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By M. MAC LEAN.

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AGRICULTURAL.

CHARCOAL AS A MANURE.

There is no subject connected with farming that requires so great attention as "manure." Let the land be ever so sterile and barren, it has been fully ascertained that by a judicious course of manuring it can be enriched and made productive. Let the soil be as rich and as full of succulent matter calculated for the producing and nourishing the variety of plants necessary to be grown for the use of man and the benefit of the animal creation, a continued course of tillage, and a series of years' neglect of manuring will certainly render it barren and unproductive. Upon the state of the soil on every farm depends the living, we may say, of the farmer and his family, and carrying out the principle in its most extensive sense, upon the activity and intelligence of the farming community depends the whole interest of the entire commercial and civil community of any country. These facts are so evident to any man, who will take but a moment for reflection upon them, that it is a wonder indeed that more attention has and is not directed to this all important question as to what are the best manures? No doubt the manures that are well calculated to produce a decided and active influence at once upon many soils would not act so readily and so permanently upon many other soils; but there are many manures that so act upon all soils; or at best, there are many applications that may be made to almost any soil, that if they are not manures themselves, form the basis upon which the principles of other active manures may be made to produce the most astonishing effects. I have recently had my attention directed to the use of charcoal, by the knowledge of some facts that have been communicated in answer to my inquiries, that has induced me to devote a paper to the subject, in the hope, at least, that it will excite attention, and be productive, in the end, of great good to the community, by inducing a series of experiments upon the use of charcoal as a manure, that will result in immense benefit to the farming interest.

I shall not pretend to enter into a series of reasonings upon the chemical affinities of charcoal to the soil upon which it may be applied; those matters I shall leave to those whose education and pursuits have better fitted them to ascertain these things, by enabling them to reach them by chemical analysis, which I am unable to make. I shall simply state the facts which I have observed, and those which I have learned from others, whom I have requested to look to them, together with the results that have been obtained, leaving to others to say whether the question is not of sufficient importance to lead them to try whether the results will not be equally beneficial in very many other situations.

In the neighborhood in which I live there are great many hearths of coal pits, as they are called; places where wood has been piled, and burned into charcoal, scattered about the country. I have invariably observed, that upon these hearths in the course of a few years, a luxuriant coat of grass made its appearance, when all around in the vicinity scarcely a blade of grass could be found, and what there was found out of the coal hearth was sickly and dwarfish. This was so well known that in the heat of summer, when the pasture in other places was dried and withered by the summer drought, it was a common practice to drive the cattle to the "coalings," as they are called, sure that they would there obtain food. During the last summer, business called me into Hartford county, in Maryland. While there I was surprised at the exceedingly luxuriant growth of a crop of grain but lately seeded into a field, on Deer creek, and also at the very peculiar appearance of the soil. The soil upon which the grain was growing had a remarkably dark appearance, and appeared to be so mellow and friable as nearly to bury the foot at every step, and although it lay very level did not appear to the touch to be so; not as the soil in the other fields around it on the same level. My attention was excited by what I saw, and I inquired if the field had not been covered with charcoal, and was told that it had been. I inquired when it was done, and was told it had been spread upon it more than twenty years ago! I then asked what was the general quality of the crops raised upon it, and I was told that they were invariably fine, both as to quantity

and quality. The person who lived upon the property informed me that he had repeatedly hauled the soil from that field and spread it upon the surrounding fields, and he could, for years, or in fact from the time he spread it there to the present day, always see, by the growth upon these places, exactly where he had put it!

I had for some time past had my attention directed to the subject but here I found it fully developed to my full satisfaction.

