

LEWISBURG CHRONICLE.

BY O. N. WORDEN & J. R. CORNELIUS.

H. C. HICKOK, CORRESPONDING EDITOR.

Fridays--at Lewisburg, Union County, Pennsylvania.

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The Lewisburg Chronicle.

FRIDAY, SEPT. 11, 1853.

Timely Receipt.

The use of lime is very good, but for a complete disinfectant an addition of salt is essential. Lime attracts putrefaction, and holds it, and does some good, while chloride of lime destroys as we may say the putrescent poison.

A CHEAP DISINFECTOR.—The following is attributed to Professor Nash, of Amherst College; we have seen it in a number of exchanges: "To one barrel of lime add one bushel of salt dissolved in as little water as possible, which pour upon the lime, and slack it, so as to form a thick paste. The result will be an impure chloride of lime, a very powerful disinfectant—equally good for out-door purposes with the article (chloride of lime) bought at the apothecaries, and not costing one-twentieth as much. It should be kept moist and applied wherever offensive odors generate."

Every house or shop-keeper—in town or country—would do well to have in use this preparation, at all times. There are sources of contagion somewhere about the premises of nearly every one, which may breed distempers of various kinds, and do occasion or make worse most of the diseases of the season.

Union County Whig Convention.

Pursuant to previous public notice, the Convention of Whigs of Union county, was held at Gen. Blair's Franklin House, Lewisburg, Saturday afternoon, Sept. 8, 1853.

MICHAEL BROWN, of East Buffalo, was appointed Chairman, and AARON SMITH, of White Deer, Secretary.

On motion, Resolved that we invite the sister counties with which we are connected, to concur in the nomination of O. N. WORDEN for Senatorial and H. W. SYDNER for Representative, Delegates to the Whig State Convention, 11th Sept. inst.; and that they have power to appoint substitutes and supply vacancies in the District.

Resolved that our Representatives in the Convention be instructed to pursue such a course as shall seem best adapted to combine all the opponents of the perfidious National Administration upon one man for Canal Commissioner.

On motion, Messrs. James M. Creight, Johnson Walls, and O. N. Worden were appointed Conferees, to meet those from Snyder and Juniata counties, at Moyer's, in Freeburg, 18th Sept. inst. to nominate a Whig candidate for Representative, with power to appoint substitutes and to supply vacancies.

Resolved that we do not regard it as necessary, under our free and Republican institutions, to organize any secret political associations, whether *Nice Weilers* or *Say Nicks*.

Resolved (in the language of Andrew Jackson) that "it is time the American people became more Americanized;" that therefore protection to American industry, preference for Americans for office, guarding against election frauds, extending the probationary period for naturalization, and preventing the imposition upon us of foreign paupers and criminals, are measures which should be supported by every good citizen, whether native-born or adopted, and whether he calls himself Whig, Democrat, or by any other party name.

Resolved that all attempts of the supporters of a foreign hierarchy to subvert the free schools of our land, and to banish God's Holy Word, must and shall be resisted to the last extremity.

Resolved that the imprisonment of Passmore Williamson by John K. Kane (of "Kane letter" infamy) for informing a poor woman of the right of herself and of her children to their freedom, was a high-handed usurpation and abuse of power; and that Williamson, in prison for a humane act, has the sympathies of all lovers of right and haters of wrong.

Resolved that the removal of Andrew H. Reeder for his honest aim to enforce the law and do justice in Kansas, is the crowning act of treachery of the ignoble Slave Oligarchy at Washington; and that we hope he will soon be the Representative of the Free State of Kansas in the National Government.

Resolved that the attempts of Gov. Pollock to relieve the burthens of taxation by selling the Public Works, meet the hearty approbation of the people.

Resolved that the successful efforts of the Governor, State Treasurer, and Canal Commissioners, in paying the interest of the State Debt, and preserving the State Credit unimpaired, during the late severe monetary crisis, entitle them to the gratitude of Pennsylvanians of all parties.

The following were appointed Standing County Committees for the ensuing year: Lewisburg South Ward—Wm. Van Goser.

