

THE ORIGIN OF THE POTATO.

The common potato (*Solanum tuberosum*) was found growing wild in Virginia at the time of its first settlement, and was introduced into Europe in the year 1545, by Sir John Hawkins.

Gerarde, an old English botanist, mentions in his Herbal, published in the year 1597, the fact of his having planted in his garden a potato, which did as well there as in its native soil.

Queen Ann, wife of James I, in a manuscript account of family expenses, mentions the purchase of a few pounds of potatoes, at two shillings a pound.

In 1663, the Royal Society recommended their cultivation as a means of preventing famine.

Previous to the year 1624 they were only planted in the gardens of the nobility; during this year a small portion was planted in an open field in Lancashire.

The potato will not thrive within the tropics, except at an elevation of from three to four thousand feet above the level of the sea; their natural climate is the temperate zone.

CASTING THE WITHERS.

Casting the withers, or inversion of the uterus, is a serious trouble of frequent occurrence among cows after calving. Mr I. B. Puffer, of Putney, Vt., informs us that himself and two of his neighbors have each saved cows when in this situation by tying a cord tightly around the protruding mass, near the body, and cutting off the part below the cord, and afterward fattening the cows. If the entire uterus protrudes, and the cord is tied above it, around the membrane connecting it with the vagina, and the section is made so as to remove the entire womb, we think it may succeed. No part of the womb should be left. If the uterus cannot be returned, it may be well to try this method to save the life of the animal. The "casting of the withers" is caused by the womb becoming turned inside out, as when a man in taking off his coat turns the sleeve wrong side out. The way to replace the withers is precisely that which a man would take to return his sleeve to its proper condition. He would take hold of the cuff and push his arm through the sleeve to the whole length of his arm. So here, the hand must be placed on the fundus or upper end of the womb, which will now be at the bottom of the hanging mass, and be pushed up through the cavity of the womb into the vagina, and this process must be gently persisted in, until the organ is replaced in its natural position. It generally requires the arm of the operator to be pushed into the body its entire length. It would do no good in returning a sleeve to re-turn it half its length. The work must be done completely. So in this case, if the inversion is partially done the womb will inevitably fall again. When properly restored to its place, it generally remains without further trouble. It will hardly be safe to allow a cow that has once had inversion of the womb to have another calf.

One who understands the true nature of the difficulty, and the anatomy of the parts, will have little difficulty in restoring the inverted organ if done before the parts become swollen and cold. Before any attempts to restore the organ, it should be carefully cleaned by bathing in warm water.

TREATMENT OF LAMBS.—Correspondents of the Mark Lane Express testify to the efficacy of a slight application of common tar around the navel a few hours after the birth of the lamb to prevent inflammation, which is often fatal to a great extent on many farms.

SEXES OF ANIMALS AT WILL.

Much inconvenience and loss is felt by all breeders of cattle for the dairy, in having such a large proportion of male animals. These are not wanted for working animals or for beef, and so are fattened as rapidly as possible and sold out of the way. The consequence of this is, that the number of calves which the farmer has to select from to keep up his dairy stock, is reduced more than one-half, which frequently induces him to raise heifer calves that are defective in some points, or, at any rate, do not come up to the standard which he would like to preserve.

We present below an article on the subject of "producing sexes at will," not because the theory is entirely new, but as a timely suggestion to those who have cows to provide for at this particular season of the year. If careful observation is made, and the facts recorded, what must seem to many now as a mere theory may be so corroborated by a multitude of instances as to remove doubt from all minds, or fail in so many as to prove that the whole matter is still veiled in uncertainty.—For many years eminent naturalists have been satisfied of the necessity of a practical way to produce the sexes at will. M. Thury had the good luck to be the first one in putting the law in practice, as the following certificate and remarks, which we copy from the correspondence of the "Southern Cultivator" shows, translated nearly in its full extent:

I, the undersigned, George Cornaz, the overseer of the estate of my late father, M. A. Cornaz, President of the Societe d' Agriculture, de la Suisse romande, Mont nt. Canton de Vaud, do hereby certify, that having received from M. Thury, a Professor at the Academie de Geneve, on the 18th day of February, 1861, some confidential directions for the purpose of verifying by experiments the law regulating the production of sexes amongst the animals, I used with my herd of cows the directions given by M. Thury, and I obtained, immediately, without any variation, all the expected results and successes.

In the first place, on twenty-two successive occasions, I desired to have heifers. My cows were of Schwitz breed, and my bull a pure Durham.—I succeeded in all these cases. Having bought a pure Durham cow, it was very important for me to have a new bull, to supersede the one I had bought, at great expense, and without leaving to chance the production of a young male. So I followed, accordingly, the prescriptions of Prof. Thury and success has proved once more the truth of the law. I have obtained from my Durham bull six more bulls (Schwitz Durham cross) for field work; and having chosen cows of the same color and height, I obtained perfect matches of oxen. My herd amounted to forty cows of every age.

In short, I have made in all twenty-nine experiments after the new method, and in every one I succeeded in the production of what I was looking for—male or female. I had not one single failure. All the experiments have been made by myself, without any other person's intervention; consequent-

ly I do declare that I consider as real and certainly perfect, the method of Prof. Thury, &c.

Done at Montet, February the 13th, 1867.
Signed, G. CORNAZ.

On the 17th of August, 1863, M. Thury submitted a memorial to the Academie de Sciences de Paris, and the French Emperor ordered the renewing of the experiments in several large "fermes modeles." These curious trials have been made also with equal success in the case of other animals as horses, sheep, goats &c. It is also known that with hen's eggs, the first laid give female and the last laid give male products. The law is general till the end of the laying season, when the number of female production exceeds the male, under circumstances not yet sufficiently ascertained to be reported.

It is on account of this new practical law that the people can explain why the stock-raiser must give young bulls to his cows. The bull, when young, is more prompt, and meets the female at the beginning of the heat; instead of a bull old or exhausted, or lazy by long service, which meets the cow only at the end of the heat. The first gives heifers—the second produces generally males.

The law for stock raisers and farmers is as follows: If you wish to produce females, give the male at the first signs of heat; if you wish males, give him at the end of the heat.

T. DE R.

Thibadeaux, La., March, 1867.

FRUIT GARDEN.

GRAPE VINES.—Those grown with horizontal arms will need to have the ends of the arms bent downwards, to cause all the buds to start equally. With vines planted this spring, allow but one bud, which should be the strongest, to grow. Two buds may grow from vines planted last year.

LAYERS may be made by bending down a cane of last year's growth, placing it in a trench six inches deep, and fastening it there by means of hooked pins. When the buds have started, and the shoots have made a few inches' growth, gradually fill the trench with soil.

CURRENT BUSHES.—The currant worm appears this month and next. No better application has been suggested than dusting with the powder of White Hellebore. Keep the ground well cultivated, or put a heavy mulch between the rows.

STRAWBERRIES.—Where the winter mulch still remains on, it should be parted over the plants if not already done. Set plants, and if they show any blossom buds, remove them. Beds without mulch should have the surface thoroughly cleaned, without moving the soil so as to disturb the roots; then put on a thick mulch of bog or salt hay, straw, tan-bark, or whatever is most convenient.

PICKING AND MARKETING.—Procure baskets and crates in good season, and have them distinctly marked.

INSECTS.—Hand picking is the only remedy for rose-bugs, as it is for the leaf-rolling caterpillars.—AMERICAN AGRICULTURIST.