

the cost at which the prairie can be cultivated for the first time. In subsequent years it is diminished; as, after the soil is once turned up, the land can be ploughed for one dollar an acre. This reduces the aggregate cost to 25s. per acre. But it may be supposed that, as the husbandry is rude, the yield will not be very abundant. The average yield of good prairie land, when properly tilled, is about thirty-five bushels per acre; but as it is generally farmed it yields an average of thirty bushels. This gives the cost of production at very nearly 1s. the first year, and at 10d. the subsequent years. The American is somewhat smaller than the English bushel; but making ample allowance for this difference, 10s. sterling may be assumed as the cost of producing a quarter of wheat in most portions of the Mississippi valley where the land is prairie land. Of course when it is forest land the cost of clearing will enhance that of production. It therefore follows, that all that the prairie farmer can get over 10s. sterling per qr. for his wheat on his farm is clear profit to him. Compare this with 84s. 6d., and 56s. as the successively assumed remunerating prices in this country.—*Mackay's Travels in the United States in 1846-7.*

BENEFITS OF SALT AS MANURE.—We have recently been perusing several European articles, detailing experiments made with salt as manure, and from them we have made the following brief synopsis of its utility:—

It attracts the humid vapors and repels frost, and thus assists in keeping the land moist in dry weather, and warm in cold. It keeps every thing in the soil in a soft and soluble state, and assists to digest and prepare the food for vegetable nutrition. It destroys many kinds of vermin and weeds, and usually increases the amount of the crop one fourth to one third; strengthens the growth of every thing to which it is applied, and brings all crops earlier to the harvest. It generally adds from five to seven bushels per acre to the yield of wheat used in the most moderate quantity, and in all kinds of grain makes more ear and less straw. Mr. George Sinclair obtained at Woburn, on plots of thirty-six square feet, at the rate of seventy to ninety-five bushels of wheat per acre, by the use of salt mixed with other manures. It is found equally beneficial to pasture as well as root crops, sweetening all vegetation, and making it more wholesome for both man and beast. It is a great safeguard against blast, rust, mildew, and indeed all the diseases of grain and vegetables.

Salt is inoperative applied near the sea-shore, where salt water spray is already in excess on the land; but every where else it is beneficial. It may be used at the rate of five or forty bushels per acre, though ten or twenty bushels are better. It can be sown broadcast on the land, or be incorporated in the manure or compost heap. Mr. Prideaux informs us, that mixed with lime and its compounds, it undergoes decomposition, producing soda or its combination with carbonic acid, or with humus; all more powerful digesters and feeders than salt itself; and the muriate of lime, which has the strongest attraction for moisture of almost any thing known. Salt and lime work vegetable matters to decay quicker than salt alone. With gypsum it will supply soda and sulphuric acid cheaper than any other material, besides the muriate of lime, so valuable for its moistening quality.—*American Agriculturist.*

ROOKS.—I take the liberty of predicting that in the course of a few years the farmers of this country will be unable to grow corn crops at all! You must not be startled at a supposition so bold as this. I will premise my explanation by a short statement made in works

upon Natural History upon the very best authority. Many years ago, the Coffee plants in the island of Madagascar were attacked by the grackle, a well known bird on the African coast. The grackle is an insect feeder, but having used up the supply, it betook itself in pure necessity to Coffee. An edict was speedily issued and carried into effect, for the annihilation of grackles, and every bird on the island was destroyed. All went on very well for a year or two; when lo and behold, the insects and their larvæ having the field to themselves began to make sad havoc upon the Coffee plants. What was to be done? There was no alternative but that of bringing back the grackle, which was in due season imported. The Coffee planters had however gained something by experience, and they resolved to profit by the same; they managed to keep the grackle within bounds, and they well knew that he would do the same by the insects. And they were right. By preserving a *juste milieu* doctrine between the two, they were enabled to grow Coffee. Now I apprehend the farmers in the present day are much in the same position as the Coffee planters of Madagascar. There has been for some time a system practiced in this neighbourhood of poisoning birds by wholesale; thousands upon thousands have thus been destroyed, and the system continues. Can anything, I ask, be more absurd and irrational; I had almost said stupid, than this abominable practice. I will say nothing about the beauty and harmony of living nature, I will not whisper a syllable of the goodness and beneficence and wisdom of its great author, for I know from experience, that against prejudice in agricultural districts such arguments have no weight; neither will I attempt to picture the horror with which I have witnessed this familiarity with poison spreading like an evil pestilence among the beautiful of God's works. But this I will say, that if the farmers of England run blindly and wilfully into the proved and fatal error of the Coffee planters of Madagascar, if they permit the grub and the wireworm to destroy the crops of this country—and this they will do most assuredly if they annihilate insect feeders—they will not only effect their own ruin, but they will inevitably cause a great national calamity.—*Agricultural Gazette.*

GREAT FARM.—The United States Patent Office Report says, "One of the greatest dairies in our country is that of Colonel Meacham, of Pulaski, N. Y. His farm consists of one thousand acres, three hundred of which are devoted to grass; and he keeps one hundred head of cattle and ninety-seven cows. In one year he made thirty thousand pounds of cheese, twenty thousand of which sold at one time, in New York, for from six and a half to seven cents per pound. He feeds his cows mostly on hay and carrots; of the latter, he raises two thousand bushels, and gives each cow half a bushel per day. And besides the benefit derived from his grass for his stock, he gathers not less than three hundred bushels of grass seed."

CHOKING OF SUBTERRANEAN DRAINS.—A short time since. Mr. Hawkins, of Assington, a gentleman occupied in farming and professionally engaged in land-surveying and draining, brought me a slimy substance which he described as collecting within and choking up drains in certain localities. He referred me to Mr. Parkes' "Essays on Land Draining," p. 66. for an account of this substance and its analysis by Mr. R. Phillips. Mr. Parkes considers it to be an aggregation of peroxide of iron precipitated from the chemical solu-