The Sioux County Journal.

[ESTABLISHED 1888.]

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Entered at the Harrison post office as second class matter.

THURSDAY, DEC. 17, 1891.

The Effect of Fertilizers on the Quality of Grain.

From Homestead.

Sir J. B. Lawes, of Rothamstead, England, has recently, in his annual report of that experiment station, called the attention of the farmers to the fact that while fertilizers increase the quantity of crops grown per acre they have very little effect on the quality. This statement has been criticized by English authorities to which Sir John replies by calling the attention of his critics to the fact that nations that grow but eight or ten bushels of wheat per acre produced grain of a superior quality to that of England which boasts of an average well up to thirty. He goes even farther and points out that the quality of the grain is dependent on climate rather than on the fertility of soil, that while the soil of Rothamstead will produce four tons of hay per acre, the pastures will not fatten a steer, no matter how much grass it may consume, while the pastures of Scotland, on much thinner land, will fatten a steer perfectly. His views on the point may be gathered from the following from the *North British Agriculturist*:

"I have just threshed my fortieth successive crop of barley. On some experimental plats the yield will be considerably over fifty bushels per acre. Not one of these experiments will give a sample of malting barley of fine quality; nor do I think, by any process known can such barley be grown upon my soil. Turn now to permanent pasture. In our various experiments we can grow crops as high as four tons of hay per acre, but this large crop if fed would not fatten a bullock; nor do I think that there is any process known by which an ordinary pasture can be made to produce the amount of meat which is produced upon one of the fine Leicestershire pastures. Many of your Scotch farmers have migrated to the south and east of England, where they will find that they will grow a worse quality of oats, turnips, wheat and mangels than they did in Scotland and I have always understood that the turnips grown upon the east side of Scotland possessed greater feeding properties than those grown upon the western side. If we look a look a little further into the subject, we shall find that it is the soil and climate of the localities which produce the fine qualities of wine, such as Lafitte or Marjean clarets, or the cabinet of Johannesberg. To attempt to double the yield by high manuring would probably be a fatal mistake. Even as it is, the value of the wine depends on the special climate of each year. I hope therefore, I have established the truth of my remarks, and I can only add that, while I have been able to increase so largely the yield of my crops, it has been a source of considerable annoyance to me to have comparatively so little control over the quality."

Singularly enough, while this discussion is going on in England, American scientists, in discussing the question whether corn can be made a nitrogenous crop by cultivation, are bringing out the fact that there is a variation of fifty per cent in the albuminoids in the different samples of corn and that some corn fodder has three times as much albuminoids, or flesh producers, as other samples. Dr. Atkins, of Connecticut, a high authority in these matters, affirms that western corn has two per cent. less albuminoids than that grown in Connecticut. Inasmuch as the usual) amount in Connecticut corn is given at ten and a half per cent, this would make a difference of forty-five per cent. in the albuminoids of different specimens, a difference which he fancies is due to fertilization and tillage."

There is much in all this to think about. Farmers are all aware of the fact that certain sections and even certain fields of the same farm, will fatten cattle better than other sections and other fields, and that, too, when the feed is apparently no better, and often, of outward seeming, inferior. It is worthy of consideration when estimating the influence of certain environments in fattening breeds and that other question, how important still, as to the possibility of these breeds being kept up to the standard when taken away from that environment. It is the fat pastures that will in time develop the fine breeds of stock, and when these are placed on lean pastures the breeder had better look out.

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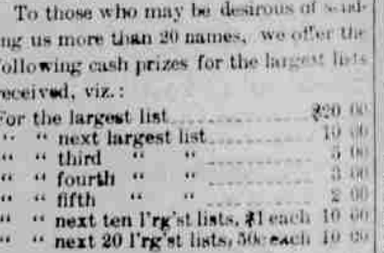

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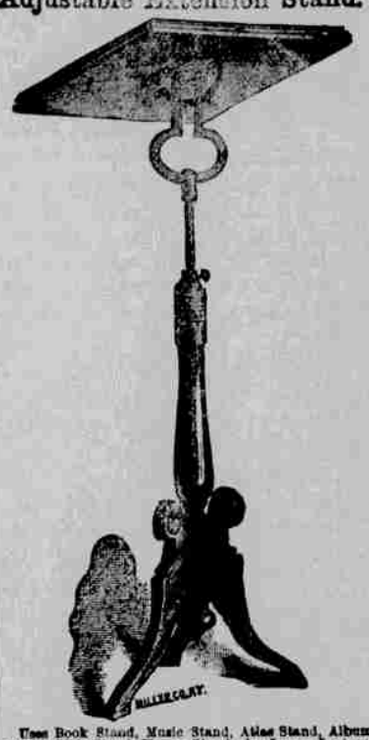

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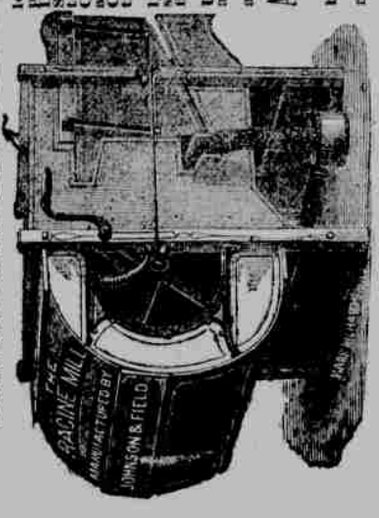

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