North "—David Reber.
East Buffalo—George Reed.
Kelly—John Noll.
White Deer—Aaron Smith.
Buffalo—James D. Chamberlain.
West Buffalo—Wm. Ruhl.
Millburg—Isaac L. Beck.
Hartley—Mark Halfpenny.
Limestone—Robert Chambers.
Jackson—John Gayer, Jr.
New Berlin—Michael Kleckner.
Union—Henry Gibson.

Voted that the several Editors of the papers in this county be furnished with an early copy of these proceedings, for publication if they see proper.—[Adjourned.]

An Epistle of "John," not the Divine.

Last week's *Sax* commends, in two separate articles, the communication of a certain "JOHN" as full of music and importance, (although his hearers are "dull of apprehension") and prophesies that he "will make some of our friends in Lewisburg scold." This JOHN, we learn, is a Millburg pill-maker, who by a strange hallucination imagines himself a farmer, and flourishes over two columns of "Opinions upon the proper selection of a County Seat." We waded through it—all and don't feel at all alarmed about it.—After a long eulogy upon his own wonderful intelligence! and impartiality!! JOHN announces his awful decision to be that he will vote for Millburg for three reasons:

1. He thinks county buildings should be as near the centre as possible, and all of Jacks mountain and all the Hartley and Buffalo and White Deer mountains, with no inhabitants, should be taken into the account as much as the river section of which every acre is tillable. Union county is a triangle, of which White Deer, Kelly, Lewisburg, Buffalo, East Buffalo and Union form the east side, and these six Districts contain nearly 500 more voters than the remaining districts running back to that narrow point on Penns creek. Along this east line, which is far most populous, and to which all the waters and nearly every road tends, Lewisburg is certainly the central point, as to territory, population, and business, and the latter are more important matters than mere territory. All know that a majority of the people of Union county could reach Lewisburg quicker, and easier, than they could Millburg; and the former being nearest the centre of the whole population, would of course cause least mileage to jurors and witnesses. "The greatest good of the greatest number" must govern, and not the many along the River line be inconvenienced to accommodate the few in the extreme western point.

2. Lewisburg is a great place of business, has a great many visitors, and will therefore be most exposed to "dysentery, flux, measles, small pox, yellow fever, Asiatic cholera," &c., &c. That we are more peculiarly liable to diseases than our up-valley rival, is not true in regard to the past, and we do not believe will be in the future. The argument is, that mere size and activity, expose to contagious diseases: not necessarily so, JOHN. The health of a place (as of a person) depends measurably upon location, and the care and cleanliness and temperance observed. Our town is high, with wide streets, on rolling land, with a current of air, from the surrounding mountains and along the trough of the river, almost constantly stirring. If Millburg has anything better, we do not know it.

Indeed, the larger a place is, the more numerous and uniform and efficient are the measures generally taken to preserve and restore health, and to prevent contagion. Portsmouth now suffers much more, in proportion to size, than the large city of Norfolk by its side. New Orleans has every year ten times proportionally more deaths than New York. The yellow fever was last year in the great city of Philadelphia: it is now in Baltimore: but it creates no public alarm: and the deaths were not and are not one tenth as numerous as in the little towns of Gosport and Portsmouth. The ravages of cholera at Columbia, Pa., last year, were far more terrible than they were in the City of London itself. At Sandusky, Ohio, a few years ago, the cholera was more destructive, in proportion, than in any other city. The mortality in Sugar valley, referred to last week, has rarely been equalled. Occasionally we know of disease raging on the hills, and in our valleys, more fatally, among families, than in any of the towns within our knowledge. We refer to the decease of all but one in Mr. Davis' family, Buffalo township, and to the death of Mr. Beckman, his wife, and two grown sons, in Kelly township, a year or two since, as proofs that mere numbers do not necessarily create a greater proportionate mortality. (We are informed, this week, of the decease of a mother, daughter, and neighbor who waited upon them, recently, in White Deer Valley, all from dysentery.)—Death strikes wherever and whenever he is commissioned: his agents may lurk around a farmer's dwelling, at a crossroads, in the rural hamlet, in the large borough, or the crowded city, alike. The frightful picture JOHN draws of Lewisburg, will terrify few if any sensible persons: here as elsewhere, "dangers stand thick on every hand to bear us to the tomb," but any special appropriation to this town, our neighbors through the county know to be gratuitous.

