

Farmers' Gazette,

AND CHERAW ADVERTISER.

VOLUME VII.

CHERAW, SOUTH-CAROLINA TUESDAY, AUGUST 23, 1842.

NUMBER 41.

By M. MACLEAN.

TERMS:—Published weekly at three dollars a year; with an addition, when not paid within three months, of twenty per cent per annum.

Two new subscribers may take the paper at five dollars in advance; and ten at twenty.

Four subscribers, not receiving their papers in town, may pay a year's subscription with ten dollars, in advance.

A year's subscription always due in advance.

Papers not discontinued to solvent subscribers in arrears.

Advertisements not exceeding 16 lines inserted or one dollar the first time, and fifty cents each subsequent time. For insertions at intervals of two weeks 75 cents after the first, and a dollar if the intervals are longer. Payment due in advance for advertisements. When the number of insertions is not marked on the copy, the advertisement will be inserted, and charged till ordered out.

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AGRICULTURAL.

[From the Temperance Advocate.]

REPORT

Of the Committee on Potatoes before the Newberry Agricultural Society, July 27, 1842.

The Committee on Potatoes, find little difficulty in reporting on this root, so generally cultivated by the planters of South Carolina, which culture has been quite successful; yet we beg leave to suggest its improvement, and believe it practicable to add valuable qualities to it, by careful attention; deriving this opinion from contrasting the scarcely edible "*Solanum Tuberosum*" which was discovered indigenous in South America, and the cultivated Irish Potato, a root which has contributed at least one half to the sustenance of the peasantry of the middle climates of Europe, for the last twenty years.

It is conceded that to ensure a plentiful crop of this species of potato, it is only necessary to prepare the soil well, plant early, and manure properly; for which purpose recourse should be had to the bountiful materials at the command of every planter, in the shape of hog-hair, rotten straw and chaff, China-berries and cotton seed, all of which are admirable ingredients to promote this crop. We cannot recommend the latter too highly, as the best Irish Potatoes we have ever seen grown in Newberry District were manured with cotton seed. With the above general directions, and a moist climate, after having selected the seed carefully, no one need despair of a good crop of Irish potatoes, as it is a fixed maxim in regard to this crop, that the least work ensures the best and most palatable tubers.

—The tubers of the Irish Potatoes, having no distinct taste, and being composed chiefly of starch, have more of the nature of flour, or the farina of grain, than any other vegetable, which causes this potato to be universally a favorite; and it can be longer used without becoming unpalatable, than any other article of diet. Among its various domestic uses, in Germany and Ireland, bread is made of it, by a preparation of flour from the dried roots, and the addition of a small quantity of wheat flour; and puddings equal in flavor to the celebrated millet puddings—to which we may add potato starch, which, independently of its use in the laundry, is an equally delicate article of food for invalids as sago or arrow root. In the Northern States it is extensively used as food for cattle, horses and hogs.

We deem the peculiar province of our report confined to the cultivation of the sweet potato, (*Convolvulus Batatas*), which was introduced into England previous to the Irish potato, and was in those days, supposed to possess the qualities of restoring decayed vigor, and more frequently found in the soup of the confectioner, than in the larder of the cook. It is a native both of Spain and the Canary Islands, and was, as an edible, in such bad repute in the year 1699, that the renowned *Ecclina*, in his work on gardening, recommends that potatoes should be planted in the worst ground, and we are glad that we live in an age and country where we can say, plant sweet potatoes in your best land; though probably in the days of the author above quoted, the promise by this root was such, that it held forth no inducements to the cultivator; and certainly time has proved that England's soil and climate have been uncongenial to its improvement. Though there are many who, even in Newberry, take this advice and neglect this crop, for the sole fact, that they themselves are not fond of potatoes—not consulting the tastes of voracious hogs and cows, who squealing and howling for corn and hay, would be happily regaled with a satisfactory meal from the potato pile.—We regard the successful cultivation of the sweet potato as an easy attainment. It delights in a light, rather sandy, deep and well stirred soil, which must be located on a dry subsoil, though we have raised good potatoes on clay lands. We think a moist atmosphere, the temperature of which is warm, most conducive to the early growth and pleasant flavor of the sweet potato.

