

PLANT PEAS AND BEANS---A TIMELY SUGGESTION.

"Can't you advise your readers to plant peas and beans before it is too late for this season? There is more money in them than in cotton. There is machinery now to gather them at a nominal cost—at least the cotton and corn crop should be largely supplemented by them.

Yours, &c., J. W. MAYO.

Whitaker's, July 1, 1886."

Our esteemed correspondent will find elsewhere some suggestions on the above subject, which were in type when his communication was received, and we are gratified to know that they accord so well with his views.

The corn crop, on much of our richest bottom land, is ruined by excessive rains. As soon as these lands can be plowed they should be put in peas or beans, or both. It is not yet too late for these crops to mature, and the farmer who will be short in corn will find fifty or one hundred bushels of peas or beans a wonderful help next winter. Do not neglect it—raise all the peas you can and take care of them. It will pay you in more ways than one.

SEED CORN FOR PLANTING.

Mr. Powers writing to the Country Gentleman concerning the proper selection of seed corn, maintains that that which has been exposed to severe freezing is not reliable, especially that which has not been kiln dried. I want, says he, an ear that is heavy in the hand, rather long, with straight rows of kernels (for crooked rows seem to denote mongrelism, or poor breeding,) not tapering, but nearly of the same diameter throughout, well filled and rounded over at the ends, kernels long, smooth and thick, whether broad or not, and not too flinty or too soft, and rough or dented at the outer ends.

Corn is probably the most variable of cereals, hence I consider it important to aim for uniformity. This is more necessary to be sought after than in any other kind of grain. The best crib of corn will be the one which has the greatest number of ears exactly or very nearly alike.

The farmer may pronounce an ear of corn a good ear, and be disposed to pass it in his perhaps hasty inspection of seed, when it may be a wide departure from the standard which he should keep before himself. It may be a deepkerneled and with long cob, yet be decidedly objectionable on account of its sharp taper and its rough kernels. Years ago, while I still followed the now abandoned practice of selecting seed corn from the crib in the spring, I used to search out an ear which exactly suited my ideal and lay it before me as a model for constant comparison.

Some persons will tell you that seed corn should be selected which produces two ears to the stalk. This is an error which the practical farmer will soon abandon, if he has not already done so. The type of the race is a one-eared stalk, just as the type of the ovine race is to bring fourth one lamb. Now every experienced shepherd knows that it is not desirable to breed twin bearing sheep as his standard. What he wants to do is to rear a race so vigorous that they shall frequently flower out in twins as a sort of symptom of redundant strength, but to choose twin bearers specifically is undoubtedly an error. So I do not want a two eared variety of corn, but I want a variety which shall grow so strong that a stalk now and then—I do not care if one in ten does it—shall develop one good ear and a nubbin.

The point to be considered is this: A uniformly two-eared variety of any kind of corn desirable for our latitudes cannot be developed. We shall have either an ear and a nubbin or two nubbins. Pop-corn will produce two ears or more; so will sweet corn. But a robust, powerful field corn which shall be the counter-part in vegetable life of the short-horn in animals as well as the feeder of it, will not be found in a two-eared (or two nubbined) variety. This is no bare assertion with me.

—Of the 23,000 acres in the town of Newtown, Long Island, 1,849 are occupied by cemeteries. A million bodies are now buried in these places, and the annual interments amount to 28,000.

Farm Notes.

GRASS NOT A FULL RATION.

Excellent as pasture is for many purposes, there are others for which it is inferior unless supplemented by something else. It is doubtful whether alone it is a perfect ration for any stock excepting milk cows, and then only for a brief time. Early in the spring the grass is too watery. Late in Summer the seed stalks appear and then it is coarse and hard.

BREEDING SHEEP.

The ram must be kept from breeding ewes from now until the time for them to commence breeding. If this is not done flockmasters will be having lambs at all times during late Fall and Winter, and it will be impossible to properly care for them as could be done if lambs were dropped when expected, and after proper arrangements had been provided for them.

RICH SOIL FOR CABBAGE.