When I returned home, I made it the subject of conversation frequently with the farmers in our neighborhood, and from one of them I learned that when he lived in Chester county, Pa., with his father, a part of their farm became worn out and unproductive. It was abandoned for several years and in the mean time many coal pits had been formed upon several of the old fields, by drawing the wood there to burn into coal, that had been cut in the adjoining timber lands. After some time they again put those fields under tillage, and he states that wherever a coal hearth had been left, there the crop of grain and the growth of grass was equal, if not superior, to that which grew upon any of their most productive fields. Another case of the application of charcoal I have found in this neighborhood was made by a gentleman in the iron business in his meadow, near the coal house. He had a large quantity of the coal that had become too fine to be used in the furnace; he did not know exactly what to do with it, it was in the way, and he concluded, as the easiest way to dispose of it, to haul it out and spread it upon the grass land. He spread it late in the fall, and for many years he informed me he observed the most astonishing effect produced upon his yield of grass. The quantity was nearly double, and the effect continued as long as he owned the property, which was at least ten years; so he informs me.

From what I can see of its effect, where a large quantity is left upon the ground, as for instance, in the centre of the hearth, it takes a considerable time for it to acquire a sufficient degree of moisture to penetrate to the bottom, and until it has acquired that degree of moisture nothing will grow there. Around the outer edges of circle where it is thrown upon the ground it is soon saturated with moisture, and vegetation is soon facilitated, and goes on rapidly. I should judge, from this, that when about to be applied to land the coal should be ground fine, and then thoroughly wetted and sown or spread with a lime spreader over the surface of the soil. From the circumstance of its being easily powdered or mashed up, I should suppose that the process would be very easily effected by making a floor of plank, say circular, and procuring a good sized stone, to be affixed by a shaft to an upright post, throw the coal into the circular planked way, and attach a horse to the shaft passing through the stone, and drive him round, carrying the stone, in its passage, over the coals. A very simple and easy process, precisely similar to the old fashioned way of grinding or breaking up bark, practiced by the tanners, previous to the invention of the cast iron mill now in use. The cost of covering an acre would be trifling, and if it produced no other effect than that of forming a permanent vegetable basis in the soil, for lime to act upon, it appears to me it would well repay a greater amount of labor and expense than would be necessary to try it.

I have just been made acquainted with another result of the application of charcoal to arable land, that if general, from its application, will induce its use by every one who can procure it at a reasonable price: that is, wherever charcoal has been applied *rust never affects the growing crop of wheat!* My friend who has communicated this fact to me states, that he has observed it particularly, and when the field generally has been "struck with rust," as it is called, those places where he had applied the charcoal invariably escaped.

J. H. HEPBURN.

Jersey Shore, Lycoming Co., Pa.

ON FATTENING SWINE.

To the Editor of the Ploughman:
Sir:—In your paper of the 18th you have a communication on the cooking of meat for hogs, &c.—Now, Sir, I have no doubt that it is the best way of fattening swine, both as the most economical and also the quickest way; for in the first place, swine love the taste of food that is boiled, or scalded, much better, if we may judge by the way in which they take hold at their meals, than when they have the raw article given them, and it follows as a matter of course, that they will fatten quicker, the cooking of food renders it more luscious, and it takes a less quantity than when used in a raw state. I have seen some farmers give their hogs raw pumpkins, potatoes, and also apples, thinking to fatten them; the result has been, as far as I have observed, a great waste of all these articles and a very small profit. To be sure a little while before killing time comes, they have given them shelled corn, to finish them off. Now I have no doubt if they had cooked two-thirds, or mayhap a less quantity, they would have realized a