3. But, besides being large and flourishing, JOHN says, "Lewisburg has an interior apart, and in a great measure at variance from the rest of the county"—as great a folly as ever befogged a muddly brain. You might as well say that Millburg had no affinity with Limestone and West Buffalo—that the hands were independent of the arms—that a man could live without food or drink. Every farmer knows that the interests of our

town and the surrounding country are necessarily one and indivisible; that Lewisburg is but the outlet of Buffalo Valley, and its every hope and interest is indissolubly identified with those of the whole Valley. If that prospers, we prosper; if that suffers, we suffer with it.

But JOHN seems to be determined to keep aloof from a prosperous town, and thinks there is no danger from the advancement, the influence, or the popularity of Millburg. (Happy JOHN! happy Millburg! you seem "made for each other!") And then JOHN fears that Lewisburg will "continually and for ever afterwards" cheat the North and the West ends of the county out of their rights—rule them with a rod of iron—and make them slaves. All that, however, depends upon the people themselves. Our acquaintance with the sensible and independent farmers of Buffalo, White Deer, and Dry Valleys leads us to think they were not made to be either dupes or slaves. No doubt there are men in Lewisburg as well as in Millburg, who would like to manage all the county matters to subserve their private interests; wherever county seats are, such men endeavor to ply their trade; but then, JOHN, we have an all-sufficient remedy for that evil—it is, the BALLOT-BOX! The townships always have the large majority of voters, and can select a ticket (as now) without a single candidate from the county seat. In truth, the smaller a county seat is, the more universal and frenzied is the office-hunting mania. New Berlin had more office-brokers than Danville has. And why? Because in a large place there are a variety of lucrative and more engrossing pursuits, and the business of a county becomes only one of many matters of interest: while in small, stationary, single-quadrupled burghs—such as JOHN wants his county seat to be—two-penny offices is the great strife of the year, and every man is looking out for one dollar or a hundred from the county treasury.—"O but," says JOHN, "you'll build plank roads, cross-outs, and what not, out of the people's funds." That, good sir, depends upon the Laws and upon the Commissioners, and Millburg needs such improvements, and would be quite as apt to strain a point to get them, as Lewisburg. The People elect the Commissioners; and they act under the Law, whether in New Berlin, Millburg, or Lewisburg.

JOHN says he has "more good and weighty reasons" of the same sort, but thinks these will do, such as they are. No doubt of it.

"Such arguments with honest face have never shamed to his face." "Good-bye, JOHN!"

ORIGINAL ESSAYS—No. V.

LIFE.

Human life, what is it? The mind starts at the question, but can only answer, "A breath, a vapor, that one moment is seen, and the next, gone!" It is but the running of a race—the tarrying of mortals on earth for a little span of time—and then an endless eternity is spread up to view. Yet, short as it is, how fraught with joys and sorrows, hopes and fears, and subject to changes as diverse as light and darkness! Why is it, ah! why is it that mankind does not realize it as but a furlong from the spirit land? The secret is easily solved, when we recall the language of inspiration, which tells us that the heart of man is deceitful. Could we ever have this idly stamped upon memory, methinks the past would have borne a far different record to the throne of God than it has. Were we but to pause and consider the brevity of life, and compute its bearing on the weal or woe of the eternal world, and remember that its mispent moments could never be regained, our aspirations would not so often linger among the vanities of earth; our affections would not so often entwine around things which perish. But, alas! as we turn the pages of the past, every leaf reveals to us a waste of the precious gem. We sigh, but 'tis gone, for ever gone, and the impress which it bears, it bears for eternity. The young do not know the loss they sustain by trifling away the spring-time of their existence. All other losses may be repaired, all other errors admit of reformation. Fallen reputation may be regained, by subsequent virtue; wealth, by industry. But what power can erase the stain of a wasted life from the record of heaven? Life is given us to prepare for eternity. Whatever we do for our own aggrandizement or sensual gratification, is lost; but that which we do for the good of our fellows, and in obedience to the law of heaven, serves to secure for us "an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away." There is nothing which presents itself to my view so emblematic of life, as the launched bark upon the placid ocean. It sets out with bright prospects in view; and bids fair to return a worthy compensation to its owner. Calmly and tranquilly it floats on, perhaps for weeks and months it bears its precious burden with naught to stop or retard its progress. Thus it sails on, until it has perhaps come in view of its desired haven, and all are looking forward, with bright anticipations, to the final realization of their brightest hopes; when suddenly the lurid sky be-