It is impossible to make land too rich for cabbage, but it must also be moist. It is always a forced crop, in which success requires an unnatural development of the leaves, called the head. If left to itself a cabbage plant would grow few leaves and from these send up a seedstalk as quickly as possible. On poor land poorly tilled seed is sometimes formed the same season as planting.

BREEDING COWS FOR THE DAIRY.

The Jersey cow is a specimen of what careful breeding exclusively for butter and cream can do. Its small size is due to the fact that for successive generations the breed has been bred very early, and thus its vitality is turned to other uses than to building up itself. Jersey heifers will breed very early, many dropping their first calf when a little more than a year and a half old.

THE TURNIP CROP.

The idea that turnips need no hoeing is a great mistake. If sown in corn or potato fields that have been well tilled up to this time the shade of these crops will partly obviate the necessity of hoeing. But enough more per acre can be grown to sow in drills and run the hoe through them. Thinning turnips is very important. They are always sown too thickly and, the turnip, like most roots, is its own worst weed.

GROWING TOMATOES IN FIELDS.

The tomato is almost the only garden vegetable that succeeds better without the richness of soil of the garden. Too large growth of vines make the fruit larger and more liable to rot. In field culture the fertility sufficient to grow a good crop of corn or potatoes is ample for this crop. The yield is generally more than that of potatoes on similar soil, and the price averages higher, making it a profitable crop to grow.

CLOVER AFTER HEAVY MANURING.

Market gardeners and others who manure heavily find it pays to seed clover frequently. Some of the excess of manure necessarily used is leached into the sub-soil, and the clover roots better than any other reach this, and not only save it from loss, but bring it in reach of the other crops that feed near the surface. Potash and phosphate naturally sink into the soil, and when it is cropped with only surface feeding plants, these valuable fertilizers are wasted.

HILLING POTATOES.

The almost universal practice is to make some sort of a hill about potato plants. It at least saves the tubers from becoming sunburnt, which makes them worthless for cooking. The hilling should be done when the tubers have set, as breaking the roots after this may cause a second crop to form, and neither crop will be of marketable size. Early hilling also saves labor. After potato vines begin to fall down, the cultivator cannot be got through them without covering many leaves which late in the season seriously injures the crop.

STEALING CHICKENS.

Fortunate are those farmers whose poultry yard is not exposed to the predatory excursions by lawless bipeds intent on plunder. This is one of the drawbacks to success in many cases where otherwise all the conditions are favorable. There are no meaner pilferers than those who steal chickens, and since so many have made poultry breeding a business this sort of petty larceny

becomes meaner than ever. Poultry, which used to be only an incident in farming, has become with many their entire avocation. Whoever caught the chicken thief should be given the full penalty of the law.

HIVING BEES.

Old beekeepers learn to handle bees without fear, and more especially at swarming time, when the bees are engorged with honey, and not likely to sting unless attacked. The avoidance of fear is the best means of avoiding danger. A timid, nervous person soon enrages the bees by parrying fancied assaults, while one who keeps cool soon learns that the thousands of bees buzzing around him are on no hostile intent. If a new, or at least clean, hive is offered the bees, and the swarm shaken down in front of the entrance, few swarms will refuse their new home.

FARMING IN SCOTLAND.

Winter-feeding hill sheep was introduced many years ago, and as the practice gradually became known so did the severe Winter losses gradually pass away. Until within the last few years, dairying as a branch of farming was rather looked down upon by the farmers of the greater portion of Scotland. Recent years, with their accompanying simple apparatus and low prices, have dispelled that idea. Dairying for the production of butter is principally carried on outside a six-mile radius of Glasgow. Around Ayr and Kilmarnock considerable quantities of butter are made. In almost all cases the butter is absolutely fresh or but very slightly salted. Considerable cheese is also made in the county of Ayr.

ENSILAGE IN SCOTLAND.