much larger profit, and not heard so much squealing, for a hog is not content with raw apples, potatoes, or even a fine pumpkin thrown over in his muddy domain without raising sundry screeches of disapprobation. I once fattened two hogs on cooked apples, that is to say, they were the chief of their living. The process was this; I filled a large boiler with apples, and then put in water till it came even on the top. After the apples were sufficiently boiled, I stirred in cob meal till the water was soaked up; this was fed out to them three times a day; at first it physicked them, but in a short time, with the aid of a little salt, it did very well. My apples were, generally, the refuse of the barrelling fruit, and of course worth but little. I kept them on this food from the middle of September till about the twenty-fifth of December, when we slaughtered them. They appeared all this time to thrive and fatten well; and all thought who saw them after they were butchered that they would weigh four hundred pounds, and I thought the same; but when they were weighed in Boston, where they were sold, they did not come to quite three hundred pounds. The pork was soft and flabby, and did not weigh like corn fed pork; but the cost of making it was small, compared to that of corn fed pork. Now I use but few apples and those in the early part of the fall, boiled up with potatoes and pumpkins; about the first of October, I feed them on boiled potatoes with Indian meal mixed in, sufficient to make a thick mush; and in November they have meal scalded, till the latter part of the month, or the first of December, when they are slaughtered. I have found this, as I think, the best and most economical way of fattening my hogs, taking care that they always have a good bed of dry litter for this is better, for them than muddy planks to lie upon. I had two hogs slaughtered on the 30th of last month, which weighed, when dressed, eight hundred and thirty-nine pounds, and which were fattened, as I have stated above. I have two of the Mackay breed, fattened in the same way, they are a year old in February, and which I suppose will weigh three hundred at the present time. I have used wheat shorts, for hogs, but did not find them to answer. An intelligent and enlightened farmer of this town, told me that he once made use of rye meal for his hogs with good success; this was when the price of rye was much below that of corn; and now, Sir, if you think that these remarks are worthy of notice, you may give them a corner in your good farmer's paper.

Yours with respect, L. G.
Weston Dec. 1841.

Our Weston correspondent is a practical farmer, and we are pleased that he defends the good old practice of letting hogs have a variety of good things. If some of these are cheap so much the better; and in regard to cooking food for swine experience seems fully to prove the advantages of it. If it suits the stomach better it must prove more nutritive than raw food. Pork raised and fattened wholly on grain seldom commands price enough to repay the cost, and the refuse of the dairy is well adapted to promote the growth of hogs; but other cheap materials may often be used to advantage, and by boiling they may be rendered more palatable.—[Ed.—*Massachusetts Ploughman.*]

THE COLIC IN HORSES.

CAUSES.—The colic is sometimes occasioned by perspiration being suddenly checked from imprudent exposure to wet or cold, or drinking a large quantity of cold water when the body is heated by exercise, or it may be produced by eating too much immediately after fatigue, or by bad hay, new corn, or whatever is new or prone to ferment; and sometimes it may originate in weak and delicate animals, from the fermentation and confinement of air in the intestines.

SYMPTOMS.—This disease is generally manifested by the horse's suddenly lying down and rising again and sometimes striking his belly with his hind feet; he stamps with his fore feet, and refuses every kind of food. When the gripes are violent, he throws up his body in convulsive motions, his eyes are turned up, and his limbs are stretched out as if dying; he falls into profuse sweats, succeeded by cold shivering fits; strives to stale; turns his head frequently towards his flanks; rolls over, and often turns on his back. When the pulse becomes small and feeble, the horse frequently lying on his back, and voiding small portions of dung like ginger-bread nuts, his back bone elevated, and his legs and ears cold, it is a certain indication that inflammation has taken place. When a mortification advances, the animal appears free from pain and easier, which is a sure prelude to death.

CURE.—In all cases of the colic, clysters should be administered with as little delay as possible; and repeated every half hour until the disorder be removed or considerably relieved. Previous to introducing the clyster-pipe, the hardened

dung in the rectum should as before stated, be cleared away.

Mr. White recommends to give, as soon as the disorder is observed, the following draught:

Balsam of Capivi, 1 ounce,
Oil of Juniper, 2 drachens,
Simple mint-water, 1 ounce,

To be mixed in one dose. Or the following:—Venice turpentine, one ounce, mixed with the yolk of an egg; adding, gradually, peppermint-water, one pint; also spirit of nitrous ether, half an ounce for one dose.

A clyster also should be injected, consisting 6 quarts of water gruel, or warm water and eight ounces of common salt.

