Nebraska Advertiser.

AGRICULTURAL.

R. W. FURNAS, Editor.

THURSDAY, MAY 12, 1870.

Shall We Plant Potatoes.

Notwithstanding all the prophesying and croaking last year, a very fine crop of potatoes was raised in almost every part of the country. Quite a large breadth was planted, and, as a natural consequence, potatoes have sold at very low prices, and the best qualities command only about fifty cents a bushel, wholesale, in our market, even at this season, when they usually sell for more than at any other. Inferior qualities are quoted at as low as thirty cents. Of course, farmers living far from market cannot afford to raise this crop and sell it here at such rates.

But we believe that even at those rates farmers living within fifteen miles of the city can make more money raising potatoes than they can raising corn. Land that will produce fifty bushels of corn, will, in an ordinary season produce two hundred bushels of potatoes. Counting the corn at 75 cents per bushel, in the year, we have amount of $37.50. The potatoe at 40 cents per bushel, would bring the sum of $80. The corn fodder, we will say, is worth $10, so that the corn crop may be estimated at $47.50.

This showing gives a balance of nearly forty per cent. in favor of the potato crop. But it costs more to raise and market an acre of potatoes than it does the corn. We are not able to say how much the difference is, because there having been no accurate experiments made, but we think that if to the cost of raising an acre of corn and marketing it, we add twenty per cent., it will cover all the expense of raising and marketing an acre of potatoes within fifteen miles of the city. This reckoning leaves a fair balance in favor of potatoes near market. How then is in the country, so far away that one could not expect a market for his crop outside of his own premises?

Fortunately, the short crop of corn in some sections last year, led to experiments that help to answer this question.

Experiments have been made with reference to the comparative value of potatoes and corn as feed for stock, particularly hogs. The results have been somewhat various, but all favorable to the use of the potatoe. Some have stated that two bushels of potatoes are equal to one bushel of corn for feeding hogs—and if cooked and properly mixed with cereal food, we presume this is a fair estimate. But if we count three bushels of potatoes as only equal to one of corn, still we shall find it profitable to raise them.

There is a large amount of starch in potatoes which give them their value as food, and they are probably as good as any other vegetable to feed to horses and cattle, during the winter when deprived of succulent food. We think every farmer in this latitude and northward, should aim to raise a good crop of potatoes every year. With this, as with every other crop, they will sometimes fail; but, as was quite extensively the case last year, when the corn is cut short, potatoes become a very important auxiliary in feeding stock.

It would be folly for the farmer to say he will plant no potatoes, beyond the wants of his family this year, simply because the price is so low. Should all adopt such a course the price would certainly be very high next spring, and then all would wish they had planted largely.

But success with this, as with other crops, is achieved by practice and skill. The farmer must know what soil, what preparation of the sail, and what mode of cultivation is adapted to this crop, and what varieties to plant.

Our subject does not require a discussion on the sail and cultivation, but we will state that the potatoe delights in a mellow, rich soil. A fresh soil is best—either sod well mellowed, or new timber land. If one has only old ground on which to plant potatoes—old ground which has a stiff subsoil, and that has been plowed about four inches deep, and cropped until nearly exhausted of plant nourishment—he had better give his seed potatoes to the hogs; and we will add that any farmer who will suffer his land to be thus impoverished, had better make an auction, sell off his old farm traps, and go at some business more honorable than cheating his Mother Earth of her beauty and wealth.

Whatever may be said about the propriety of raising potatoes for market—and we are aware that the views above expressed will not be excepted by all—every one must acknowledge that this vegetable forms one of the most healthful and economical articles of diet that can be provided for the table; and for this purpose, if for no other, care should be taken by every farmer for a liberal supply.—*Journal of Agriculture.*

How to make Farming Attractive and Profitable.

The necessity and advantages of keeping strict account of farming operations seems to be but little understood by farmers, or if understood, they often feel wearied by the toils and cares of the day, and after a short trial neglect this most necessary duty before they have even realized any of the benefits to be derived from it. In the spring of e853 I determined to see if there were any advantages to be derived from keeping a debt and credit account of my farming; also an account of my family expenses, and the drtes and time when different crops arrived at maturity, and would say that since that time I have continued that practice.

Many will say they have not time, that it will do well enough for those who are able to hire their work done, etc., but let me say here that I rm a hard working farmer, and that I consider the time spent in keeping these accounts as the most profitable, in many points of view, of any of my hours of labor.

