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Remarks on the Constuction and Management of Cattle Yards.

By J. BUEL, OF ALBANY.

Vegetables, like animals, cannot thrive or subsist without food; and upon the quantity and quality of this depends the health and vigor of the vegetable as well as of the animal. Both subsist upon animal and vegetable matter; both may be surfeited with excess, both may be injured by food not adapted to their habits, their appetites, or their digestive powers. A hog will receive no injury, but great benefit, from free access to a heap of corn or wheat, where a horse or cow will be apt to destroy themselves by eating the boughs and bark of trees, where the hog would starve. The powerful robust mule will repay, in the increase of its grain, for a heavy dressing of strong dung; for which the more delicate wheat will requite you with very little but straw. The potato feeds ravenously, and grows luxuriantly, upon the coarsest litter; while many of the more tender exotics will thrive only on food upon which fermentation has exhausted its powers. But here the analogy stops; for while the food of the one is consumed in a sound, healthy, and generally solid state, the food of the other, before it becomes aliment, must undergo the process of putrefaction or decomposition, and be reduced to a liquid or seriform state.

I have gone into the analogy between animals and vegetables thus far, to impress upon the minds of our farmers the importance of saving, and of applying, the food of their vegetables with the same care and economy that they do the food of their animals. How scrupulously careful is the good husbandman of the produce of his farm, destined to nourish and fatten his animals; and yet how often careless of the food which can alone nourish and mature his plants! While his fields are gleaned and his grain, hay and roots carefully housed, and economically disposed to his animals, the food of his vegetables is suffered to waste on every part of his farm. Stercoraries we have none. The urine of the stock, which constitutes a moiety of the manure of animals, is all lost. The slovenly and wasteful practice of feeding at stacks in the fields—where the sole of the grass is broken, the fodder wasted, and the dung of little effect, is still pursued. And finally, the little manure which does accumulate in the yards, is suffered to lay till it has lost full half its fertilizing properties, or rotted the sills of the barn: when it is injuriously applied, or the barn removed to get clear of the nuisance. Again—none but a slothful farmer will permit the flocks of his neighbors to rob his own of their food; yet he often sees, but with feeble efforts to prevent it, his plants smothered by pestiferous weeds, and plundered of the food

which is essential to their health and vigor: *A weed consumes as much food as a useful plant.* This, to be sure, is the dark side of the picture; yet the original may be found in every town, and in almost every neighborhood.

Is it surprising, that under such management, our arable ground should grow poor, and refuse to labour its accustomed reward? Can it be considered strange, that those who thus neglect to feed their plants, should feel the evil of light crops? Constant draining or evaporation, without returning any thing, would in time exhaust the ocean of its water. A constant cropping of the soil, without returning any thing to it, will in like manner exhaust it of its vegetable food, and gradually induce sterility. Neither sand, clay, lime or magnesia—which are the elements of all soils—nor any combination of part or all of them, is alone capable of producing healthy plants. It is the animal and vegetable matter accumulated upon its bosom, or which art deposits there—with the auxiliary aid of these materials diffused in the atmosphere—that enables the earth to team with vegetable life, and yield its tribute to man and beast.

I will now suggest a cheap and practicable mode of providing food for vegetables, commensurate to the means of every farmer of ordinary enterprise; and that my suggestions may not be deemed heretical, I will add, that I "practise what I preach."

The walls of the yard, on the south side of, and adjoining the barn. Sheds, substantial stone walls, or close board fences, should be erected at least on the east and west sides, to shelter the cattle from cold winds and storms—the size proportioned to the stock to be kept in it. Excavate the centre in a concave form, placing the earth removed upon the edges or lowest sides, leaving the borders ten or twelve feet broad, and of horizontal level, to feed the stock upon, and from two to five feet higher than the centre. This may be done with a plough and scraper, or shovel and hand-barrow, after the ground is broken up with the plough. I used the former, and was employed a day and a half, with two hands and a team, in fitting two to my mind. When the soil is not sufficiently compact to hold water, the bottom should be bedded with six or eight inches of clay, well beat down and covered with gravel or sand. This last labour is seldom required, except where the ground is very porous. My yards are constructed on a sand loam, resting on a clay subsoil. Here should be annually deposited, as they can be conveniently collected, the weeds, coarse grass, and brake of the farm, and also the pumpkin vines and potato tops. The quantity of these upon a farm is very great, and are collected and brought to the yard with little trouble by the teams returning from the fields. And here also should be fed out, or strewed as litter, the hay, stalks and husks of Indian corn, pea and bean haulm, and the straw of grain not wanted in the stables. To still further augment the mass, leached ashes and swamp earth may be added to great advantage. These materials will absorb the liquid of the yard, and, becoming incorporated with the excrementitious matter, double the ordinary quantity of manure. During the continuance of frost, the excavation gives no inconvenience; and when the weather is soft, the borders afford ample room for the cattle. In this way the urine is saved, and the waste incident to rains, &c. prevented. The cattle should be kept constantly yarded in winter, except when let out to water, and the yard frequently replenished with dry litter.

Upon this plan, from ten to twelve loads of unfermented manure may be obtained every spring for each animal; and if the stable manure is spread over the yard, the quality of the dung will be improved, and the quantity proportionably increased. Any excess of liquid that may remain after the dung is removed in the spring, can be profitably applied to grass, grain or garden crops. It is used extensively in Flanders, and in other parts of Europe.