If the disease has continued for several hours, and the pain appears to be excessive, with a quick pulse, it will be proper to bleed to three quarts, or sometimes more to prevent inflammation and remove the spasmodic contraction of the intestines.—The draught and clyster should also be repeated, and the belly be rubbed for a length of time with mustard embrocation. If the disease be exceeding violent and resists these remedies, which will very rarely occur, a pint of castor oil, with an ounce and a half of tincture of opium may be given. The horse must be rubbed perfectly dry, and well clothed: and his stand filled with clean litter for a considerable height.

Lawson's Modern Farrier.

THE SPECTRE MASK.

A tale of the Lake of Como.

It was a still and cloudless night—not a breath stirred the leaves on the high trees that surrounded the great villa of Count Minotti, on the lake of Como, when two figures were seen to emerge from a private door that led into the garden surrounding the house, and descend the stone steps to a little boat, in the stern of which sat a figure muffled in a coarse cloak. Perceiving their approach, the man who occupied the boat, immediately arose and assisted the cavalier and his companion, a female of stately form and features, of great beauty, to descend, which they did in silence, and entered the boat, which was immediately pushed off. There no moon to add beauty and effect to the scene, but the heavens were studded with stars, and the clear blue lake reflected their more intensely blue rays, whilst the lights from the windows of the different dwellings that skirted the shores, were reflected in long lines of gold, and the distant bark of the watch dogs alone broke the stillness of the night. Not a word was spoken by either party, until the boat reached the middle of the lake when the lady laid her small white hand on the shoulder of the cavalier, and looked earnestly in his face for some minutes.

"Dearest Vincenzo," said she, "why so moody and thoughtful? Your evening star shines as brightly as on that night when you wooed and won my poor heart; but," she continued mournfully, "you are changed, aye, changed—and now scarcely vouchsafes a word."

"Yes," replied he who was thus addressed, as he cast his shoulder the cloak in which he was thus muffled, "I have words for thine ear to-night which may not be pleasing—Mariana, thou hast outlived my love. Hast thou no prayer ready? for here I shall absolve myself from the vow my folly made thee."

The lady stared wildly at her husband, for he was no less, and attempted to clasp him round the neck.

"Dear, dear, lord," she said in supplicating accents, "what dreadful deed dost thou meditate! Think, oh, in mercy think what you would do!—Have I offended? Have I said or done anything to—"

"Peace!" muttered her stern but cruel partner, forcibly removing her arms—"peace, I say, and pray for thy soul, for thou has not ten minutes to live!"

The lady fell on her knees, before her merciless lord, and in a frantic manner, besought him to have pity, but the fiend had steeled his heart, and he harshly bade her prepare for death; when the tone of his victim suddenly changed, and no longer a suppliant, she vehemently upbraided him for his cruelty.

"Vincenzo!" said she, as her dark eye flashed wrathfully, "I am in thy power, but my friends will avenge me! I ask not for life, for I know thy purpose is deadly; but dread the vengeance of my family, who will demand me at thy hands."

The Count deigning no other reply than a low articulate malediction; made a sign to his attendant, who immediately rising, seized the lady by the arm.

"Hurl her into the lake, Jacopo," said Minotti; and the words had scarcely passed his lips, when their victim, forced in spite of her struggles, over the side of the boat, fell with a faint shriek and a heavy splash into the water, but she almost immediately rose to the surface, and the Count seizing an oar, endeavored to stern her by a blow on the head.—The stroke was ill-directed, and missed the Countess, who, seizing the oar with both hands, supported herself, and thus addressed her cruel husband:

"Vincenzo Minotti, thy days are numbered—God shall judge you for this deed; I summon you to appear before his tribunal before this moon is out!"

Her husband instantly directed his attention to return to his villa. Remorse never touched the breast of Minotti who was as subtle as he was revengeful and cruel, and he spread it abroad that his wife had eloped from him, and the tale was believed, for he had previously circulated stories of her infidelity.