comes dark and lurid, clouds multiply until the whole heavens are overcast; that storm begins to rage, wave after wave dashes in upon the frail bark, every energy is put forth to guide and steady the ship. But vain are all attempts; it is tossed to and fro at the will of the storm, like a mere bubble on the turbid ocean. Hark! now there is a cry of land; ah! it is the desired haven; now for the anchor; this secured, and all is safe; but what if it is left behind? ah! its doom is sealed; one crash, and all is destruction. Just so it is with man. He glides on upon the ocean of time, smoothly perhaps, through more than half his course; naught has occurred to mar his happiness. But the scene changes, one storm of adversity succeeds another, his heart is rent with sorrow, and well nigh broken, and faint would his sickened soul "take the wings of the morning and fly away and be at rest." But there is for him an anchor, if he has secured it he is safe, and laying hold on it he eventually lands at his desired haven. If he has failed to secure this simple though sure implement of safety, his fate is sudden destruction. Do I hear some ask, What is this anchor? It is simple faith, that lays hold of the glorious promises of the Gospel, and although storms may rage, and quick-sands threaten, their bark shall soon be safely moored, and their weary souls find rest on the Rock of Ages.

A. E. S.

Republican State Convention.

The proceedings of the new party held at Pittsburg last week, were very spirited. Letters were read from David Wilmot, Jas P. Hale, Benj. F. Butler, Senator Wilson, and a "very funny letter from citizens of Union county recommending Passmore Williamson for Canal Commissioner."

Peter Martin of Lancaster, William M. Lloyd of Blair county, A. H. Reeder, and Passmore Williamson were nominated for Canal Commissioner, and Williamson was selected, amid great excitement.

Thrilling speeches were made by Judge Jessup (President), Hon. Messrs. Bingham and Campbell of Ohio, Mr. McFarland of Washington Co., Rev. Samuel Aaron of Norristown, Joshua R. Giddings of Ohio, and Hon. Messrs. Howe of Crawford Co. and Alison of Beaver Co.

Wm. B. Thomas of Philadelphia wished to say a word or two in reference to our candidate, Mr. WILLIAMSON. He is a thorough business man, by profession a conveyancer, about thirty-five years of age, and has always been a voting anti-slavery man. He is not of the Garrison school, but is now a thorough Republican, and will heartily endorse our Platform.

Avowal of Principles.

WHEREAS, The founders of this Republic, in the formation of this government, proclaimed this great truth—that all men are endowed by their Creator with the inalienable rights of Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness; and that our government was constituted to secure these rights to us; and Whereas, The National Executive, in his inaugural address, virtually denies these doctrines, in the expression of his opinion that domestic Slavery is based upon the same principles as other recognized rights, and that our federal government is bound to sustain the institution of Slavery; and Whereas, The President of the United States, and the political party which sustains him, have endeavored to overthrow the principles of Civil Liberty proclaimed by our Revolutionary Fathers, by extending the bounds of Slavery into territories expressly consecrated to Freedom by a solemn Compromise, and by obtaining territory of Mexico for the purpose of spreading the withering curse of Human Bondage, and by endeavoring to involve us in a war with Spain, for the acquisition of Cuba, with the intention of perpetuating and strengthening the institution of Slavery, and by sustaining the Slave trade on our Southern coasts, Therefore,

Resolved, That the great question of freedom and slavery, now agitating North and South, is one which overshadows all others, in a national point of view; and its importance demands that the people of the North should unite in harmonious action, to defend their honor and vindicate their rights. The continual aggressions of slavery upon the interests of freedom, increasing in insolence and magnitude with each concession of the North, must be met and resisted with a united voice. Holding that the Union was formed (in the language of the Constitution) "to establish justice, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessing of liberty," we adopt as the foundation of our political faith, and for the guidance of our political action, the principle that, under our government, FREEDOM IS NATIONAL AND SLAVERY IS SECTIONAL.

