

PROGRESSIVE CULTIVATION OF FRUITS.

The progressive cultivation of fruits, as well as of other vegetable productions, and their removal by wandering tribes and conquerors, from region to region, give, when these events can be traced, a peculiar interest to the subject. The absence of records, and the little attention which early history has paid to almost any thing save the splendid though destructive tracks of victorious armies, has involved the facts in obscurity; but wherever man has penetrated, we may be assured that he has assisted the dissemination of vegetable productions, much more surely and rapidly than the birds which bear their seeds from land to land, than the currents of the ocean, or even than the winds."

If we consider, for example, the fruits of our own country, we shall observe to what extent the conquests of foreign foes have operated in this beneficial manner. Before the invasion of the Romans, the natives of Britain probably possessed no other than the wild fruits of northern Europe, the crab, the sloe, the hazel-nut, and the acorn. The Romans themselves had, but a few centuries before, obtained their principal fruits from Greece, and more eastern countries. It was not till the triumph of Lucullus, that the cherry was transported to Italy from Pontus, as a memorial of his conquest. In less than a century, the same species of cherry was common in France, in Germany, and in England, where the conquerors had introduced it. Thus the cherry, and in all probability the peach, the plum, the apple, and the pear, are evidences that England was once a colony of Rome. It is interesting to remark, as a fact in perfect accordance with the ordinary operations of the all-wise but mysterious Governor, who "causes the wrath of man to praise him," that the evils of war are generally mitigated, in the earlier stages of society, by the diffusion of the arts of cultivation. Plutarch, noticing this in the case of Alexander the Great, says, perhaps with some natural exaggeration, that the communications which that conqueror opened up between distant nations, by his progress into India, had more benefited mankind than all the speculative philosophers of Greece. This incidental blessing, however, is only confined to the early stages of society, and war becomes an unmitigated evil when mankind have far advanced in civilisation—an evil, however, to which that very civilization tends to put an end, by distinctly exhibiting it in this light.

Another and milder sway introduced new fruits into Great Britain. I mean that of the church. The monks, after the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons to Christianity, appear to have been the only gardeners, and in the agreeable relaxations of this profession they took great delight. While the rude nobles and barons, and their still ruder dependents, wasted each other by mutual depredations, the sacred ground of the church was universally respected; and here the gentle arts of peace found shelter, and were successfully pursued. The venerable abbey is almost always found situated on some spot remarkable for its fertility, as well as for the beauty of the surrounding scenery. Even though it has been wholly neglected, though its walls be in ruins, covered with stone-crop and wallflower, and its area produce but the rankest weeds, there are still the remains of the aged fruit-trees, the venerable pears, the delicate little apples, and the luscious black cherries. The chestnuts and walnuts may have yielded to the axe, and the fig-trees and vines died away, but sometimes the mulberry is left, and the strawberry and raspberry struggle among the ruins."

The Crusades, by renewing a communication with the countries of the East, again assisted the diffusion of those vegetable treasures which had been neglected after the destruction of the Roman empire. The monastic gardens saved many of their choicest fruits to the care of those ecclesiastics who had accompanied the expeditions to the Holy Land. A similar result of this taste for horticulture, which existed in European monasteries, seems to have accompanied the transplantation of this corrupted form of Christianity to the new world. "In studying the history of the conquest," says Humboldt, "we admire the extraordinary rapidity with which the Spaniards of the six-

teenth century spread the cultivation of European vegetables along the ridge of the Cordilleras, from one extremity of the continent to the other;" and he attributes this remarkable effect principally to the industry and taste of the religious missionaries. In the South Seas, in Southern Africa, and in Australia, the same system is now pursued; in the two former places, chiefly by missionaries; in the latter place, by the free settlers. With regard to Australia, in particular, the introduction of European fruits, and other vegetable productions, was essential to the subsistence and comfort of the inhabitants, for, previous to its occupation by the British, there was scarcely a production of the soil fit for human food; and it is remarkable that the only addition which has been made to the list of our garden vegetables, by the discovery of that new and singular continent, is a species of spinach. It was not till the age of Queen Elizabeth, that horticulture made much progress among the middle classes. Commerce began at that era to diffuse its wealth, as well as its intelligence and enterprise; and then horticulture may be said to have first commenced its beneficial influences among the mass of the people.—*Duncan's Sacred Philosophy of the Seasons.*

From the Glasgow Magazine.

THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER OF MALINES.
A STORY.

The vicissitudes of war are so various, that they frequently lead to different and equally unexpected results. The casualties belonging to it may consign a man to the earth, or raise his fortune upon it.

Hall, a private dragoon, when placed with his back against a wall in a street of Brussels, the day after the affair of Waterloo, thought that *this world was little to him*—that his pass was already signed and sealed with a bloody wound, to send him to the next.