Our rule, when we manure for potatoes, is to spread the manure broad cast over the soil—hence, the easiest manner of preparing the land properly, is to cover the ground intended for potatoes, late in the summer, and during the fall giving it frequent ploughing, so that the manure deposited may not be evaporated or washed away by rains. Plough up the land very deep early in January; to which ploughing we would recommend a sub-

soiling to those who have the proper implement. Plough again in February, and in March repeat with a like ploughing; immediately after which, we bed up our land with a common twister plough four feet wide, upon which beds we drop our potato slips five or six inches apart, covering them with a hoe, one and a half inches deep, with good mellow soil.

This mode of planting is usually termed ridging; and simply to cross the beds at equal squares with their width, we can form potato hills by drawing up the corners of the squares with a hoe. We have tried both hills and ridges, and have no preference, though the soil, when planted in hills is most likely to be washed away by violent rains. We plant four or five slips in each hill. So soon as the potatoes begin to sprout, the ridges or hills should be scraped off with a hoe, which will enable the young plants to come up readily, and immediately after they have appeared above ground, the beds should be ploughed down, which ploughing should be performed carefully, and as close to the plants as they will bear, so as not to disturb the parent slip. This yields to the young plant that warmth which is so much desired in this culture, and potatoes thus cultivated will stand the summer drought better than those which have been tended otherwise. Frequent ploughings with a few times hoeing is all that is necessary, until the vines attain a length which interferes with the ploughing, at which period the ridges and hills should be drawn up with a hoe, fuller than they were originally, and in such a manner that they should be hollow at top. Great care should be taken not to throw any soil on the vines, and therefore, whilst drawing up the bed, they should be gently raised by the hand. Just before the vines reach the bottom of the beds, a plough should be run twice through the rows, in order to give them mellow earth to root in. This will serve to sustain the vine in extreme drought, and as the leaves are almost the only organs which feed tuberous roots, we earnestly recommend an abandonment of the practice of topping potatoes, or tearing the vines with a plough—and particularly the practice of making a calf pasture of the potato patch, late in the summer. Potatoes for planting should always be raised from cuttings, as they are generally more succulent, and vegetable better in the Spring than those which are raised from small potatoes. And hence, large potatoes bringing forth stouter plants are preferable to very small slips. The chairman of this Committee has raised 5000 bushels of good sweet potatoes on an acre of land, and 300 bushels has been an average crop with him.

They were of the dark mottled Spanish variety, which we think are the best; though any and every sort should be cultivated, and we are not advocates for any particular variety, as the yellow yarn would suit a sandy location, whilst the dark Spanish would succeed better on clay soils. The yarn is best cultivated from sprouts drawn from a bed, but for the cultivation of almost every other variety of the sweet potato, we deem it advisable to plant the root itself. Our plan to preserve potatoes is simple: making a circular bed 8 or 9 feet in diameter, on which we place pine straw or corn stalks; in the centre of which we set upright a plank tub with a great many holes bored in its sides, around which tube we pile up our potatoes until the cone is completed within a few inches of the top of the tube, when we cover them up with pine straw, corn stalks, and lastly with earth four or five inches thick. The tube may be closed in frosty weather by a wisp of straw—during mild weather, it may be opened, in order to allow the gas arising from decayed, bruised potatoes to escape. With this and the addition of a temporary shelter, we have always succeeded in saving potatoes.

The sweet potato, independently of its great use in culinary concerns, is a crop which deserves more attention at the hands of our up-country planters. The fine effect which they give when fed to milk cattle, should make it a favorite with all who delight in good milk and butter. They furnish a fine wholesome beverage in the shape of potato beer; and we ask, as a matter of inquiry, whether the sweet potato could not be dried so as to furnish a flour eminently adapted to culinary purposes, at those seasons when we cannot enjoy the root in its green state? We unhesitatingly recommend that the same land be planted in potatoes each succeeding year, for we believe that the culture of this crop adapts the soil for the increased reproduction of this root, believing that the covering of the vines where potatoes are gathered, restores the land a larger supply of nutrition than is consumed by the production of the crop.—There is now growing, in the garden of the chairman of this Committee, a variety of potatoes entirely new in this section of the country, known as the *Mascioton*, or *African yam*, possessing the singular faculty of producing its tubers on the vine above the ground. It is characterized by very rich and luxuriant growth. It seems to be admirably adapted to the construction of arbors, as it easily attains the length of twenty and twenty-five feet. It is said to be fine flavored, and as the vine has a quantity of potatoes now growing on it, this Society shall be informed

of its value, should it possess any, and of the success of the cultivator in growing it.

