

The Bloomfield Times. HOUSE, FARM AND GARDEN.

The History of the Potato.

The potato has a curious history. It is a native of the elevated valleys of the Andes in Peru and Chili, and is found as far north as Mexico. It was taken to Spain soon after the discovery of the American continent, and was cultivated in gardens as a botanical curiosity. The tubers being small and not edible in its wild state, it attracted no attention. In 1586, Sir Walter Raleigh introduced it into England, and is credited with bringing it from Virginia; but of this there is no evidence. Its cultivation in the cool, moist summers of Ireland soon developed large tubers, which were found to consist chiefly of starch. A successful experiment was made in the use of the tuber as food, but this was met and combated by a number of learned men, and several works were written and published to prove its poisonous character. It belongs to the great Nightshade family (Solanacee), all of which are poisonous. This indictment was true, but they had not yet learned that a poisonous plant may bear a fruit of a tuber not only harmless but very nutritious. This prejudice prevented the use of the tomato till within the last 40 years. The truth is, both these vegetables being of Nightshade family, are poisonous in stem, leaf and flower, but this property does not extend to the tuber of the one nor the fruit of the other. While on this subject, it is proper to say that solanine—the poisonous principle of this family, is sometimes developed in the potato, even to a dangerous extent. If the tubers, while growing, are uncovered, so as to expose them to direct sunshine, they will assume a green appearance and become poisonous from the presence of solanine. The same effect in a minor degree, is produced in the sprouting of potatoes. If these are used in cooking they should be sliced and placed in cold water an hour or two before being cooked. Otherwise sprouted potatoes are unwholesome food.

The potato is a tropical plant, but its tuber-producing quality is a northern modification of the plant, and in this quality it is improved by the cool summer of the north, and is successfully cultivated to the Arctic circle, and with a decided improvement in the quality of the crop and generally in its yield. The crop is sometimes injured by the intense heat of July and August, even at the fortieth degree of latitude. The tendency of the tuber to degenerate in warm climates will suggest the precaution of occasionally renewing the crop by planting northern potatoes.

Measuring Building Materials.

The following figures are worth remembering, as they will save a great deal of calculation and give approximately accurate results with a minimum of labor. A cord of stone, three bushels of lime and a cubic yard of sand will lay one hundred cubic yards of wall.—Five courses of brick will lay one foot in height on a chimney. Nine bricks in a course will make a flue eight inches wide and twenty inches long, and eight inches wide and sixteen inches long.—Eight bushels of good lime sixteen bushels of sand and one bushel of hair will make enough mortar to plaster one hundred square yards. One-fifth more siding and flooring is needed than the number of square feet of surface to be covered because of the lap in the siding and matching of the floors. One thousand laths will cover seventy yards of surface, and eleven pound of lath nails will nail them on. One thousand shingles laid four inches to the weather will cover over one hundred square feet of surface, and five pounds of shingle nails will fasten them on.

Babies Need Water.

An old physician relates his experience with a sick child, to which he was called. It was crying and struggling, and the mother in her reply to a query said she could not remember when she had given it any water—that she seldom did so, and did not know that it needed any. The doctor called for cold water, gave the infant a few tablespoonfuls, and it was relieved of all its trouble; stopped crying and sank peacefully to sleep in its mother's arms. Let this be a reminder to all mothers and nurses. Infants who nurse at the breast may often suffer as much from the want of water as adults who eat more solid food. Often when a child cries it is only thirst which causes it.

A Good Foundation.

One of the greatest troubles of our people is weakness of the stomach. As this soon causes Indigestion, Nervousness and Rheumatism, they prevail in almost every American household.—There is positively no need for anybody to suffer from these painful troubles who can buy a 50 ct. bottle of Parker's Ginger Tonic; for this superior medicine always tones up the stomach and nervous system, and keeps the kidneys active in carrying off the foul matters, thus laying a good foundation for perfect health.

PARKER'S INDIAN BLOOD SYRUP. CURES DYSPEPSIA, LIVER COMPLAINTS, & HEART DISEASE. CURES ALL DISEASES OF THE STOMACH, KIDNEYS, SKIN, & BLOOD.

This Syrup possesses Varied Properties. It stimulates the Ptyaline in the Saliva, which converts the Starch and Sugar of the food into glucose. A deficiency in Ptyaline causes Wind and Souring of the food in the stomach. If the medicine is taken immediately after eating the fermentation of food is prevented.

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Sure Cure for Dyspepsia. MECHANICSBURG, Cumberland Co., Pa. DEAR SIR:—I was suffering with Dyspepsia, had severe burning at the pit of my stomach, with Nauseating sensation, dullness of spirits, headache and general languor, and the use of your INDIAN BLOOD SYRUP entirely cured me.

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