon the whole, inclusive of allowance for rent at the original rate of half-a-crown per acre, together with all charges on account of tithes and taxes, amounted to a little more than 10,000*l.*; the returns, by crops sold and sheep fed, exceeding that sum by 88*l.*, independent of the crops now in the ground, which will come to the landlord in September next. This may appear to be an inadequate return for the 15 years' experiments; but, as Lord Portman justly observes, "as a farmer he has lost nothing, whilst as landlord he is a considerable gainer, the land being now fully equal to any of the neighbouring farms." Two objects, both of great importance, have thus been attained. These 200 acres have been fertilised, which would otherwise have been of no present or prospective value, and in the process of cultivation employment has, during that long period, been provided for several hundreds of labourers, who, but for that resource, must, at some seasons at least, have become a burden to the parish.

PRESERVING SCYTHES, &c. FROM RUST.—To preserve scythes, sickles, reaping hooks, and other steel tools from rust after the season for using them, wipe them clean and dry, and hold them before the fire and keep drawing them backward and forward until warm enough to melt wax; then take some bees-wax and rub it all over. A half penny worth of wax will be sufficient for a scythe. Then put it in a dry place, but not warm; it needs no other covering. The usual method is to wrap a hay-band round; but in winter time this naturally contracts moisture, or the damp air strikes it between the folds of the hay band.—*Farmer's Magazine.*

THE ELECTRICAL EEL IN THE ADELAIDE GALLERY.—The eel, as it seemed, knew well enough that we had some design upon him that he might not exactly like, for as I planted myself to wait for him by the basin, with arms raised and shirt sleeves tucked up, prepared to seize both head and tail at once, he suddenly turned back, although he had already come pretty near me, betook himself to the opposite side of the basin, and would not again swim towards me while I kept my position. I had to retire, to assume an indifferent air, and wait some time before the animal resumed his circular motions. Observing now that the right moment was come, I dashed at the water, and seized the eel stoutly at both ends. The blow which the creature gave me was of most exceeding severity; and although I used every effort to receive it with composure my features and gestures, it would seem, must have expressed some amazement; for as I hastily drew both hands out of the water, my surrounding friends burst out into

loud laughter. Nevertheless, the effect was, after all, less severe than was felt by the well known writer, Basil Hall, who, on making the same experiment a few days before, was struck so smartly by the gymnosis, that the captain, on receiving the blow, fell flat on the ground. As for the strength of the shock which I sustained, I should be disposed to compare it with those which a Leyden jar of the largest size, fully charged, or a hydro-electric battery of some 200 pairs of plates, is able to give.—*Diary of a German Naturalist.*

TRUE BENEVOLENCE.—Amid all controversies respecting the quarter from which the assault on the evils of indigence is best commenced, whether the physical wants should be remedied through the moral, or the moral through the physical; whether most is to be hoped for from legislative measures, or from individual efforts; one principle may be regarded as certain, and, considering the tendencies of our age, not unseasonable. You cannot mechanise benevolence; you cannot put Christian love into an act of parliament, or a subscription list; and, however necessary may be the remedial action of laws and institutions, on account of the comprehensive scale of their operation, the ties between man and man can be drawn closer only by personal agency. Not one new sympathy can arise, but by the contact between mind and mind; in the spiritual world, life is born only of life; nor is any abrogation possible of that law of God which requires that we seek whatever we would save.—*Rev. James Martineau's Endeavours after the Christian Life.*

LONGEVITY OF A SHEEP.—Mr. George Gibson, Threestone Burn, tenant upon the estate of William Roddam, Esq. of Roddam, has a Cheviot "guide" wether 20 years old. This patriarch of the flock has led, during many a bitter blast, the "hirsle" from the heights of Hedgerhope to the "stell." His instinctive knowledge of a coming storm is astonishing; he conducts his companions to shelter with unerring foresight. At the wash-pool he is always first to breast the wave. His locks are now growing thin, but only one of his incisor teeth is lost, though all the molars are gone. His agility appears very little abated, and Mr. Gibson has hopes of this venerable "guide" enjoying another summer with his fleecy kindred, "where blooms the blue heather" upon his native hills.—*Kelso Mail.*

CHINESE MARKET.—The salesmen enter the market-place or step from their junks upon the shore, having baskets suspended at the extremities of a carrying-pole, in which are contained dogs, cats, rats, or birds, either tame or wild, generally alive, sea-slugs, and grubs found in the sugar-cane. The species of dog most in request is a small spaniel; the poor animals appear particularly dejected in their imprisonment, not even looking up in the hope of freedom; whilst the cats, on the contrary, maintain an incessant squalling, and seem never to despair of escaping the fate which must otherwise prove inevitable. As far as appearance is concerned, rats when butchered, for they are not brought to market alive, are by no means disgusting; they are neatly prepared, slit down the breast, and hung in rows from the carrying-pole by skewers passed through their distended hind legs. Thus these "small deer" are made to constitute their quota to the general enjoyment of society, and with the addition of "duck's blood and mare's milk," of which the soups of China are composed, a mandarin or man of substance is enabled to gratify his own taste and secure the encomiums of the "diners-out," with whom it appears the Celestial empire, like the European empires, abounds.

MATERNAL AFFECTION OF THE WHALE.—The maternal affection of the whale for its young is very great. As soon as the mother observes a threatened danger, she clings, as it were, to the calf, tries to hide it, and often takes it between her floosks (fins), and endeavours to escape. She has even been observed to carry off the calf when it has been killed, but not fastened upon. Some-