

## farmers' Department.

### Renovation of Soils.

There is in the constituent particles of soils, a constant tendency to more minute division, by continual tillage, and the concurrent action of salts, manures, and frost, this division may become so extreme, that at length a soil may be reduced to a fine powder or dust; in which state it will be destitute of substance, and cease to be productive; the rain falling upon it will convert it into mere mire or mud; and this being hardened by the heat of the sun, the air will be excluded, and the roots of plants will be wholly unable to fulfil their functions. "All these soils" (for instance, where 45 parts of 100 are clay) "are unproductive, and become adhesive and clammy when wet; the water which stands upon them is uniformly turbid and whitish, and particularly so when it is agitated by wind; the effect of heat is to contract and crack their surface, to make it hard, and render it impenetrable to the plough; nor can they be made to any considerable extent productive, but by the liberal application of coarse undecomposed manures, and especially by ploughing in crops of buckwheat when in flower." It is not my purpose to discuss the question of renovating soils, for it has often been ably treated, but to state the result of an experiment in wheat culture, on a soil approximating the above description, quoted from the sterling work of Chaptal, on Agricultural Chemistry. The soil was rather a stiff clay, and having been some thirty-five years in arable condition, and for much of the former part of this time very productive of wheat, it had been, for want of a knowledge of the benefits of the "rotation system," sadly abused. In 1838 it was summer fallowed, having laid the four years previous to sheep pasture, but the crop of wheat which followed was very ordinary, not yielding bushels to the acre; which in part arose from the adhesive and clammy nature of the soil, causing the frost to have a very considerable proportion of the plants on the surface to perish. This is well known to be a very common occurrence, in our climate, with heavy clay lands, if sown late; but this was not the fact in the last particular, and the growth in the fall was beyond an average. After the crop was harvested, I observed on all parts of the field, numerous cracks on the surface, to much greater extent than is usual with similar soils. I contemplated giving the field a heavy manuring the following season, and plant with corn; but subsequently changed my plan, having resolved to adopt the course recommended as above, by Chaptal. I consequently applied about twenty-five large cart loads of coarse, unfermented manure, drawn from my sheep barns, to the acre, which was spread no faster than the ploughs would cover. The plants in the fall, assumed so dark a green, that I was a little apprehensive of the usual rank growth before harvest, which almost invariably follows the direct application of manure to the wheat crop, as well as large proportions of straw to the berry. But, doubtless owing to the great poverty of the soil these results did not follow. The field averaged over twenty bushels to the acre, which is about the average production of well tilled fallow land, sown timely, and in favorable seasons, in this immediate quarter. The coarse manure had evidently affected a material modification of the soil, a few cracks were distinguishable on the surface, after harvest, showing most clearly, that it was more friable. It is a year ago last spring since the grass seed was sown upon it, and a more luxuriant covering of clover, I have rarely seen than the field now presents; which is another proof of some renovation of the soil, otherwise, very much of the clover would have been thrown out by the frost of last spring. It is my present impression, that if this field is permitted to rest for two years longer, and then sowed with buckwheat, and plowed under when in blow, preparatory to wheat, in consideration of what has already been done, its original fertility will be nearly restored, and in some measure the adhesive clammy texture of the soil destroyed. But while on this subject, I beg leave to enter a protest against applying manure—except compost—directly to the wheat crop; unless, as in the above case, when the soil is rendered quite unproductive, by long and "skinning" management, before agricultural periodicals taught us better. You will permit me to quote your remarks, gentlemen on this point, for I am quite sure they cannot be kept too much before the people,—from the 7th vol. of the Cultivator, taken from a sterling article on "Wheat Culture." "One of the greatest evils of direct manuring for the wheat crop, arises from the liability of the grain so manured, to lodge, the rapid growth of the stem renders it unable to support its own weight, it is soft and flexible, contains much less silex than those grown in a poorer soil; the wheat does not usually perfect its berries, and at times, from the thinness of the skin or cuticle, it is more liable to mildew and rust. These things render it certainly unadvisable, unless the land is very poor and reduced, to apply unfermented manure to wheat."