All of which is respectfully submitted
JOHN SUMMER, Sen., Chairman,
J. H. MAFFETT,
C. B. GRIFFIN.

From the Farmer's Register.

MARLING IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

To the Editor of the Farmer's Register.

* * * I am still pressing on with the marl, and have collected on my bluff, since I planted my crop, some 25,000 bushels, and am still bringing up 2,400 bushels per week: I shall begin to haul it out as soon as I gather. The forwardness of cotton will interfere with me some, as I shall have little or no time between gathering fodder and commencing to pick, but I am resolved to have between 600 and 700 acres marled for the next crop. The land marled this year shows the effects very plainly, and that marled earliest shows best, which gives me faith in its continuing to improve. I think, as things every one, that the effect this year is fully equal to a fair coat of our stable manure. Both the corn and cotton marled are also in advance of earlier plantings, apparently a week or ten days now. I find that some bald places, have been injured, but, to counterbalance, low wet places which I thought too wet for marl, have proved to have been only too sour heretofore, and are bearing finally. My experimental acres in corn will afford a pretty fair test, but not in cotton. It turns out that the acres without marl and with the 300 bushels of marl were far superior in point of soil to those with the 100 and 250 bushels. I was deceived by the stalks of cotton. The last year being a very peculiar one, the poorer acres produced as well as the best. In addition to this, the marled land being slower to come up, my overseer planted it all over again. The acre unmarled vegetated earliest, and was only replanted: half of it is ten days or more older than the others. On the whole, however, I am fully satisfied, and if it goes on as it now promises, I shall go on until I marl all my planting land. My people all say the marl has very much improved the land for working. The stiff parts are mellowed, and the light made more consistent. They say, too, that they can work the out-grass better, and kill more of it. This terrible nuisance made its appearance a few years ago on my place. I have done nothing to arrest it, for I have never known anything to avail. Do you suppose marl can have any effect on it? Possibly it is an acid grass, and, like sorrel, may be rooted out by alkalis.

Remarks by the Editor.

[We have heretofore, on several occasions, remarked upon the absence of all effort to improve by marling in South Carolina; and afterwards welcomed the news of the earliest movement towards that great and beneficial work. We rejoice now to learn that, at least on one large plantation, marling is in that state of progress, and has been already so successful in profitable effects, as to leave no doubt of there being now fairly commenced such operations as will soon make South Carolina a marling country. In this great "internal improvement" of that state, (more valuable for private profit, and for augmenting the public wealth, than all her great and costly improvements for transportation, on rail roads and by navigation,) the writer of the private letter from which we have taken the liberty of extracting for publication the foregoing passage will be one of those pioneers who will render the greatest service to the countrymen, by practically showing to them the way to improve and reap rich profits from their great and almost totally neglected natural resources. In consideration of our object, to make his example more profitable to others, we trust that he will excuse this use made of a portion of the last received of his several private letters, written to obtain information for his own guidance in marling. We cannot presume farther, and point out the writer or his locality more distinctly. But we may say to those of his countrymen who can use marl, and have done so—"Seek out for the most extensive and successful marling operations now in progress in South Carolina—see them and judge for yourself, and then act according to your judgment of the proofs of success and profit." [It is true, and lamentable, that all that is said, written, or published to urge to this or any other novel improvement in agriculture, has scarcely any effect, even on those who hear and read all the facts and reasoning. But exhibit the same truth to the eyes of the same persons, and twenty of them will follow the example, where one would without such ocular proofs being presented. We have, in our way, by writing and publishing, done very far more than our correspondent to instruct his countrymen, as he has been instructed, and almost to no purpose; but his practice will do what our precepts have failed to effect in every particular, except on himself and perhaps a few others. May he effectually do this good work, in which we have, for this State, and so far, signally failed.—Ed. F. R.]