After the battle of Waterloo, every hospital in Brussels was quickly filled, and many of the private houses also. Those of the wounded that could not be taken into the hospitals, were left on the litters that bore them, until room could be made for them. The kind inhabitants of Brussels were not slow to open their doors to receive the wounded of the British army; of that number, Hall was one.

Albert Van Hosche had nearly reached the head of the street leading to the park, when a group of disabled soldiers, just unloaded from a waggon, attracted his notice. The sunken eye of a wounded dragoon, and his blood-stained jacket, seemed strongly to indicate that he was fast approaching the last stage of his journey through life's weary way. He was seated on the ground, and his last earthly look apparently directed towards an officer (with his arm in a sling) who stood over him. A serjeant was taking in pencil, upon a scroll of paper, some request of the wounded dragoon.

The escort that accompanied the wounded, was dismounted: the men composing it held their horses by one hand, whilst the other rested upon an unsheathed sword; but their attention seemed intensely fixed on those comrades whom they were then looking at—perhaps for the last time.

The patience of Albert Van Hosche was not to be wearied, until he had endeavoured to gratify his curiosity by speaking to the officer in command of the escort. Of him he learned that the request of Hall was, that his watch and a prayer-book of the church of England might be sent to his father. Hall at this moment lay down, as if in the last struggle between life and death, from loss of blood occasioned by the jolting of the waggon as it passed through the forest. An assistant serjeant shortly came to take charge of the wounded; and, as the decaying strength of Hall seemed to revive by the blood being stopped, his first thought reverted to his father. "But my book," said he, "is lost!—lost for ever! It was in my kit, and my horse was killed when I was wounded."

The officer repeated this to Albert Van Hosche, who did not understand much English, and could speak none. The old man feelingly said, he once had a son who fell—

an only son, the comfort of his home, and the hope of his happiness in after years: but he fell not in defence of his own country. He was taken as a conscript in the year 1811, and fell in the French lines at Salamanca; "and," added Van Hosche, "this soldier shall not die on the street. I have a small house, to which I came when I lost my boy; it is not far off, and at Malines I have that which keeps it—a mill." It need hardly be stated that the officer was gratified by this instance of generosity, and immediately abandoned the poor wounded soldier to the care of the good-hearted miller.

We pass at once to the peaceful abode of the miller at Malines, where the excellent daughter of its possessor, Victoire Van Hosche, paid the utmost attention that delicacy of feeling could suggest to the enfeebled soldier. Her nursing care was eminently successful, and the dragoon was in a few months enabled to rejoin his regiment, which he, however, did not do without expressing in heartfelt sincerity his grateful thanks for the kindness and hospitality shown to him, and by which his life had been preserved.

Behold, then, the departure of the revived invalid soldier, and the quietness which succeeded in the dwelling of the miller. At the door of the cottage we find the fair Victoire resuming her wonted seat, with her cushion and bobbin, making lace, upon her knee. Her mind was still occupied by the recollection of what she had seen at Brussels, as well as of the late inmate of her father's house, and the thoughts pressed strongly upon her, in proportion as the bobbin flew quickly through her fingers—

"Oh, woman, in our hours of ease,
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please;
But when stern fortune hits the brow,
A ministering angel thou."

And such had been Victoire Van Hosche to the wounded dragoon.

The pale lily seemed to have supplanted the rose upon her cheek, and the stem from which she sprung was bending towards its native earth. She might ere long be without a father; and a brother she had none—he had fallen a victim in a foreign land.

Time rolled on in the routine service of an army of occupation, until the regiment to which Hall belonged was ordered home to recruit its shattered ranks. In some short time after, it returned to England. Hall applied for his discharge; and the adjutant represented to his commanding officer, that it was in consequence of a letter which Hall had received, enabling him to purchase it. The colonel replied, that they came home to recruit, not to discharge men; "but," added he, "let me see the fellow and his letter."

The letter was from the miller of Malines, with an order for £40, to purchase his discharge, as well as to give something to his father, and afterwards pay his expenses to Belgium; and the letter stated in conclusion, that, as the writer of it was fast sinking in years, and could not make him his son, he felt anxious to make him at least his son-in-law—the partner of his dearest treasure.

Luckily for Hall, the hardy feelings of a soldier had not supplanted, in the heart of his colonel, the warmth of an affectionate husband and a kind parent. These pleaded in behalf of the wounded dragoon: the discharge was granted: and thus did Hall become the husband of the Miller's Daughter of Malines.

BATTLE OF A BEAR AND AN ALLIGATOR.

On a scorching day in the middle of June 1830, whilst I was seated under a venerable live oak, on the evergreen banks of the Tache, waiting for the fish to bite, I was startled by the roaring of some animal in the cane brake, a short distance below me, apparently getting ready for action. These notes of preparation were quickly succeeded by the sound of feet, trampling down the cane, and scattering the shells. As soon as I recovered from my surprise, I resolved to take a view of what I supposed to be two prairie bulls mixing impetuously in battle, an occurrence so common in this country and season.