The first year I found that to raise an acre of potatoes cost me, including seed, $23, and that I received for them $68. The next year I put the same acre to tobacco, and found instead of a profit of $45, above expenses of manure and labor, of $194, and my land left in far better condition than after my crop of potatoes. I found in 1865 that the profit on my corn was only $17 per acre, while an acre of cabbages gave me a net profit, above marketing and all expenses, of $212. Now if I had kept no account of those crops, I should have known that my tobacco and cabbages paid me better than corn and pctatoes but should not have realized how much better; neither would I have known just how much percentage my load of manure, which I had purchased paid me.

Since I began to keep farm accounts I am fully satisfied that I have cleared double the mony which I had done before and I fully believe that it was mainly due to this practice. I have been enabled by this means to do what every farmer should strive to do that is to improve his farm, to beautify his home, and to make home a place where his children delight to stay where happiness and contentment will reign supreme.

How many farmers make home the paradise they might, feeling themselves too poor to surround their places with neat fences and flowers, and things to gratify the taste and enlarge the mind. Is it any wonder that their children, as they grow up, leave for some more congenial employment, or some more pleasant home, many of them falling into vice and ruin, which which have been avoided had their parents made home attractive, and the cultivation of the sail a delightful occupation (as it might be) instead of a drudgery and hardship.

Let all hope from the influence arising from aa free interchange of ideas, and from the publication of such papers as the Boston *Cultivator*, devoted to progress and improvement, that farming may, as it should, take rank among the most ennobling pursuits in life.—*H. H. Waller, in Boston Cultivator.*

The Curse of Many Varieties.

No doubt what I have to say will be duly appreciated by the amateur horticulturists or by progressive culturists of either fruits or vegetables, but it is an undoubted fact, and one that is becoming daily more apparent, that the numbers of varieties of both fruits and vegetables is something large much larger in fact than any person would wish to try at once; and thus, if you wish to plant, you must rely on the word of some one for the merits of the kind or kinds in question. I do not say that this is wrong, for I believe that all should contribute their stock of information for the good of their fellows; but I do say that there are more varieties than are absolutely necessary for the good or the prosperity of the growers. By having such an array of names, it tends to confuse the beginner, leaving him in a very undecided frame of mind, for it is very seldom he sees "all" of them marked good, excellent, etc., etc., and so he gets a few of each kind. Sometimes the number amounts forty or fifty different sorts. Now we will say that this is all right; but as the trees begin to fruit, the first difficulty presents itself; there being so few of one variety it is not possible to get together enough for market until about the second or third, and sometimes the fourth fruiting year; so if planter is in moderate circumstances, it may inconvenience him very much for no doubt he has had glorious visions of golden gains, "all" obtained from the products of the trees. It does not make so much difference with those who plant for experiment and pleasure only, for the generally have plenty of the needful, so it cannot do them much harm.

This mania—I cannot call it by any other name—is not confined to fruit, but has very naturally included vines, vegetables, plants, and in fact almost everything; for you should pick up the catalogue of some extensive grower or daler, you are at a loss to know which is the most worthy of your attention among the vero many that you see named and described, and a good rule is to never try anything "new" yourself, but have others do it, who are more willing, and as a matter of course, more able to stand the loss, should there be any.

I speak to those who have only small means, but who are very enthusiastic to become culturists of some kind, for a little information of the right kind, and a little forethought may save many dollars for the enthusiast, for we, as horticulturists and fruit growers of several years' standing, know to our sorrow, for we have had a very large apple out of that basket, and should we wish to plant fruit again—which we shall, and are doing constantly—we shall confine ourselves to from one to twelve different varieties. We do not particularly regret our venture, for it has shown us what kind will succeed, although we did not try near all of the different sorts.

Co not always base tne value of a fruit on the appearance which the same variety gives when upon show upon the table of some horticultural society, for it is always the case that these are the largest of their kind, generally forced by some particular process, but the genuine quality can be had by deducting about one-fourth of its merits, and the remainder will generally give its true value.

Should more of our farmers or horticulturists give an account of their experiments facts, etc., so as to post others, there would be less made by unprincipaled dealers, by selling trees, etc., which they know are not profitable to grow; and should some grower cut down his list, say one half, he would be doing a great good to the fauit growing community, and would prevent the necessity of writing on "the curse of many vaiieties."—*Cor. American Farmer.*

How to Raise New Pears.