Resolved, That while we claim no power to interfere with slavery in States where it now exists, we believe that the National Government should be relieved from all connection with, or accountability for it.

Resolved, that the repeal of the Missouri Compromise was a violation of the National faith, and a wanton outrage upon the rights of the Free States; and that it

was the first step of the conspiracy against freedom, which has found its appropriate and intended sequel in the lawless attempts of a Missouri mob, instigated by a conspicuous friend of the National Administration, and connived at and sanctioned by the same, to force the curse of slavery upon the free soil of Kansas; and we not only oppose the extension of slavery over our national territories, but also the admission of any new slave States in the Union, believing that, as our national domain is free from slavery, in the absence of any positive law establishing it, we are justified in making freedom a condition of their admission into the sisterhood of States.

Resolved, That we are in favor of the repeal of the present Fugitive Slave law, because it virtually suspends the sacred writ of habeas corpus, and takes away the right of trial by jury.

Resolved, That the imprisonment, without trial, of citizens of free States, by Federal Judiciary, is a bold invasion of personal liberty, a violation of the guaranteed rights of States, and an assumption of federal power that should be resisted determinedly by every friend of personal and civil freedom.

Resolved, That we cordially invite all who approve of the principles set forth in these resolutions, without regard to their former political associations, to unite and co-operate with us for the purpose of restoring the administration of this government to its original purity, and directing its energies to the accomplishment of its true object, as set forth in the Constitution, viz: "To form a more perfect Union; to establish Justice; to insure Domestic Tranquillity; to provide for the Common Defense; to promote the General Welfare, and secure the blessings of Liberty to ourselves and posterity."

"It is a common saying that old age is a return to childhood; that saying meant of the weakness of the body was wrested to weakness of the mind. The dotage they ascribe to age is never the effect of time but sometimes of the excesses of youth, and not a returning to, but a continual stay with childhood; for they that want the curiosity of furnishing their memories with the rarities of nature in their youth, and pass their time in making provision only for their ease and sensual delight are children still, as they that come into a populous city, and never going out of their inn, are strangers still, — Bishop Taylor.

There is no doubt of the following: "Geologically speaking," says Hood, "the rock upon which hard drinkers split is quartz."

THE FARM: The Garden--The Orchard.

(Written for the Dollar Newspaper—Phila.)

The Moon's Influence on Vegetation.

This is a subject that ought to be understood better than it is, and hence this effort to draw the attention of those who can throw light upon it.

It is a very common notion among men, that the moon, in its various changes, exerts a material, and, at times, great influence upon the weather, its heat, dryness, and moisture or rain, wind, &c., and of course upon vegetation through the weather. And this opinion has not been confined to the mere unlettered or unthinking portion of our race, for men of science have held the same view. Thus Pliny, for example, a distinguished Roman philosopher, who flourished soon after the period of our Saviour's birth, tells us that grain intended for immediate use should be collected at the full of the moon, or, as I understand him, not until the moon is full, while grain intended to be kept or preserved, should be gathered in the new moon. He says, grain intended for immediate use, should be gathered at the full of the moon, because grain increases rapidly in magnitude during the increase of the moon. (See I. Lardner's Lectures on Sciences, p. 504.) His reason for the other branch of his advice, I am unable to give, not having seen it in any book.

We are told by the moon and weather philosophers of our own day, that trees designed for timber should be cut down during the decline or waning of the moon, as timber cut at the time of full moon, or during the increase of the moon, will be full of sap and spongy, and so soon become wormy, and rot, and be worthless. But M. Duhamel Monceau, a French agriculturist, has tested this by felling trees at different and opposite periods of the lunar month, trees of the same age and exposure, and growing upon the same soil, and found them to remain the same in point of quality, and exhibit no difference in regard to their durability. (Lardner's Lectures, p. 502-3.) Thus giving a death-blow to this theory.

