Farm, Garden & Household.

PHILOSOPHY OF UNDER-DRAINING.

The following, from the *New England Farmer*, will help to illustrate the great importance of under-draining, and will show why it is so much insisted on by intelligent and scientific agriculturists:

When soil is wet, the heat of the sun, which is intended to warm the soil, is expended in evaporating the water from the surface, and thus the warmth which is necessary to the growth of plants does not reach their roots.

When a soil is dry it often becomes twenty or thirty degrees warmer than the atmosphere above it, but a soil filled with water is cooler than the atmosphere.

When a soil is too wet the plant-food which it contains is so much diluted that a much greater quantity of fluid must be taken up by the roots, or it will not receive due nourishment. The vessels of the plant will be gorged with so much water that the plant itself will be kept at low temperature, in consequence of the increased evaporation from the steam and leaves.

When clay soils are wet they become compact and adhesive, and prevent the air from reaching the roots of plants. When the water is removed they become open and mellow and admit the air freely, and are more easily worked.

Drainage not only removes the water, but makes room for the air, which will by the force of natural laws take its place, and penetrate to every part from which the water is drawn off.

Vegetable matter immersed in water decomposes slowly, and yields but little food to plants, and that not always of a wholesome character. But when the air has free access to it, it decomposes rapidly, and yields carbonic acid and other elements of nutrition. Manures containing organic matters go much farther on a dry soil than on a wet one. If a sandy soil lies upon a wet clay subsoil, the water will constantly rise towards the surface and the roots and organic matter in the soil will have the benefit of its presence.

On some soils plants are liable to be parched up in a drought. This often because the roots cannot penetrate the subsoil, which is filled with stagnant or unwholesome water. Remove this stagnant water by a drain, and the subsoil will become mellow and sweet, and the roots will penetrate deeply into it, and thus be able to endure a drought that dries the surface.

Sometimes it does very little good to break up a hard, compact subsoil with the plough. It soon becomes again hard and impenetrable. But if the soil is drained below this hard pan the rains penetrate through it and soften it, and remove any noxious properties it may contain, and a deep root-bed is made the plants, by which they will be sustained even in very dry seasons. It is where hard subsoils lie near the surface that crops suffer most from droughts.

Thus drainage warms, and deepens, and sweetens the soil, and renders it more productive, and enables the growing crops the better to endure the effects of a wet or a dry season. The roots of corn and some other crops penetrate a mellow soil from three to four feet deep. Draining, then, to be effectual, should take off the water to a depth somewhat below that to which the roots penetrate. This should always be done where the fall is sufficient to allow it.

CARBOLIC ACID.

Reference is frequently made to this new disinfectant and purifier as the most powerful of any now in use. It has only recently come into general notice, and its great value will render the following account of its production and properties, taken from the *Maine Farmer*, especially interesting to all our agricultural and scientific readers:

"Carbolic acid is extracted from coal tar, which is well known as one of the waste products obtained in the manufacture of gas from coal. In fact the properties of this substance are more of an alcohol than an acid, and it is also called carbolic alcohol, phenic acid, phenic alcohol, &c. It is now some twenty years since the attention of chemists were turned to the methods of extracting this acid from coal tar. Improvements in the methods of extracting it have been steadily made since that time, until now an article of pure carbolic acid is made from coal tar, that is entirely free from all disagreeable or tarry flavor, as pure as if extracted directly from benzine.

"The uses of this substance are numerous. Its properties as a deodorizer, disinfectant and antiseptic are remarkable. Being volatile, carbolic acid meets with and destroys the germs or sporules which float at the atmosphere and vitiate it; and on this account it has been used with astonishing success in England, Belgium and Holland during the prevalence of cholera and the cattle plague. Mr. W. Crookes, F. R. S., (editor of the London *Journal of Physical Science*,) says he has never met with a single instance in which the cattle plague has spread on a farm where it has been freely used. Its antiseptic powers are so strong that the merest atom will prevent the decomposition, fermentation or putrefaction for months of urine, blood, glue solution, paste, flour, &c. Its vapor alone is sufficient to preserve meat in confined spaces for weeks, and even a little vapor will prevent fresh meat from being fly-blown for several days, even in an ordinary atmosphere. For some diseases of sheep, especially scab, foot-rot, &c., carbolic acid is an efficacious remedy. Cattle are never annoyed with flies if washed with a weak solution of this substance, and ten per cent. of it added to fresh butter forms an excellent salve for wounds of all kinds in man or beast."

KEEP YOUR ASHES FOR MANURE.