Under this title, Mr. Thos. Rivers contributes a paper to the *Gardener's Chronicle*, which is of great interest. He shows that Pears are not cross fertilized from other trees to near the extent supposed, as when he sowed seed from trees not artificially crossed, the general character of the parent was nearly maintained; while, when the same variety was purposely impregnated by the pollen, the most diverse characters ensued. He thinks that, as a rule, thorny trees produce the best fruit, and that the best Pears have been the product of chance; quoting the fact particularly that Major Esperen by his chance seedlings has done more permanent good in fine varieties, than Van Mons did by his celebrated and much vaunted system. This accords with our frequent teachings, that the credit which scientific men are apt to give to the "skill of the hybridizer and the intelligent horticulturist in ameliorating the sour crab," and so forth, should rather be placed to the account of nature's own inherant laws of evolution. He further proves by Van Mons' notion, that by successive generations, Pears can be brought to bear so young, that fruit may be had from a two or three year old tree, is not correct. Another very interesting point, and one which also we have always contended for, is that there is a limit to the *direction* of improvement in Pears. One will probably have better success in raising from a second class fruit, than from one ranking as first quality. He has been all his life raising from such fine kinds as Seckel, Duchess, Bartlett,—in fact, most of the popular kinds, without finding one "better" than the parents, though from such parents fruit is uniformly "good."

Not so much from our own personal experience, as generalizing from the facts presented by others, we have seen and taught these principles for some years past. These direct results of a long life of actual experiments are therefore of incalculable value to those interested in the improvement of fruits.

The great law undoubtedly is, that there is no limit to to the *variety* of change, but that there is to *direction.* Nature does not advance in one line far before she returns to the hub, and starts again another spoke, only soon however to reach the circumference of her ever revolving wheel of change. However much it may go against our feelings to everthrow idols we have given our heart worship to so long, it is getting evident that in many respects "Van Mons," "Knight" and other worthies have to go; we have "to learn the hard lesson over again," although in this particular case, it is not so very severe a task to remember, *there is much more chance to get the best seedlings from poor kinds with hardy vigorous constitutions, than from kinds already as good as they can be.*

Our own Rogers has taught us this in the grape; but this experience of Rivers' should add force to the lesson.—*Gardener's Monthly.*

From the Illustrated Bee Journal.

Progress in Bee Culture.

"Old fogies, arise, shake off your foginess, and give way to progress, for we are coming." What? Why we, the bee-keepers of United States. Look at our progress, in the last few years in numbers there is, at least, five bee-keeper now for every one there was eight years ago. We have not only increased in numbers, but we have made many improvements in the art. There is at this time six or eight different kinds of patent hives in the United States. Among the best are Mitchel's "Buckeye Hive," "The American," by H. A. King & Co., L. L. Langstroth's and E. Quinby's. We are also progressing in literature, there is at this time two Journals pub for the benefit of the bee-keeper. One the *Illustrated Bee Journal*, by N. C. Mitchell, the other *The Bee Keeper's Journal*, by H. A. King & Co. These are also many books that are very valuable, among the list are "Mitchel's Guide to Bee-keeping," the "Bee-Keeper's Text Book," "Mysteries of Bee-Keeping," and several others. This is a progress, look at the difference between now and ten years ago, then bee-keeping was considered a luck, now it is considered as certain as any crop of grain a man can plant. There is as much profit on honey at [illegible] per pound, as wheat at $1 per bushel. The time is coming when we can live on honey. Let the work go on, is the wish of yours truly,

T. CLARK ATKESON,

Buffalo, West Va.

Planting Potatoes.

In the $100 Prize Essay on the Cultivation of the Potato, by D. H. Compton, the question of cut and uncut seed is discussed with the following conclusions: Only large mature, sound tubers should be used; cutting them in pieces with two or three eyes each, securing as much flesh as possible. Eyes from the seed end produce the earliest maturing potatoes as well as the smallest; those from the large end produce the largest and latest potatoes; those from the middle of the potato produce tubers of very uniform size. Very few of the eyes of an uncut potato produce vines that come to maturity, the stronger shoots overpowering and starving the weaker. "If small, ill-shaped potatoes are planted on the same ground for three successive years, the results will give the best variety a bad name."

Some of these conclusions will hardly meet with universal assent. But it is a well established fact that the greatest yield from a given quantity of seed can be obtained by cutting the potatoes, probably, to single eyes.

The same writer says that if the potatoes are to be planted in hills, the ground should be marked out four feet apart each way, with broad, flat-bottomed furrows about three inces deep. Three pieces of potato each with two or three eyes should be dropped at the crossings, being placed a foot distant from each other and forming a triangle. It is better to place the cut side down. Cover about two inches deep. Sprinkle over and around each hill a large handful of unleached wood ashes and salt, about six parts of ashes to one of salt.

Why do Bees Swarm?