We are also told, the planting of garden seeds and trees, and grafting and pruning of trees should be done during the increase of the moon (this is, nothing more than Pliny's notion, a little extended) as the increasing moon tends to increase the rapidity of the growth of these seeds and grafts, and also the healing of the wound made by the pruning knife. But M. Ara-

go, a highly distinguished French philosopher, who has taken great pains to collect and examine the various notions entertained by the populace concerning the moon's influences on the weather, vegetation, &c., is of the opinion that all or most of the changes that commonly occur in the weather, vegetation, &c., while the moon is in or is passing through a particular phase, are not caused by the moon at all, but by some other cause or causes, not yet fully or distinctly known. And Dr. D. Lardner, a distinguished English philosopher, who lectured with great eclat on scientific subjects, a few years ago, in Philadelphia, New York, and elsewhere, and who derived much of his material in relation to lunar influences from M. Arago, concludes his review of them thus, viz: "In conclusion, then, it appears that of all the various influences popularly supposed to be exerted on the surface of the earth (by the moon) few have any foundation in fact." (See I. Lardner's Lec. 503-509.)

And another scientific writer in the Literary Record and Journal, published at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, in 1845 and 6, takes the same position, for he says: "None of the known laws of Nature have as yet been able to explain why the moon should influence the movement of sap in plants, the durability of a roof shingled in a particular phase, the time of falling of timber, and a thousand other things which are commonly received as facts. Popular opinion has invested our little satellite (the moon) with almost unlimited power, and the most extraordinary and opposite effects are attributed to its influence. It does not follow, however, that that which is generally believed must necessarily be true; and if the foundation on which these opinions rest be very slightly examined, it will be found that few of them are even apparently sustained by facts." (Literary Record 2 vo. p. 270-1.)

Now let some practical man, by way of contrast, and for the purpose of illustrating and enforcing the correctness of his moon theory, tell us what experience has taught him as respects the moon's influence upon gardening and farming operations, and we may, perhaps, all learn something that we do not yet know or sufficiently understand.

I have already shown you that Pliny, of ancient times, believed in the moon's materially influencing the weather and vegetation, and that M. Arago, Dr. Lardner, and other scientific men of our own day, disbelieve in it, while M. D. Monceau, a practical Frenchman, has proved by actual experiment, that the moon's various phases, or changes, have no effect whatever in changing or altering either the quality or the durability of timber, no matter in what phase of the moon it may have been cut. Now let me add a few more scientific authorities.

The Messrs. Chambers, in closing their very interesting subject entitled, "Meteorology—The Weather," say: "According to an ancient prejudice it has been supposed that the moon, on entering its different quarters, exercises an influence on the weather; but this is ascertained by men of science to be without foundation in truth. The moon affects the tides of the ocean, but in no other known manner has it any influence over the ordinary phenomena of plants."

"It has been even said that the winds are the grand disturbers of the weather and that to them we may proximately ascribe the occurrence of clear skies, fogs, clouds, rains, &c. As the winds originate from circumstances frequently far beyond our horizon, and cannot consequently be foreseen, every prognostic of either fine or bad weather is liable to complete derangement. The chance floating of an iceberg from the Northern Polar regions to a temperate latitude in the Atlantic has been known to shed such a cold over Britain as to destroy the best hopes of summer." (See Chambers' Information, I. vo., p. 280.)

By the best hopes of summer here evidently mean the husbandman's hope of a good harvest.

And Branda, another high authority, says: "It has always been a favorite prejudice that the weather is influenced in some mysterious manner by the moon. The moon can be supposed to act on the earth only in one of three ways, namely: 1. By the light which it reflects. 2. By its attraction; or 3. By an emanation of some unknown kind. Now the light of the moon does not amount to the 100,000th part of that of the sun; and the heat which it excites is so small as to be altogether inappreciable by the most delicate instruments or the best devised experiments. No effect can, therefore, be attributed to the moon's light. With regard to the attraction of the moon, we see its influence on the tides of the ocean; and might, therefore, be disposed to allow it a similar influence on the atmosphere; but when we take into account the small specific gravity of atmospheric air, in comparison with water, and the consequent smallness of the mass of water to be acted upon, it will readily be perceived that this influence must also be extremely feeble. In fact it has been demonstrated by Laplace that the joint action of the solar and lunar attraction is incapable of producing more