**A MAGNIFICENT RAILWAY CARRIAGE.**—The directors of the Great Eastern Railway Company are constructing a specimen of railway carriage, which, for luxury and beauty, can only be compared with Cleopatra's galley. Talk of "purple sails, and oars of silver, and pavilion of cloth of gold!" the carriage which is being built at Stratford for the use of the Prince and Princess of Wales is quite as fine! "I wish I were a princess," the little lady plaintively says in the nursery; "then I could have sugar candy for breakfast!"—So we almost wish that we were a prince; then we should ride upon quilted satin, with our feet inches deep in a velvet-pile carpet, and hang our hats upon frosty silver pegs! Let our readers only realize the splendor of the drawing-room on wheels which is to travel to and fro between Sandringham and London. First of all, it is twenty-six feet long, in separate compartments, so that royalty can stretch its legs. Then it is seven feet high, so that royalty's traveling cap, or royalty's head inside it, will not knock against the roof, or try unwilling conclusions as to relative hardness with the glass of the carriage lamp. The interior of this mansion-in-miniature is hung with blue silk, brocaded and bordered with silver, and studded with the same metal.—The handles and furniture are all of silver also, designed to exhibit everywhere the triple plume of the Prince of Wales. Interned with the same emblems on the inside panels, the Danish Cross appears in all directions, and the carpet woven ad hoc, reproduces the same ornaments. Even the outside is gaudy, for it is to be painted in lake-and-gold, with the royal arms and the badge of the Order of the Garter; in those spaces where vulgar rail-carriages carry the description of their class.

**THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE.**—The election of Mr. Schuyler Colfax as Speaker of the House of Representatives is a matter of general congratulation. He was elected by a decisive majority, including every Union member, so that the triumph is not a Republican triumph, but one of a higher and broader nature. Mr. Colfax is in every way qualified for an office so responsible. He has been a Representative of the Ninth Indiana Congressional district for eight years, and adds to thorough knowledge of parliamentary business the indispensable qualities of strict integrity, firmness, impartiality, and courtesy. His decisions will be respected by friends and opponents, and, so far as a Speaker can influence the deliberations of a legislative body, Mr. Colfax will facilitate the speedy transaction of public business, and protect the dignity and order of the House. But, independently of this special fitness for the high position which the Union members have unanimously given him, Mr. Colfax has, by a loyal and active course, well earned the confidence of the country. Born in New York city in March, 1823, he became a printer when a boy, and always studying and improving, removed to Indiana in 1836, and there established the South Bend Register, a journal which he still controls. More than half of his life has been spent in public service, and few men have served so faithfully and well.—*Philadelphia Press.*

**B**A laughable incident is related of a jealous woman, at Lewiston, Maine, who went into an auction room the other day, and saw as she supposed, her husband very familiarly sitting beside a young lady. Stepping up softly, she seized a head in each hand and pounded them together a number of times in a great rage. Her surprise may be imagined when she found that the innocent stranger was not her "worst half." She apologized and passed on amid the laughter and great merriment of the crowd.

**THE DRUNKARD'S DAUGHTER.**—"Take me on your lap, papa. Now kiss me like you used to do; stroke my head and call me your little pet. Why don't you kiss me? Don't you love Lizzie now? I love you, papa, O, ever so much, and when mother cries when you are away, I put my arms around her neck and say, 'Lizzie loves you mamma,' and then she wipes the big tears away and tells me, 'your papa once told me that; but I am afraid he has forgotten it, for he doesn't seem to like home any more.'"

"And dear papa, sometimes her heart beats so hard, I am afraid it will break.—Will it, papa? What will Lizzie do then, should mamma die? And what will you do?"

"Hush my child."

"Do tell me, papa, for she coughed so hard to-day; and she told me to be ever kind to you if others did abuse you and call you wicked names, for she said she was sinking fast. What is that? Ain't that going to die, papa? Oh, do tell me!"