From the Southern Planter.

AN EXPERIMENT ON STONE FRUIT.

You know, sir, how difficult it is to ripen the nectarine. Being a smooth-skinned

fruit, free from the furze, the curculio is fonder of attacking it than the peach, and it is generally eaten up by its worm. As the immature fruit falls, the worm retires into the earth, only to rise again the next spring and renew upon the young nectarines. I had been so often tantalized in the growth of this beautiful fruit—none of my three trees bringing in many years a single specimen to maturity on my little farm, that I determined to remove one of them to my back yard in the city, which is well paved with brick. In the second spring the tree produced as beautiful nectarines as could be desired. My apricots always succeed in the same situation—and a worm is never seen in them (for ten years)—among them is the *black apricot*, a sound, very pretty and racy fruit, partaking of the character of the plum and the nectarine.

My attention has been drawn to this matter by an article in the last "Farmer's Register," 207, on "The Fruit Curculio," from Hillsboro, North Carolina, April 8th, which states that, "a few years since, while at the house of a very intelligent farmer of Lincoln county, I was forcibly struck with the lively and clean appearance of his plum trees, which were then loaded with fruit. On inquiring his mode of treatment, he remarked, that the only secret in the case was to set them out by the road side, (as his were) or along some path where the ground would be trodden down as hard as possible. It would appear, therefore, that the rationale of the thing is not to be sought in the shell marl or in the clay, but in having such a hard pan of earth around and under the trees, that the insects, which infest them, cannot get a lodging place in the soil."

Yours, with the best wishes for the success of your Planter, T. RICHIE.

Richmond, June 1, 1842.

P. S.—If your friends desire any cuttings of the black apricot, they are welcome to them. I will send you a specimen of the fruit when it is ripe. The tree grows in my back yard. My nectarine tree was an old tree, much injured by the worm before I removed it—and was stripped down by the wind the fourth year after it was transplanted.

T. R.
There is no man in this country, who understands, better than Mr. Ritchie, the proper mode of demonstrating to an editor the truth of a proposition: we have received a plate of the fruit, rare as it is delicious, the black apricot, to which he refers. In the name of our friends, we return thanks to Mr. Ritchie for his polite offer with respect to the cuttings.

That the fruit is saved from the curculio, if the passage of the worm from the fallen fruit to the ground can be intercepted, is confirmed by the testimony of John Carter, the celebrated nurseryman in this vicinity. Instead of the trampling or pavement, Mr. Carter subjects them to the devouring jaws of his swine, which have a regular run in his peach orchard.

From the Southern Planter.

HOW TO COOK CUCUMBERS.—We have seen a recipe to cook cucumbers, somewhat after this fashion:

Take the cucumbers and after cutting off the rind, cut them into slices, then cut up a few onions with them, pepper and salt them to your liking, and add vinegar to them—and then, open your window and throw them away.

This is the usual way of preparing them for the table, and doubtless, the recipe is so worded as to impress the idea of their unhealthiness, and we must confess, that we are among those who have so esteemed them. But if cooked as below stated, we conceive them not only to be wholesome, but among the most palatable vegetable dishes with which the table can be garnished. Our method is this:

Pare off the rind, then cut the cucumber into slices *lengthwise*, dust either side of those slices with corn meal or wheat flour pepper and salt them to please your taste; this done, fry them brown, and you will have one of the most delicious dishes that you can imagine, combining in their flavor those of the oyster plant and egg-plant. Of their healthfulness, thus cooked, there can be no question, and of their palatableness, it is only necessary that you try them, to say with us that they are exquisite.

NOVEL MODE OF CULTIVATING CORN.

Extract from Louisville Journal.