At the recent Michigan Bee-Keepers' Convention, this subject was discussed. Mr. Otis is reported as saying: The strongest instinct God has given the honey bee is the love for storing honey. This instinct is so strong that she will remove the young larvae from its cells and destroy it, that she may make room for the gathered honey. But she does not thus destroy the brood unless crowded for room, by an unexpected rich harvest of honey. It is to guard against destruction of brood the queen cells are formed preparatory to swarming, which takes place as soon as one or more is sealed over.

The Creator has implanted in the queen-bee such unparalleled hatred toward any rival that but one normal queen is allowed in one family of bees. This hatred is so strongly developed that she will make divers attempt to destroy a rival while yet in the cell. But the worker bees keep the cells guarded, which so exasperates the old queen by the time one or more is sealed, that she rushes from the hive to find a new home, being accompanied by a majority of the colony. These, therefore, are the reasons why bees swarm; 1st. The want of combs to hold honey; 2d. To save the destruction of a brood. 3d. The hatred between rival queens.

Dr. Conklin said his bees did not always wait until they had sealed queen-sells. Two years ago he had opened a hive as soon as the swarm had left, and he not only found no queen, but not even the sign of any being started.

Mr. Baldridge said he understood Otis to say that bees did not swarm till the hive is full of comb, and the comb is full of brood and stores; and not then, even, unless there is one or more cells sealed. His bees swarms sometimes when the cavity is not more than two-thirds full. He thinks it is natural at the proper season for bees to swarm. As a rule the cavity will be full and the combs well supplied with brood and stores, one or more queen cells sealed, and the flowers secreting honey rapidly, when the sworm issues.

Mr. Moon also asserts that his bees swarms when the cavity is only part full. They also swarm when they have no queen cells started; the cause is excessive heat. Bees will swarm at certain seasons of the year when there is no apparant cause; in honey season it is as natural for bees to swarm as for the sun to rise, or the tide to flow.

Speed of Horses—Strength and Endurance.

"An Old Farmer," in your paper of March 24th, thinks it strange "that horses trotting a mile in 2½ minutes, or at the rate of 25 miles an hour, sells for twenty thousand dollars each, although good for nothing else." Allow me to say that a horse that trots a mile in 2¼ minutes, *works*, and *works excessively hard*, and if he will repeat this for two or three miles he will, if kind—and such horses are generally the kindest and most intelligent of animals—plow, draw manure team all day and invariably tire out the stout farm horse—as surely as the good work horse will tire the coarser, and slower-moving ox. We should always remember that a poorly made horse, or a poorly bred horse makes a poor worker, whether he works fast or slow. Neither should we fail to observe that it takes strength and endurance to work fast and long. A fast and lasting trotter is invariably a strong and lasting horse. Facts will prove this. Dutchman, the first "flyer," was taken from a butcher's cart, and was a valuable worker. Lady Suffolk was a kind, safe, patient and lasting family mare. Flora Temple was two years in a livery stable before she found the track, and was a great favorite in the stable. For seven years she was "queen of the turf," and is now a sound, plump brood mare. The old Vermont Merrill worked two years in a heavy cart, before it was known that he was fast. This shows that high rate of speed is not incomparable with strength, kindness, strength, endurance, docility and beauty. It is because all these qualities are so rarely combined in one horse that Com. Vanderbilt values so highly.

Fast trotters are so rare that they bring a fancy price, and who is to blame for it? There is no accounting for tastes. When the country is filled with fast trotters, the speed will depend all other excellencies with speed. In reply to the question "whether we should countenance the high prices paid for speed, it may be said that we cannot control men's tastes nor wo[illegible].

The truth is that horsemen are no nearer utilitarians than other people, and are not likely to be. What is the farmer's or breeder's duty in the matter? We answer raise the best paying animals. Horses of right size, with strength, endurance and beauty, will, for a long time, add much to their market value, if they can show a low, long, elastic, smooth, fast-trotting action. Let farmers look to it, unless they breed the heavy draft horse.—*Co. Gent.*

Diseases of Plants.

MILDEW, (in Ger. Mehlthau, rust on corn) this term is generally applied to a particular mouldy appearance on the leaves of plants, produced by innumerable minute fungi, which, if not checked in their growth, occasion the decay and death of the parts on which they grow, and sometimes the entire plant. The causes favorable to the production of mildew, are a rich soil, and mellow atmosphere, without a free circulation of air and sunshine—such as moist, cloudy weather continued for several days; again it sometimes occurs from extensive dryness, which checks the action of the natural functions of the vegetable organs. Under certain circumstances it may be checked by application of sulphur in the form of powder on the leaves covered by the fungi, this being found to destroy them without greatly injuring the leaf.