Having explained my method of procuring and preserving the food of vegetables, I will proceed to state my practice in feeding or applying it. It is given, every spring, to such hoed crops as will do well upon coarse food, (my vegetable hogs and goats.) These are corn, potatoes, ruta baga, beans and cabbages. These consume the coarser particles of the manure, which would have been lost during the summer in the yard; while the plough, harrow and hoe eradicate the weeds which spring from the seeds it scatters. The finer parts of the food are preserved in the soil, to nourish the small grains which follow. The dung is spread upon the land as evenly as possible, and immediately turned under with the plough. It is thereby better distributed for the next crop, and becomes intimately mixed and incorporated with the soil by subsequent tillage. Thus, upon the data which I feel warranted in assuming, a farmer who keeps twenty horses and neat cattle, will obtain from his yards, besides what is made in summer, and the product of his hog sty. With this he may manure annually ten or twelve acres of corn, potatoes, &c. and manure it well. And if a proper rotation of crops is adopted, he will be able to keep in good heart and progressively to improve, sixty acres of tillage land, so that each field shall be manured once every four or five years, on the return of the corn and potato crop.

From Rio Janeiro.—We have been favored with the following extract of a letter, received yesterday, dated U. S. Ship Cyane, Rio Janeiro, May 27th, 1826:

"We arrived here on the 20th inst, fourteen days from Montevideo. Probably you will be anxious to learn every thing in relation to the war in this country, and I know of nothing that would gratify me more, were I placed in a similar situation, than a correct statement of facts concerning the subject which; as matter of course, I shall give. In the first instance, I perceived in the United States papers, that the Patriots were in possession of Montevideo, which is incorrect. It is besieged by less than one thousand Buenos Ayrean or Patriot Cavalry, and garrisoned by between three and four thousand Imperialists, and the mount which commands the city is garrisoned by about one thousand Imperialists.

We left here about nine weeks since, arrived at Montevideo in two, where we stopped two days, took a pilot on board, weighed anchor at midnight, and proceeded with a light breeze up the river. At day-light discovered the Brazilian blockading squadron ahead, at anchor, distant three leagues; consisting of one frigate, four corvettes, four brigs, and six or eight schooners. Cleared ship for action, on our approach, and beat to quarters. Two corvettes, and three brigs made sail and stood for us. One of the corvettes, mounting 30 guns came within hail. Capt. Elliott hailed, and was informed that the squadron was blockading Buenos Ayres, and was requested to send our boat aboard the Admiral's, which Captain Elliott refused to comply

with, but offered to receive one from him. In a few minutes, two boats from the squadron came aboard. The officer informed us we could not go up to B. Ayres. Captain Elliott said he was bound there, and would go up. The officer asked the Captain if he would go down to the Admiral (distant one mile at anchor.) The Captain refused. The boats then left the ship. A few signals passed between the Admiral and other vessels, and immediately the corvettes and brigs came within hail. Captain Elliott hailed, and wished to know if they had any more to say. The reply was not distinctly heard. We filled away, made sail and stood up the river in ureas. Here we saw the Buenos Ayres navy, which consists of one ship, mounting 28 guns, one barque of eighteen, three brigs, one schooner, and ten gunboats, commanded by Commodore Brown, a very brave officer, as will appear hereafter. It will be well to mention here that the Brazilians have a squadron in the river of seventy-one sail of pendants, under the command of Admiral Lobos. The blockading squadron is thirty miles above Montevideo, and about one hundred and fifty below Buenos Ayres. While we were in Buenos Ayres, Commodore Brown, with his ship, barque, and three brigs, got under way, proceeded down the river, passed the blockade, and arrived off Montevideo. A frigate is kept here to guard the port. She slipped her cable, and stood for Brown, and commenced an engagement which lasted three hours. The Frigate was beaten in, and took shelter under the lee of a British frigate, and thus put an end to the action. Brown arrived at Buenos Ayres slightly injured. We stopped here ten days on our return, saluted Admiral Lobos, which was returned by him, gun for gun.

"At Montevideo were two Frigates just arrived from this place, one forty-four, and the other thirty-six guns. The forty four is called the Imperatrice, or Empress. On the 25th ult. the blockading squadron came into Montevideo, amounting to nineteen sail, among them one frigate, five corvettes, four brigs, and remainder schooners. On the 27th ultimo, at about thirty minutes past 11 o'clock at night, Commodore Brown came down with his ship, barque and three brigs—commenced an attack upon the squadron. The Imperatrice drew his attention, and he gave it to her. Old Lobos, with his squadron, slipped their cables and stood up the river. We weighed anchor, and stood down a short distance, to get out of reach of the shot. The action continued one hour and 40 minutes. At this time Lobos was streaking it off as fast as canvass would carry him. Brown hauled off and stood up the river with little damage; it is said that Brown afterwards took some small vessels. I went on board the Imperatrice in the morning, and took a survey as I pulled around. She was very much cut up in hull, rigging, and spars. The commanding officer informed me that the Captain was killed, and three men, and eight wounded but there must have been one hundred killed and wounded at least. Four days after the blockading squadron came down, and anchored at sunrise. Brown was discovered with his little squadron. The Admiral made signal—all got under way, the two frigates including, made sail, and stood for Brown, who 'went about,' and stood up the river. An action was commenced between Brown's single ship and a frigate, which relieved by the squadron. Brown made off. What I have related are facts, what I have not been an eye witness to, I have received from men of undoubted ver-