Three weeks and more had passed, when a nobleman on the other side of the lake, gave a splendid fete, to which many were invited, and amongst the rest the Count Minotti was the gayest of the gay throng. During the evening he had regarded a lady of exquisite beauty, and now he endeavored to enter into conversation with the object of his admiration; but the lady was coy, and replied to all the fond things he addressed to her with provoking coldness, and Minotti more than once felt his wrath almost master order. If he handed the beautiful mask an ice, she modestly excused herself, and the Count in vain begged that she would partake of some slight refreshment, without which she could not possibly support life through the evening.

The halls were brilliantly illuminated by enumerable lamps, that mocked the stars above; them, and danced and sprightly conversation were not lacking.

"Dearest lady," said he, "excuse a little gentle force, and let me remove that envious vizor from your lovely face."

His companion made no reply, and Minotti construing her silence as an assent, playfully raised the mask from the lady's face—but oh, horror! what did he behold!—the pale countenance of his murdered wife, who regarded him with a look so fearful, that his very blood was chilled, and his knees bent under him.

"Vincenzo!" said the spectre, laying her cold, clammy hand on his and looking him earnestly in the face, "behold thy wife!"

The Count heard no more—he recoiled from the apparition, and with a gasp fell senseless to the ground. He was discovered by some of the company in a death-like state, from which though attended by the most skillful physicians, he did not recover his senses until morning, when he begged those who attended him to send for a confessor, to whom he unfolded what had occurred; but the remembrance of the scenes in which he had been an actor operated so strongly on his shattered nerves, that fit after fit succeeded and ere the evening bell had rung, the guilty soul of Vincenzo had fled forever.

So far goes common rumor; but the sisterhood of a neighboring convent know the sequel of the story. The wife whom her lawless husband would have betrayed to death, was not permitted by Providence thus to perish.

Buoyed up by her clothing, and assisted by the oar, which by the trepidation of those who intended her murder was left in her possession she floated a long hour a living death upon, the bosom of the deep, still lake.

The barge of the nobleman at whose villa the fete took place, rescued the lady as her strength was just exhausted, and the rest the reader knows. It only remains to state that the lady, shocked with the world, betook herself to the seclusion of a convent; and it was not thought advisable to disabuse the minds of the peasants of the idea of a supernatural visitation for so horrible a crime. Her rescue and subsequent residence were therefore carefully concealed.

SPEECH OF A KENTUCKIAN.—The New Orleans Picayune tells an excellent story about a Kentuckian in Havana, who was dining with a friend, in company with an Englishman, and finding the latter's attention attracted towards him, told certain very marvellous anecdotes, and ran a complete "saw" on his companion. A wart on the bridge of his nose, near his left eye, which had been blackened by the application of lunar caustic, gave a very sinister aspect to "Old Kentucky."

The first toast offered, from the head of the table, was "Mary, the Mother of Washington!" The Kentuckian seized a decanter swallowed at least one fourth of its contents, and rising from his chair, deliberately dashed the bottle into fifty pieces. "That's the way to drink 'that' toast," said he, and calmly took his seat. The Englishman turned pale, for he began to think the next decanter would be broken over his head.

"I say," Thompson, observed the Kentuckian, winking to a person next to the Englishman, on the opposite side of the table, "do you know that the man who gouged my eye out the second time is now in this very city?"

"No, is he?"

"Yes he is, I met him yesterday on the Paseo, and he sunk like a mud-turtle into his shell."

"Did you speak to him?"

"Devil the word, but I watched where he went to, and am determined to fix him, in spite of the consequences."

"I think you had better not," said the other, who seemed fully to comprehend the Kentuckian's desire for a little fun.

"Perhaps you don't know all the circumstances of that fight," said the other, drawing himself up, rather proudly. "The way it begun, you see was rather queer. That man's cattle used to get into dad's pasture, and one day I caught"—

"Fill up for the second toast, gentlemen," called out the President.