The result of inquiries issued by the Highland Agricultural Society of Scotland on ensilage is very favorable to the system. As regards ensilage for dairy stock, those who have used it as fodder for the purpose speak very strongly in its praise. The almost unanimous opinion is that while it may or may not increase the quantity of milk, it has a marked effect in increasing the quantity and also the quality of cream and butter. The quality of the latter is considered little, if at all, inferior to summer butter. With proper precautions no taint is communicated to milk or butter from the use of ensilage. Ensilage, it is thought, is the coming winter feed for hill sheep.

TURNIPS NOT A RENOVATING CROP.

We do not grow so many turnips as do English farmers, nor is it necessary to good farming that we should. It has been said, and truly, that turnips were the basis of good farming in England; but this is mainly because they require, or at least admit, the feeding of so much else. Turnips may furnish the bulk of winter feed for sheep and fattening cattle, but oil cake and more lately Indian meal make the fat and the manure pile. A poor farmer might grow turnips forever without enriching his land. More than most other crops they take from the soil its scarcest element of fertility, phosphate of lime. In fact, English farmers commonly use phosphate on their rutabagas, and have the second use of it for wheat.

THE GROWING CORN.

Although something may have been applied to give the corn a start, the most important period is when the ears are "springing up." Hence, an application of 200 pounds of superphosphate and fifty pounds of nitrate of soda, at the last working, will largely increase the yield and enable the corn to produce heavy, well filled ears. On many farms the plant food does not decompose as fast as it is required by the corn, which is a gross feeder, and those farmers who find the crop backward will be greatly benefitted by giving an application of fertilizer as suggested above. The growth of the stalk requires a large amount of material from the soil, but if a small quantity of fertilizer be applied at the last cultivation it not only serves as an invigorator, but supplies just the kind of food required.—Farm, Field and Stockman.

—There is a family in Glascock county consisting of a man, his wife and three children, whose aggregate weight is less than 200 pounds. There is another family that altogether weigh just 2,000 pounds more than the first family mentioned.—Augusta (Ga.) Chronicle.

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION.

The agricultural colleges and the departments devoted to agriculture in the several institutions of learning, endowed by Congress, have accomplished a fairly good work in the years that have passed since their establishment. The Michigan Agricultural College stands as the pioneer in this direction, having had an independent existence since 1863. This was some years prior to the act of Congress donating lands for agricultural education. It still leads, and has furnished many professors to the later institutions. Iowa early developed this education at Ames, and Prof. Budd is now considered an authority in all that relates to trees and plants in the continental climate of the West. At Champaign, Prof. Burrill has made important discoveries in vegetable physiology. At Cornell University, Prof. Law has done much to elevate veterinary science. Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Indiana in the North, and Kentucky, Alabama, Mississippi and Georgia in the South, are among other colleges that come to mind as doing good work in the direction of agriculture. Colorado has an excellent agricultural college at Fort Collins, and Oregon at Corvallis. Canada has but one agricultural college, that near Guelph. The school is prospering well and sustains a high reputation. With the thirty-seven institutions of like character in the United States, by concert of action, by which experiments do not run in the same channels in each, very much valuable work outside the training of students is yearly accomplished. This will be broadened and become still more valuable with the increase of true experiment stations at these several seats of learning. Mistakes have been made—may possibly be made in the future—but these schools are yearly rising on the plane of valuable achievement in the direction of progressive agriculture.—Farm, Field and Stockman.

SUGAR BEETS.

There is no better food for stock than the sugar beet. No root is more certain of a crop, and none yields more food. They are excellent keepers, nutritious, and great promoters of the flow of milk in both cows and ewes. The seed in the Northwest should be sown in drills two to two and a half feet apart. About four pounds of seed will be sufficient for an acre, and it will sprout quicker if put in boiling water before sowing, and afterwards rolled in plaster to dry. They are best sown by means of one of the numerous seed-drills now to be found in every implement store. The seed should be sown thick to save the trouble and necessity of transplanting to fill any vacancies, and afterwards thinned so the beets may stand about eight or ten inches apart. To grow the crop the land must be deep, rich, and well cultivated. The soil best adapted to them is a good, strong loam, just such as abounds all through the Northwest. The ground must be kept light and well and deeply stirred. We have often urged the importance of raising more root crops in this section, and only refer to this matter at this late season of seeding so that those who have an acre or two of unoccupied tillage land can make the experiment. While the seed should be sown as early as practicable, we believe with the proper care and cultivation the crop would reach maturity if the seed is deposited in the soil by the 20th of this month.—Farm, Stock and Home.