than an atmospheric tide flowing at the rate of about four miles a day, and consequently scarcely, if at all, appreciable. As to the remaining supposition that the moon may act on the atmosphere by some obscure emanation, it is sufficient to remark that no meteorological observations that have yet been made, afford the slightest traces of any such connection between the earth and its satellite (the moon.) The Registers which are now kept in various observatories and other places, also prove, contrary to the popular belief, that the changes of the weather are in no way whatever dependent on the lunar phases." (See Branda's Encyclopaedia, tit. Weather.)

Science thus puts a broad and very positive veto or denial upon the various moon influences in question.

W. Milton, Pa., 1853.

Soil best adapted to Wheat.

All of our commonly cultivated plants are composed of precisely the same elements, the only chemical difference between the vast variety of plants being the relative proportions in which the same elements unite to form the plant; so that if a soil will produce any one of our cultivated crops, it possesses the capacity, so far as the elements of plants are concerned, of growing any other crop to some extent. In judging of the best kind of plants to be cultivated on any particular soil, therefore, we have to look to the relative proportion in which the elements of plants exist in the soil, and adopt that class of plants which requires most of the particular elements in which the soil abounds, or requires least of those in which it is deficient. This would seem to be a common sense view of the subject, yet there are many other circumstances, often overlooked, which, if considered, would materially affect our conclusions. In a large crop of corn there are all the elements which a large crop of wheat contains, and also in larger quantities, yet there are thousands of acres of land that produce immense crops of corn that cannot be profitably cultivated with wheat. A good wheat soil will always produce a good crop of corn, if properly tilled, while much of our best corn land will not produce wheat under ordinary culture. The cause of this great difference is not, we have shown, owing to a deficiency in the soil of any element of the wheat plant, for the requirements of the corn crop are identical in kind and greater in quantity than that of wheat. It must, therefore, be owing either to the manner in which the various elements are assimilated by the plant, or to some substance in the soil, which, though sufficient, it may exist in a corn soil for the actual demands of the wheat crop, yet from the different habits of the two plants, a much larger quantity may be necessary for the performance of the healthy functions of the wheat than the corn plant. This substance is most probably clay: for all soils, which experience proves to be the best adapted to wheat culture, abound with this substance and lime. The reason why clay is so much more necessary and beneficial for wheat than for corn, is not clearly understood.

In light soil the wheat plant is found to throw out its lateral roots very near the surface, while in a clayey or heavy soil it is more inclined to tap, and the lateral fibrous roots are at a greater depth. In the former case the plant would be more likely to leave out in the spring, while in the latter it would be better able to stand the vicissitudes of cold and heat, from the roots being at a greater depth, and having a firmer hold of the soil. It is therefore probable that one of the benefits which the wheat plant derives from clay, is its preventing the extension of fibrous surface roots, and forcing the plant to grow out a single tap root, which descends much deeper and takes a firmer hold of the soil.

If this is a right view of the subject, we should loosen the sub-soil of all our wheat fields, by deep plowing and sub-soiling; while on soils rather too light for wheat, every possible means should be used to render the soil compact and firm. Treating the wheat in the fall with sheep has been practiced with advantage; but in doing so, caution is necessary to prevent serious injury in case winter immediately sets in. On all soils, which produce good crops of corn, we believe that may be grown, inasmuch as there is nothing lacking which enters into the wheat plant, and all that is necessary is to impart to the soil a certain degree of texture and tenacity, which all good natural wheat soil possesses. For this purpose heavy rollers and other mechanical means must be employed, and a presser something similar to Crosskill's Clod Crusher, of which we have often spoken, would be of great benefit. We do not wish to be understood to say that consolidation is the only thing necessary in all cases, to insure a wheat crop on soil where corn, barley and oats flourish; for the land may in the winter be so wet as to destroy the plant; yet, if drained and means be taken to render the surface compact, we believe such soils would produce first rate crops of wheat.—Gleaner Farmer.