"All charged!"

"The Star Spangled Banner!"

The Kentuckian contented himself with a wild and starting "hip, hip, hurrah!" over this toast, and quietly resumed his story.

"One day I caught a favorite Durham short-horned bull, cut off its tail and right fore-leg, tarred and feathered it, and sent it home, in all its glory."

The eyes of the Englishman were fixed upon the narrator with a glassy stare. The Kentuckian continued his tale.

"There were three brothers of them; two came to me the next day to give me a flogging. I killed one, by throwing him three rods over a stone-wall with a pitch-fork. The other run and jumped into a horse-pound, where I pelted him to death with squashes. The jury acquitted me, on the ground that I had merely acted in self-defence.—A few days after, the third brother—the one now in Havana—and myself, went out a-training tought until we were completely tucker out. When we got through we compared notes. He had got my right eye, and I had chewed off both of his ears, and we made an even swap; that was the way I got my eye back. A celebrated eye-doctor came along a day or two after, and fastened my eye into my head again. Do you see that?" (pointing to the black wart in the corner of his eye,) "that is the head of the screw by which he fastened the eye to my nose, in order to hold it!"

CANNON POWDER.—A couple of our young "sprigs of the law" were walking down State street the other day, when one of them happened to notice a half peck measure filled with onion seed, which resembles coarse cannon powder, standing on the steps of a merchant's store. Thinking a good opportunity had presented itself to try the nerve and boasted chivalry of his companion, he stopped suddenly, and with apparent astonishment, exclaimed:

"Gross carelessness! what does that man mean by leaving his powder thus exposed?"

"Powder," returned the other, in surprise, "so it is. What an outrage to leave it in this public place thus exposed. It is liable to explode any moment. Let us hurry along, it is not safe to remain so near it."

"Stop," said his companion, approaching the onion seed, "it may not be powder, let us examine it."

"Oh! it is powder; come away, it may explode," was the reply.

"But I am not satisfied, and am determined to ascertain," said the other, and into the store he flew and procured a match. "Now," said he, exhibiting the match, which he immediately ignited, "we'll know what it is," and deliberately lowered the burning "loco" to within an inch of the onion seed.

"Heavens!" yelled his frightened companion, "stop—wait—you are crazy—let me go!"

And clapping his hands to his ears, in anticipation of a tremulous explosion, he "took leg bail," darting down the street, like an arrow.

"Stop," roared the man with the match, "let us ascertain what this is."

But instead of halting, his pace increased, and the poor fellow continued to run till he brought up against the lumber yard on Dutch Point, where for the first time, he dared turn around to witness the fragments of shattered buildings, which he very naturally supposed were flying in the air. He was badly "agitated," and invariably "sloped" when any mention is made of "onion seed" in his presence. [Hartford Times.]

AN INTREPID WOMAN.

A French paper says that an honorary medal, with a diploma of Sauveteur, has been awarded by the International Shipwreck Society, to Mademoiselle A. D. Larate, of Biarritz, in the vicinity of Bayonne, for her noble and heroic conduct. In the winter of 1839, a dreadful tempest broke over Biarritz, and the Zee lighter of Nantes was dashed on the rocks with terrible force. A crowd collected on the shore, but no person would venture to the relief of the sailors, who were clinging to the sinking vessel.—What no man would risk attempting, a weak woman boldly undertook. She seized a rope, threw herself into the raging sea, and, after numerous failures, at last succeeded in swimming to the vessel. At the moment of her arrival, the captain, who was holding on, found his strength give way, and fell into the sea. She caught him as he rose to the surface, and bore him to land before life was extinct. Such conduct in a man would have been admirable, but in a woman it was sublime.

THE CORN LAWS AND TEA PARTIES.

The memorial to Victoria from the women of Liverpool, for the abolition of the corn laws, contains 63,140 signatures. The English ladies and gentlemen gather