FARM AND HOUSEHOLD

WHAT A HEAVY SOD WILL DO.—The sod makes the corn. This may be taken as an axiom, as undoubted as that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points. If the sod is right the corn can take of itself. What is wanted is a mass of roots filling the soil to the depth of three, four or five inches or more, and such a mat of vegetation on the surface as will inevitably belong to such a mass of roots. Now, what such an amount of vegetable matter easily decomposed, and such as corn leaves to feed upon would measure, can be very easily estimated. It would certainly be within bounds to say that there would be on every square rod of ground 90 cubic feet of matter equal in fertilizing power to average barn-yard manure. This is over three-quarters of a cord per square rod; and 100 rods going to make up an acre, there would be over 120 cords of manure to the acre. This amount of barn-yard manure would seem perfectly bewildering to a farmer, and would be beyond the power of many to haul out and spread. And here it is on the spot, in the most perfect shape possible to be utilized. Does it need then, any further argument to show clearly that a heavy sod, is the best, cheapest and most easily handled manure farmer can procure or invent? The real question of whether one should plow deep or shallow for corn, here gets a satisfactory and simple reply. With such a sod or any sod, we may say, one must plow sufficiently deep to get enough loose soil on the top to allow the harrow to work and make a seed bed. No more, no less. If your sod is such a one as we lately saw cut from a pasture on a farm in Eastern Pennsylvania, the plow must necessarily go seven or 8 inches beneath the surface before enough soil can be obtained whereon to make a seed-bed. The average crop on this farm is over 100 bushels of shelled corn per acre, and the secret, if there is any, is in this sod. Why should it be doubted? It is a simple example in proportion; as sod is to sod, so corn to corn. And by this we may learn what a heavy sod will do.—*Agriculturist.*

NEW PROCESS IN WHEAT CULTURE.—The result of an experiment made during the past season, by R. A. Gilpin, at his farm in Weston, on the wide planting and cultivation of wheat, appears to be quite remarkable. In giving an account of the experiment, Mr. Gilpin says: The ground measured an acre within a fraction; it was not selected on account of any inferiority, but was much the same as the rest of the field, and was manured and prepared just the same. The seed was the red Mediterranean, and not very good, being taken from the wheat grown on the place the previous season, which was injured by the weevil. It was drilled in at the rate of three-quarters of a bushel to the acre, on the twenty-fifth of September, at the same time as the rest of the field. The peculiarity in the treatment was that every other pipe of the drill was stopped, so that the rows of wheat were twenty inches apart or double the usual distance. In the spring when the ground had become sufficiently dry to work, a small garden hoe barrow was run between the rows, working the ground to the depth of about three inches, this was done only once. The effect of this work was very apparent; the wheat took a rapid start and outgrew the rest of the field. As the season advanced it grew tall and strong, and no amount of wind and rain had any effect to lay it down; when the heads formed, their greater length was very apparent. It was backward in ripening, and the rest of the field was cut and hauled in a week before this was ready. Now for the result: the experimental wheat yielded twenty-three bushels to the acre, and the rest yielded only nine bushels to the acre; the quality of each was about the same. Whether from defect in the seed, or the wet season, or the late planting, the whole of my wheat was injured both by rust and weevil, and the experimental part did not escape—it was affected just as the rest was. This experiment can not be regarded as entirely satisfactory; the season was exceptional, the seed used was inferior, and the yield of the experimental part of the field was not absolutely great, but only by comparison with the rest of the crop, which was a poor one, from the effects of the rust and the weevil. But the result is, under any circumstances, sufficiently reasonable to attract the attention of farmers and induce a further trial.—*American Farm Journal.*

FRUITS—THE ORCHARDS OF THE NATION.—The Census gives an interesting statement of such fruits as grow in orchards under the head of "Orchard Products." The great increase in production is remarkable, as will be seen by the following comparison of the aggregate of the years 1850, 1860 and 1870:

In 1850 the total valuation was	$ 7,572,188
In 1860 the total valuation was	10,901,885
In 1870 the total valuation was	15,335,189

The crops included in this estimate are apples, peaches, pears and a few minor fruits, excluding grapes, berries, currants, oranges, melons, etc. The enormous increase above set forth is chiefly in apples and peaches, while in the crops not enumerated in the list the increase has likewise been great. In 1850 the State of New York was the only one that made a specialty of orchard products, her crop then being valued at $1,761,950. The wonderful increase in twenty years, as likewise the advance made in this culture by other States, is shown by the following table:

	1850.	1860.	1870.
New York	$1,761,950	$3,720,295	$5,317,351
Pennsylvania	725,379	1,179,267	1,806,604
Ohio	695,921	1,020,368	1,837,979
New Jersey	467,293	429,402	1,205,282
Massachusetts	463,905	925,510	959,854
Illinois	446,049	1,126,323	1,601,789
Missouri	514,741	810,576	1,858,086
Indiana	344,240	1,256,042	2,858,086
Vermont	415,155	211,695	642,241
New Hampshire	218,503	657,094	743,552
Maryland	161,051	252,195	1,318,095
Kentucky	106,220	604,519	1,221,385
Delaware	46,574	114,226	1,226,893
California	17,720	74,576	1,381,189

New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio head the list of the States in the production of fruit, the actual increase being greatest in New York, whose product in 1870 was nearly double that of Pennsylvania; but the ratio of increase was greatest in Ohio and Pennsylvania. New Jersey whose products in 1850 were valued at $88,063 less than Ohio, decreased nearly one-third of that amount in 1860, while Ohio more than doubled the estimate of 1850, showing Ohio progressed far more rapidly. The ratio of increase in California in the last decade was not equal to that of Pennsylvania, though it shows a remarkable advance during the past twenty years.

OVERGROWN HOGS.—There is not one single advantage to be claimed in favor of big hogs. There was never a monster hog which did not make the man who raised him pay for every pound he weighed.

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