SPIDERS AND FORESTS.

Dr. C. Keller, of Zurich, claims that spiders perform an important part in the preservation of forests by defending the trees against the depredation of aphides and insects. He has examined a great many spiders, both in their viscera and by feeding them in captivity, and has found them to be voracious destroyers of these pests; and he believes that the spiders in a particular forest do more effective work of this kind than all the insect-eating birds that inhabit it. He has verified his views by observations on coniferous trees, a few broad-leaved trees, and apple trees.

—In Walla Walla, Washington Territory, may be seen eighty miles of wheat fields along the foot-hills of the Blue mountains.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

—A new gold country is said to have been discovered by a shipwrecked French sailor in Patagonia, between the Straits of Magellan and the river Gallegos. The man had collected from the sands a little fortune when taken off the coast by a steamer.

—Great rivalry as to speed exists among the sailing ships that annually take grain and flour to England from Oregon and California. The distance is 18,000 miles and three crack ships competed this year, the winner, Lucknow, making the voyage to Southampton in 100 days, and the second best reaching Queenstown in 116 days.

—The wealth of Alabama's coal mines is to be estimated from the statement that the available coal of Alabama, collected in one lump, would be forty-five miles long by twenty-five miles wide and ten feet thick. A broaking of 5,000 tons daily from the lump would leave a part of it untouched at the expiration of 6,000 years.

—Ordinary whitewash, as frequently used, has very little effect except to disfigure the trees. To destroy the insects and eggs hidden in the crevices of the trees, very much stronger applications have to be used. Soft soap reduced to the consistency of a thick paint, with the addition of a strong solution of washing soda, makes one of the most lasting washes. A solution of one pound of commercial potash, in from two to four gallons of water, is good.

CANNING CORN.

A correspondent of the Detroit Free Press gives her receipt for canning corn, with which she says she has had great success: "Use Mason's glass jars. Take nice green corn, cut from the cob with a sharp knife—with the back of the knife scrape the cob to get all the sweetness possible—see that your jars are perfect, no cracks, put in the corn with the small end of your potato masher and pack it in. A quart jar will take twelve or thirteen ordinary ears. When the jar is plump full, put on the rubbers, screw on the covers almost perfectly tight. I screw it as tight as I can with the thumb and finger. Put hay or cloths on the bottom of your wash boiler, lay in the cans any way you please—put little cloths in to keep them from hitting each other—fill the boiler as full as you wish, cover over with cold water, set it over the fire. When it begins to boil, boil three hours without ceasing. Then take out and with your tightener make as tight as possible immediately. After they are cold, tighten again if you can. Put away in a dark, cool place. I keep mine in a dark closet in the cellar. Peas and succotash are fine put up the same way."

WATER IS FATTENING.

It has been observed that water is fattening, and that those who drink large quantities of it have a tendency to fullness and rotundity. That there is considerable truth in this observation the Medical and Surgical Reporter fully substantiates. That excessive imbibition of very cold (iced) water (especially when one is very warm) is not to be commended, yet we have reason to believe that the unlimited use of pure spring water, at its natural temperature, is not only conducive to health, but has an actual tendency to favor a fullness and roundness of body. Whether this is the result of a better action on the part of the digestive, assimilative, and depurative functions, owing to the internal cleanliness or flushing of the human sewers produced by large quantities of water, or whether water has some specific action in producing this fullness, we do not know, neither does it signify, since observation confirms as a fact that the free use of water does have this effect.

THE DYING.

A leading physician says that a patient who is lying dying of exhaustion is generally dying of starvation. We give him beef tea, calf-foot jelly, seltzer and milk—that is, a small quantity of the sugar of milk and some fat; but the jelly is the poorest sort of food, and the beef tea is a mere stimulant. The popular belief that beef tea contains "the very strength of that meat" is a terrible error; it has no food value.