My universal rule is, to plough my corn land the fall preceding the spring when I plant; and as early in the spring as possible, I cross plough as circumstances will permit, and as soon as this is done, I commence checking off the first way with my large ploughs, and the second with my small ones, the checks, three feet by three, admitting of working the land both ways. And then I plant my corn from the 20th to the 25th of March—a rule to which I adhere with scrupulous exactness; planting from eight to twelve grains in each hill, covering the same from four to six inches deep, greatly preferring the latter depth; and in this particular I take more pride and more pains than any other farmer in Kentucky, holding it as my ruling principle, that the product of the corn corresponds very much upon its being properly ploughed, and much on its being properly ploughed the first time. So soon as my corn crop is up of sufficient height, I start the large

harrow directly over the rows, allowing a horse to walk on each side, harrowing the way the corn was planted; and on land prepared as above and harrowed as directed, the hoeing part will be so completely performed by this process, that it will satisfy the most skeptical. Then, allowing the corn thus harrowed to remain a few days, I start my ploughs with the bar next the corn; and so nicely will this be done, that when a row is thus ploughed, so completely will the intermediate spaces, hills, &c., be lapped in by the loose earth occasioned by this system of close ploughing, as to render any other work useless for a time. I thin to four stalks upon a hill, never having to transplant, the second ploughing being performed with the mouldboard towards the rows of corn; and so rapid has been the growth of the corn between the first and second ploughings, that this is performed with ease; and when in this stage, I consider my crop safe; my general rule being, never to plough my corn more than four times, and harrow once. My practice is, to put a field in corn two successive years, then grass it and let it lie eight years, a rule from which I never deviate. Now, I do not pretend that the labor bestowed upon a sod-field, to put it in a state of thorough cultivation, does not meet with a fair equivalent from one crop, but I presume no farmer will doubt when I say, the second year's crop from sod-land is better than the first, with not more than one half the labor. The best system of farming is, to produce the greatest amount of profit from the smallest amount of labor.

I lay it down as an axiom incontrovertible in the cultivation of corn, that whenever a large crop has been raised, it was the result of close and early planting; and I defy proof to the contrary. I plant my corn three feet by three, four stalks in a hill, and allow but one ear to a stalk, and one hundred ears to a bushel, and then ascertain how many hills there are in a shock, sixteen hills square, which is the usual custom to put it up. My present crop, planted on the 20th of March, bids fair to outstrip any preceding one; I am now ploughing and thinning the first planting. WALTER C. YOUNG.

Jessamine Co., Ky., April 26, 1842.

From the Southern Planter.

BLACK SHEEP.

Messrs. Editors.—A neighbor selected a very likely young ram which he designed "turning out" and at shearing time made known such intention to his "headman," Peter. The shearing over, Peter came to his master and said the lamb he had selected would not do to "turn out" unless he wished to have black sheep in his flock. How do you make that out, Pete? said his master; the lamb is the whitest in the flock. That may be, replied Pete, but I tell you half his lambs will be black, for he has a BLACK STREAK under his tongue. The master and myself in talking on the subject came to the conclusion that a greater man than Pete had advanced the same opinion, and accordingly we picked up an old Virgil and commenced the search. After no little trouble, we found the following:—(Geo. 3-37.)

"Ilum autem, quamvis aries sit candidus ipse,
Nigra subest udo tantum cui lingua palato,
Rejice, ne maculis infuscet vellera pullis,
Nascentum."

The English of which, I presume is, "But though the ram himself may be white, reject him, under whose moist palate there is a black tongue, that he may not darken the fleeces of the lambs with blackish spots."

Whether Pete had borrowed the idea from the "Mantuan Bard" or not is a matter of no consequence. The question for you, Mr. Botts, or some of your correspondents, is—Is the idea correct?—We have, you see, the opinion of a "book farmer" and a practical one—of an ancient and a modern—a great man and a little one.