The *American Agriculturist* says: Wood ashes make one of the most valuable fertilizers within the reach of the farmer. The unleached article has the more potash, but the leached is thought to be quite as valuable. In leaching they shrink a good deal, and lime is usually added, which increases their value. They are generally sold, too, at a less price. Ashes are well suited to all farm crops, and are very beneficial in the fruit yard and orchard. Most farmers sell wood in the cities and villages, and rather than go home empty they should carry back ashes and other fertilizers, to replace the potash, lime and phosphoric acid that have been carried off in the crops and animals sold. Ashes show immediate effects from their application, and at the same time last long in the soil. They are very highly appreciated in the onion growing districts, but may be applied with equal advantage to ordinary farm crops. They should be kept as near the surface as possible spread and harrowed into the seed bed or applied directly to the growing crops. Make a business of saving, buying and storing ashes during the winter for the next season's operations.

THE AGRICULTURAL REPORT.—The Commissioner of Agriculture at Washington says, in his annual report, that a system of international agricultural exchanges has been established with many governments of Europe, Asia and South America. Arrangements have also been made for exchanges of rare seeds, plants, trees and various products with the botanical gardens of Kew in England, and Melbourne in Australia, the India Museum in London, the Cape of Good Hope Agricultural Society, the botanical department of the British Museum, and others. The experimental garden during the past year distributed over 30,000 plants, and many thousand scions and cuttings of fruit trees. Under the appropriations from Dec. 1, 1867, to Dec. 1, 1868, the papers and packages of seeds distributed were 592,398, including 32,129 sacks of winter wheat imported by the present Commissioner. Of these there were distributed to members of Congress, 223,672; to agricultural and horticultural societies, 98,861; to statistical correspondents, 86,391; to individuals on application, 183,400.

Humorous.

A pious perfume—The odor of sanctity.

THE bent of the understanding—The instep.

A needlewoman's exclamation—Ahem!

OF what trade is the sun? A tanner.

THE cranium in four parts—The headquarters.

A desirable domestic bird—A duck of a wife.

A little tumbler will often throw down a big man.

STAGE-driver's motto—*Jam forte in omnibus.*

Paris green—The fellow who ran away with Helen.

CONGRESSIONAL features—The ayes of the House and the noes of the Senate.

GOOD Hay Weather—When it rains pitchforks.

FOWL-PLAY—Serving you with an old hen when you call for spring chicken.

NOT a proper place for a naval engagement—the Pacific Ocean.

A wag call Grecian architecture the "stoops" that ladies use at present.

A Scotchman's definition of "reel" music—the bagpipes.

"BIRDS in their nests agree," because they would fall out if they didn't.

WHY is a flatterer like a microscope? Because he magnifies small things.

BEASTLY weather—when it rains cats and dogs.

To cure a felon—Suspend by the neck about an hour.

YE avaricious! remember that shrouds have no pockets.

A young lady must make a hit if she dislikes to be a miss.

A HANDSOME dress pattern never arrests a woman's attention. She will always go buy it.

WHEN is the book of nature studied When autumn turns the leaves and they are red.

THE "sugar wedding," occurring thirty days after a marriage, is the last matrimonial novelty.

WHY is a baby like a sheaf of wheat?—Because it is first cradled, then thrashed, and finally becomes the flower of the family.

"GENIUS will work its way through, as the poet said, when he saw a hole in the elbow of his coat.

WHEN does a man overcome the inactivity of an inanimate object?—When he makes an umbrella stand.

"NOT GUILTY," said an Omaha jury, "but if the prisoner is smart he will leave the territory before night." He left.

WE frequently hear of our Generals capturing "pieces of artillery." "What's the use of capturing 'pieces?'" says Mrs. Partington, "why not capture whole ones?"

CREDITORS are like corns: they are always reminding one where the shoe pinches. The only way to get rid of them is to cut them—and that won't prevent them coming again.

THE following is Aunt Betsey's description of her milk man: "He is the meanest man in the world," she exclaimed. "He skims his milk on the top, then turns it over and skims it on the bottom."

A GENTLEMAN once began his letter to his bride thus: "My dearest Maria." The lady replied: "My dear John, I beg that you will mend either your morals or your grammar. You call me your 'dearest Maria.' Am I to understand that you have other Marias?"

A BADLY bunged-up Emerald Islander, in response to the inquiry, "Where have you been?" said: "Down to Mrs. Mulrooney's wake, and an illegant time we had of it. Fourteen fights in fifteen minutes; only one whose nose left in the house, and that belongs to the tay kettle!"

THERE is a lucky farmer near Dubuque, Iowa. On Monday night of last week two of his sheep became the mothers of seven lambs one producing three and the other four; one of his cows had a calf; a sow had a litter of seventeen pigs; and his wife presented him with two bouncing boys.

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"Yours truly, GEO. W. WOODWARD."

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Justice of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, writes:

Philadelphia, June 1, 1868.

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GEORGE SHARSWOOD.

HON. JAMES THOMPSON,

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