"Now don't cry; there is a kiss for you; here, let me dry your face."

"Now lie me down, papa. I will tell mamma to come. I didn't mean to make you sorry."

"O, mother, my papa did kiss me like he used to do, and hugged me too, an called me his pretty dear; and (whispered) mamma, on his knees he talked to God and said he had been very wicked; but now he will try and do his duty. But my papa isn't wicked, is he, mother?"

**A** writer to the Boston Transcript whose name is a person in that city whose father was one of a family of three children, all of whom lived over eighty years of age; his father, being the youngest, lived to the uncomfortable age of ninety-six. The grandfather lived to ninety-six, and the grandmother to ninety-seven.

L. A.

**The Last of the Moon Question.**—We propose to give the readers of this report the following additional opinions upon the moon question, and with this, close the arguments, until something positively new is added:

E. C. HARRIS, writes as follows, from Glendale, Ohio:

"There is no part of the contents of The Semi-Weekly Tribune which I read with more interest than the proceedings of the Farmers' Club, and have been particularly interested in the discussions concerning the moon influence upon plant and vegetable life. The affirmative and negative on the question display their respective characteristics; the former declaring their belief in the moon theory simply because it is so; the negative ridiculing the very idea of such a thing. A blind faith is an excess on one side, and a blank disbelief on the other; but between those who so implicitly and those who so stoutly and sometimes flippancy deny an earnest seeker after truth has not found a very formidable array of reasoning on either side. To assert a thing is true because I believe it and my father and grand-father believe it before me, is not truth, but tradition; and also to pronounce a thing absurd because I do not believe it, is presumption; ignorance; for I know as much or as little as I may, "there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in my philosophy."

**C**ONCERNING this controversy certain facts have been lost sight of which it would be well to recall. The empirical notion entertained by certain astronomers of the utterly lifeless waste of the moon's surface has been exploded. This idea of the moon's negativity obtained credence by denying the existence of an atmosphere around the moon, consequently denying also the existence of water and organic life from our satellite. This theory led to the denial also of heat in the lunar rays, from all which flowed a multitude of errors.

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**A**fter a child has learned to speak ill, he may be taught to speak well; but the chances are against him. But why should he have the trouble of breaking bad habits?"—*Report of N. Y. Board of Education.*

**C**OMPOSITION FOR BLACK-BOARDS.—Lambblack and flour of emery mixed with spirit varnish. No more lambblack and flour of emery should be used than are sufficient to give the required black and abrading surface; and the varnish should contain only enough gum to hold the ingredients together, and confine the composition to the board. The thinner the mixture, the better.

The lambblack should first be ground with a small quantity of alcohol, or spirit varnish, to free it from the lumps.

**N**APOLÉON. Countersigned, DROUYN DE LHUY.

**H**OW TO SWEEP A CARPET.—Take a common wash-tub, or some vessel large enough to admit a broom freely, and put in clean cold water to the depth of a foot or more. Then take a broom, (one partly worn, so as to be a little stiff, is the best,) dip it in six inches or so, and then hold it over the tub, or go out of doors and knock off all the drops of water.

The composition may also be used on the walls.

**P**RAYERS. Prayer is the eye of faith fixed on Jesus, whether the outward manifestation be by a sigh, a tear, or the upward glancing of the eye. David was in a prayerful frame when he thurst, panted after God. Christ expressed the same moral condition, when he spoke of the soul hungering and thirsting after righteousness.

**T**HE OBSTRUCTIONS IN CHARLESTON HARBOR.—It is the opinion of more than one officer in the fleet of Charleston that the obstructions in that harbor are insignificant, if not harmless, and one of them has sent north a specimen of them as obtained by a pilot. They consist of beer-barrels pitched, secured by a one-and-a-half-inch rope, with cotton bale rope network to obstruct the propellers. In the words of the description, the obstructions, instead of being "torpedoes and chains," are larger beer kegs and clothes lines. The greatest obstruction appears to have hitherto been in the apprehensions of the commander, and not in the harbor.