P. B. W.

Notloway.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Wednesday, August, 1842.—

The speaker having announced the business in order to be the consideration of the message of the President of the United States yesterday received, stated the question thereon, (as it will be found in another part of this paper) when—

Mr. ADAMS said that in some observations he had submitted in the House on Friday and Saturday, he had requested the indulgence of the House to postpone the subject then before the House, in the hope that some circumstances might transpire between that time and the Monday morning following, which would relieve the House from a great portion of what he should otherwise feel it his duty to submit. That contingency was the possibility (a possibility he had been most reluctant to relinquish) that the dissension and discord existing between the Executive and the Legislative branches of the Government might, within eight and forty hours, be entirely removed. It was his opinion then, and he repeated it now, that if it had been the pleasure of the

President to effect an entire reconciliation of the Executive with Congress, he had nothing more to do than to put his name, accompanied by the word "approved," to an act which had been submitted to him, and which was of infinite importance to the honor, the credit, and the prosperity of this nation. He had thought so then; thought so now. He did most conscientiously believe that if the name of the President, with the word "approved," had but been affixed to the tariff bill, that both Houses of the Legislature—he thought he might safely speak for a majority at least of both Houses—would have forgotten and forgiven all that had happened before; and the country, instead of remaining in that state of prostration and distress in which it was now found, would at once have risen to a condition of comparative peace and prosperity, and credit and honor would have taken the place of the disgrace and calamity which now unhappily prevailed. The more reconciliation of the two branches of the Legislature with the Executive head, would, of itself, have been hailed by a universal burst of joy throughout this Union as the harbinger of happy and prosperous times. That hope had been blasted; and now, by the paper before the House, the Executive and the Legislature had been placed in a state of *civil war*, for which, henceforth, there could be no remedy but that which the People would take into their own hands.

I say, sir, exclaimed Mr. A., THE WAR is now DECLARED and I admit that the Executive can no longer retreat without disgrace, as I also hold that neither this nor the other House of Congress can without the same consequence. The position has been taken on both sides: the issue has been offered and accepted; and now nothing remains but that an appeal be taken to the People, or—which may Heaven in its infinite mercy prevent!—an appeal be had to the God of battles. [Much sensation in the House: laughter and cries of "oh, oh!"—the God of battles, indeed—only hear that!]

Now, said Mr. A., while I have contested, and do still contest, the truth of the position of my colleague over the way, (Mr. Cushing,) that it is the destiny of this Congress to accomplish the prostration of the country, I still concur with him in the result at which he arrived, and I put, as he did, the question, to whom is its prostration, if finally prostrated it shall be, to be attributed? He has already said that it will be justly charged upon Congress, understanding him, as I do, thereby to mean the respective majorities in the two Houses.

We were told yesterday by another gentleman (Mr. Marshall) that though he did not concur in the imputation of this prostration—which he also foretold—to Congress, and although by the force of an *esprit de corps* he should be found with the House and with Congress on that question, we should have a great battle to fight in order to place the responsibility on the right shoulders, where it justly belongs, and to cast it off from ourselves. Now, assuming as a position conceded, that nothing further is to take place between the Executive, and the Legislature on this question, which I say cannot take place without disgrace on the one side or on the other, I have a few observations to offer upon the inquiry to whom this prostration of the country is to be attributed.

I shall not have time to enter into the details of that comparison which it will be necessary for the People to institute between the proceedings of Congress and the acts of the Executive since he has come to the occupation of the chair: I shall, therefore, simply allude to the points from which conclusions will be drawn in comparing the one with the other, beginning with the commencement of the present Administration.

And, in referring to the action of Congress, it is with great satisfaction that I am able to say that, in respect to a very great portion of them, the rancor of party-spirit has had no place; and that, in regard to some of the most important acts of the National Legislature, we have had the benefit of the aid of those who call themselves the Democratic party in this Hall, who have contributed, nearly as much as the majority, to the passage of the acts which I shall now proceed to enumerate.

And the first act which distinguished the present Congress was the general bankrupt law, a measure which has extended relief to a most distressed portion of the community. And here candor obliges me to say that in regard to the expediency of that act this House did not differ from the Executive, for it was sanctioned by his signature and approval. How far his doing so may have given satisfaction to that portion of the community on which his hopes must ultimately rely, I shall not inquire. The act was the act of the majority in the two Houses of Congress, though perhaps they might not have been able to pass it without the aid of a small portion of those on the other side of the question. It is the majority of Congress, and to a certain extent a majority of both parties in that body, who carried through this important measure against the most formidable opposition. Thus, then, is not one among the sources of the existing difference, nor is it a measure for which Congress will sustain a responsibility peculiar to itself,