

Miners' Journal.

POTTSVILLE, PA.

SATURDAY, MARCH 1, 1856.

LEGISLATING FOR AGRICULTURE.—Mr. Greeley in a recent letter from Washington to the Tribune, says that there has carefully studied the composition of the Committees of the House, will have observed that that on Agriculture is cast more strongly than usual. Mr. Holloway of Indiana—veteran editor and legislator—fills its chair, with Messrs. L. D. Campbell, Crow and other prominent members following. This cast is understood to have relation to the project of creating a distinct Agricultural Bureau in the Department of the Interior, to be presided over by some able and enlightened master of Agricultural Science, and to mature and establish a system of careful experiment and observation, throughout every portion of our country, touching the diverse capacities of soil, climate, &c., and the most economic and effective means of increasing Agricultural production. To such a Bureau, the various Meteorological Reports now made at the several Military posts, would, Mr. Greeley thinks, be communicated, while arrangements would be made to procure similar reports from localities remote from Military stations. The earliest and latest occurrence of frosts in each season of cold; the adaptation of each locality to the peach, the grape, the apple and other fruits; the success or the failure of wheat and other grains, with the apparent causes of failure when failure is experienced; the northward boundaries of the successful growth of the cane, rice, cotton and other tropical and semi-tropical plants; the capacity for acclimation of the various grains and fruits, within their limits; these with a thousand similar problems, are only capable of perfect solution through many experiments, simultaneously prosecuted at widely separated points, yet under supervision and control of a single and enlightened head. The transplantation of seeds and trees from a colder to a warmer climate, and the reverse, requires to be prosecuted more extensively, and observed more carefully than hitherto. Many a fruit enjoys a local reputation, which it elsewhere emphatically despises, because of its degeneration when removed from the happy surroundings of soil and climate which insured its perfection; why may not the same rule operate inversely, war and punishment as well as negligence? Then the whole subject of improving grains by crossing or hybridization has hardly begun to be considered. At the World's Fair, in London, five years ago, specimens of wheat were exhibited wherein the product had been increased, it was stated, several bushels per acre by judicious hybridization, while in other instances, of course, opposite results had defeated the aim of the experimenter—the new variety being less prolific than either of its progenitors. A vast field for improvement here presents itself; but it can hardly be expected that individuals will volunteer to devote their lives and fortunes to its thorough exploration. Where great common benefits are judiciously sought, it is but just that they should be sought at the expense of the community.

As yet, the Agricultural Department in Washington, is only a bare skeleton. It is in fact, but a embryo sub-nate to the Patent Office, which is itself subordinate to the Department of the Interior. For a long time it was supported—so far as it was permitted to exist—by an annual abstraction from the funds of the Patent Office. At length Congress gave fresh aid of plundering the cash box of the inventors, themselves for the most part need and penniless, for the support of an important branch of the public service; and for some years past an appropriation of ten to sixty thousand dollars has been annually made from the Treasury for the purchase of rare and valuable seeds, for the prosecution of analytical researches into the structure, economy and requirements of plants, and into the nature and habits of insects which blast the hope and multiply the exertions of the farmer. Prof. Glover of New York, in the pay of the Government, devoted the last season mainly to the insects which infest the wheat plant, on which the ravages of insects have in this country proved more extensively and persistently ruinous than any other. Should this course of observation be patiently pursued through the next to twenty years, and the results thus recorded and profited by, we may rationally hope for such counteraction to the annual devastations of these little conquerors, as will save millions of dollars annually, to the farmers of our country.

It is a pleasing fact in connection with this subject, to observe that the disposition to afford some Legislative or State aid to the prosecution and progress of Agricultural Science is manifestly, in spite of numerous preju- dices, and strongly grounded objections. Thus our State is now erecting buildings for a State Agricultural College, on a noble farm of two hundred acres, given for the purpose by Gen. Wm. Irvin, located in Centre County, near the east end of the great limestone valley, which runs south-westwardly, thence, through this State and Maryland, into Virginia. The State not only liberally distributes its agricultural funds among its citizens, but also makes a liberal contribution to the educational funds of the State Agricultural College, in which a youthful student may easily and inexpensively succeed in his agricultural pursuits; and whereas it doth appear to this Legislature, that the well and learned professors in the present age have cultivated with laudable industry, and applied with admirable success the arts and sciences to other purposes, than those of a useful and profitable life, the public spirit of agriculture has, up to the present, been most lamentably neglected; And whereas it is the province and duty of the Legislature to encourage and aid the philanthropic and patriotic citizens in their efforts to disseminate knowledge and improve the condition of the agricultural College and Model Farm, which are, in addition to the usual course of scholastic learning, particularly indoctrinate the youth of Maryland, theoretically and practically, in those arts and sciences which, with good manners and morals, shall enable them to subserve the public welfare, and to render their position its advantages in soil, climate, labor, and the moral and mental capacities of its citizens entitled to it; it is, therefore, it is enacted;

The annexed, a single section of the act, shows what, in addition to the mere teaching of Agriculture as a science to its pupils, this Maryland Agricultural College is expected to do:

Sec. 6. And be it enacted, That it shall be the duty of the said board of trustees to order and direct to be made or instituted on said model farm annually, a series of experiments upon the cultivation of soil, which may be necessary to its fair and complete understanding of the result of said experiments.

This was in the original bill, but was omitted in the second reading, and in the final bill, by the insertion of the words "and the moral and mental capacities of its citizens entitled to it; it is, therefore, it is enacted;"

Whereas, It is much less represented to the Legislature, that certain wise and virtuous citizens are desirous of instituting and establishing in some convenient locality within this State an Agricultural College and Model Farm, in which a youthful student may easily and inexpensively succeed in his agricultural pursuits; and whereas it doth appear to this Legislature, that the well and learned professors in the present age have cultivated with laudable industry, and applied with admirable success the arts and sciences to other purposes, than those of a useful and profitable life, the public spirit of agriculture has, up to the present, been most lamentably neglected; And whereas it is the province and duty of the Legislature to encourage and aid the philanthropic and patriotic citizens in their efforts to disseminate knowledge and improve the condition of the agricultural College and Model Farm, which are, in addition to the usual course of scholastic learning, particularly indoctrinate the youth of Maryland, theoretically and practically, in those arts and sciences which, with good manners and morals, shall enable them to subserve the public welfare, and to render their position its advantages in soil, climate, labor, and the moral and mental capacities of its citizens entitled to it; it is, therefore, it is enacted;

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