**T**HE ATONEMENT.—The atonement by the cross is not so much a member of the body of the Christian doctrine as the life-blood that runs through the whole of it.

There is not an important truth but what is presupposed by it, included in it, or availed out of it; nor any part of practical religion but what hangs upon it.

**I**AM afraid, dear wife, that while, I am gone, absence will conquer love.—"Oh, never fear, dear husband, the longer you stay away the better I shall like you."

## Educational Department.

### MY NATIVE LAND.

BY MRS. L. J. PIERSON.  
My Native Land.—To my living heart  
There comes a spirit, who, with tearful tone  
Sits ever by its holiest altar stone.

She lifted up the curtain, whence the years  
Have woven by their part-color'd thread,  
And pointed to a landscape with fair forms  
Of love, and joy, and beauty, overspread.

Our Childhood's Home—the valley, hill, and stream,  
The path our feet first set upon,  
The flowers, the birds, the trees, the boughs by the wall,  
The grey stone door-step, and that holiest place.

The household hearth, where lives the cheerful fire,  
Which warms and blends the hearts that mingle there.  
In kindred confidence; where every soul  
Is true, and loving, where all forms are fair.

And every face so beautiful, so dear—  
A face of love that only wins a weep,  
Above the picture which memory traces  
Upon the tender heart, so bright, and deep.

That day, which with their footsteps wear away,  
That after-life's impressions, only keep  
That brilliant tablet-free from moss and dust,  
And wear the graving more distinct and deep.

The radiant image, which love abounding hand  
Presses on the heart in manhood's ardent days,  
The earlier impress of a mother's care.

My own dear Native Land! I approach thy hills  
As rugged, and abrupt, and sparsely dressed  
With guard and dark boulders, which stubborn form  
The storm winds of the North and West.

Although thy soils are not all broad and rich,  
With indigo, fucus, and white sand, with  
The sturdy village of the hills, or broad  
The stony ridge of the head of health.

Though ley winter's wing of drifts snow  
Beds thy bosom, more than half the year,  
Yet still thou art my own dear native land,  
And all thy features beautiful, and dear.

Heaven hath no brier where than thy winds,  
Earth hath no way more barren than thy streams,  
Our hills, or woods, or fields, or brooks,  
The sunlight never wove thy golden dreams.

There is no soil on which the human foot  
More firmly treadeth to the tearless beat  
Of true and freshen heart, where all the flowers  
Of pure affection, bloom so fair and sweet.

And there's no land from whence with brighter wing  
Or with more beauty the birds of summer come,  
Than with all life and song, of joy or peace,  
The thrilling music of the heart note Home.

My native land—every living heart  
These words are full of music; and their tone  
Awakes the memories that with tearful smile,  
Sit ever by its holiest altar stone.

### Articulation.

Observing that the practice and rule has been rather to read loud than articulate, I have directed early attention to be given to the elemental powers of the letters, and the practice of pronouncing lessons—comprising difficulties of enunciation. Why should even the youngest pupil remain ignorant of the distinction between a vowel and a consonant, when the following easy illustration will possess them of that knowledge.

Let the pupil open the mouth wide and insert the forefinger while pronouncing A, E, I, O, U, and then attempt to pronounce B or P, and it will be palpably proven that the one are only breathed sounds, and the others articulated—or, as expressed in a more simple form, *open* and *close* letters;

the one pronounced with the mouth open, and the other by the use of the lips, tongue and teeth—or the one sounded by itself and the other not without the use of another letter. For B, P, and other consonants close up the sound of A, as ab; but after them the vowel sound is prolonged.

Correct and precise enunciation should be taught at an age when the organs of speech are flexible, the hearing acute, and the mind more observant—being unencumbered by a multiplicity of ideas.

After a child has learned to speak ill,

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