## farmers' Department.

## Patent Office Report, CALCAREOUS MANURES. BI-CARBONATE OF LIME. Application of Lime to Land. (Concluded.)

Crushed limestone has often been applied to the soil with success in the crude or unburned state"; but its ef-fects are slow and more lasting than lime that has been burned. It has not the solvent activity of quicklime, however, nor the absorbing power of chalk; nor has it the minute divis ion of mild lime mixed with earth, while in an impalpable power.

In a district where fuel is scarce and limestone, or marble, plentiful, it might be cheaply erushed into a powder by means of water, steam, or animal power, and thus be economically prepared for improving most kinds of soil which are deficient in lime. But no lands in which calcareous matter naturally abounds, nor those containing a large proportion imperfectly-decomposed vegetable remains, such as bog roots, moss, &c., can receive much if any immediate benefit by the use of unburned lime, unless it be to render clayey soils mechanically lighter and boggy ones

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more firm, The benefits derived from burning lime for agricultural purposes are partly chemical and partly mechanical; for, while in a caustic state, it acts more promptly in producing those chemical changes, which follow from mixing it with the soil. Even in half-caustic state of spontaneously slacked lime, its effects are more rapid and more quickly seen, than when it is entirely in a carbonate or unburned state. But the principal benefits arise from the minute state of division into which the lime is brought by burning and slacking. When the burned limestone is slacked, if it is tolerably pure, the lime falls, or crumbles to a powder-finer, probably, than any which could be produced by mere mechanical means-finer, certainly, than any to which the farmer could bring it, by any crushing machine he could afford to employ.

The chief advantages to be derived from this fine state of division of lime, first, it may be diffused more equally and more perfectiy through the soil and thus go much further in improving it. Secondly, it more readily combines with acid substances in the soil, and therefore sweetens it more rapidly and more quickly. And thirdly it comes into closer contact with the organic substances in the soil, such as roots of grass, straw, leaves, &c., and consequently promotes more fully those chemical changes which are constantly going on in every fertile soil, to produce which, is one of the useful purposes for which lime is added to the land.

The above remarks are not intended to apply to such beds of impure limestone as may be employed for the manufacture of cements and hydraulic mortars; for these, when burned and ground to a powder, cannot be applied for the improvement of land in the usual way, without combining with the water or moisture in the soil, and shortly after become as hard as stone.

In countries abounding in limestone, there often exist scattered here and there, in the hollows and in the hill-sides, banks and heaps of sand and gravel, in which rounded particles of limestone are found. These are distinguished by the names

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limestone sand and gravel, and are derived from the decay or wearing down of the limestone and other rocks by the action of water. Such accumulations are frequent in Ireland .-They are inoced extensively diffused over the surface of that island, as we might expect in a country abounding so much in rocks of mountain lime stone. In the neighborhood of peatbogs, these sands and gravels aro a real blessing. They are a ready, most useful, and largely-employed means of improvement, producing upon arable land the ordinary effects of liming, and, when spread upon boggy soils, alone, enabling them to grow sweet and herbage, and afford a nourishing pasture. The proportion of corbonate of lime these sands and gravel contain is very variable. A sample of yellow sand, examined

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