RUST. The common name of *Trichobasis Rubigo vera*, a parasitic fungus, which with one or two closely allied species confounded with it by the farmer, preys upon the leaves, glumes, stalks &c., of cereals. This seldom grows on plants, but when they are over luxurant, except when attacks the chaff or seed, it seldom proves injurious to any extent, this fungus, although by that name usually confined to cereals, like the

SMUT. A disease incidental to corn crops, by which the farina of the grain in the whole body of the seed is converted into black, soot-like powder. It is to be regarded as a fungus of growth.

Mr. Berkley considered one class of fungi as springing up from various bodies, whether animal or vegetable, in a more or less advanced stage of decomposition. The ephemeral toad stools, of the hot bed, the mushrooms of our rich pastures, the sap-balls on decaying trees, the moulds of which infest our food, and even the tissue of living animals, the mildew, blunt and smut of corn crops, with many other more or less familiar objects, are so many fungi, all agreeing in the main particulars, which are indicated on fruit trees—however variously developed, the same general law, no doubt, applies to most if not all of them.—*Jacob Stauffer, in Gardners' Monthly.*

How to Plant Chestnuts.

EDS. RURAL WORLD: I chanced the other day to pick up at one of my neighbors the *Rural*, and looking it over I saw the question asked "how do you plant chestnuts," and as I have had considerable experience in planting and growing the chestnut, I thought to answer the question, but I prefer answering it in my own State paper and giving my Missouri friends the first benefit. If you plant in fall on mellow ground and cover with litter; forest leaves are best, stable litter or straw will do. Do not put any dirt on them at all, put the litter on two or three inches thick. If you wish to plant in the spring soak them in warm watter ten days, change the water every day, and sprout in sand until the tap root makes its appearance, and then plant as above and cover with earth.

The editor of the *Rural* is mistaken if he thinks the vitality will dry out of a chestnut, you might as well think of drying the life out of wheat or corn. The trouble is in bringing them back, and the same process that will sprout the apple seeds or the osage orange, will sprout the chestnut.

There is a better way than planting the nut; we who have come from a chestnut country can send back to our friends in Ohio, Kentucky or Pennsylvania, and have them dig up as many as we want, from three to five feet high, and pack them in sawdust and ship. They can be shipped as well as fruit trees, and will soon bear nuts enough to pay for all the trouble. I have had them bear in three years from the seed.

The old stock should be cut close to the ground, after they have been in the ground for one year, for the old stock is always dwarfed.

O. S. P.

Carroll Co., Mo.

Nebraska State Fair.

The Fourth Annual fair of the Nebraska State Board of Agriculture is to be held at Brownville, September 20th and 23rd. We are in receipt of the Constitution, By-Laws, Regulations and Premium list from the Secretary, D. H. Wheeler, Esq. The Premium list is large, varied and liberal. In the stock classes they are very generous for so young a State, which is eminently proper, as Nebraska is claimed to be one of the finest regions of the great pastoral lands of America. Its growth in population and wealth is immense. It is more than probable that the State Fair the present year will eclipse any former exhibition of the Society.—*Western Rural.*

As often heretofore said, we now repeat, we will take pleasure in receiving and forwarding orders to any of our advertising patrons.

AGRICULTURAL ADVERTISEMENTS only, will be inserted on this page.

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Getting out to Grass.

There is probably no more critical period for the flock than the one in which it is being transferred from the dry, strong food of Winter, to the young and juicy grasses of early Spring. The change must be gradual—letting them feed upon the grass but a short time, and lengthen their stay each subsequent day. Their Winter feed must be diminished in proportion as their stay upon the grass is lengthened. Even with the best care many animals will be found "scouring." Among the larger flocks it is the usual custom to feed grain once a day in the morning, and then to let the sheep onto the grass. We would recommend salting every fifth day, while the sheep are on the grass. At least, once a day the flock should be carefully looked over, and such animals tagged as need it. In small flocks much the best plan is to tag all animals before turning from the wintering shed or lot. When this is done, enough wool can generally be saved to pay for the labor.

Blackberries and Raspberries.

At the last meeting of the Cincinnati Horticultural Society, the subject of small fruits and apples were opened by Dr. Warder. He said the same treatment was proper for blackberries and raspberries. There were many varieties that it would be invidious to select one for discussion. The essential point in their culture was summer pruning. The modern plan was to pinch the stem and thus force a lateral growth. They do not need support as some think. *If properly pruned they will be self-supporting.* His plan was to summer prune in June, or just before harvesting. When they get from two and a half to three feet high, he prunes. He pruned the shoots that makes next years' cane—not the fruit bearing branches.

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Every Plow Warranted to GIVE SATISFACTION.

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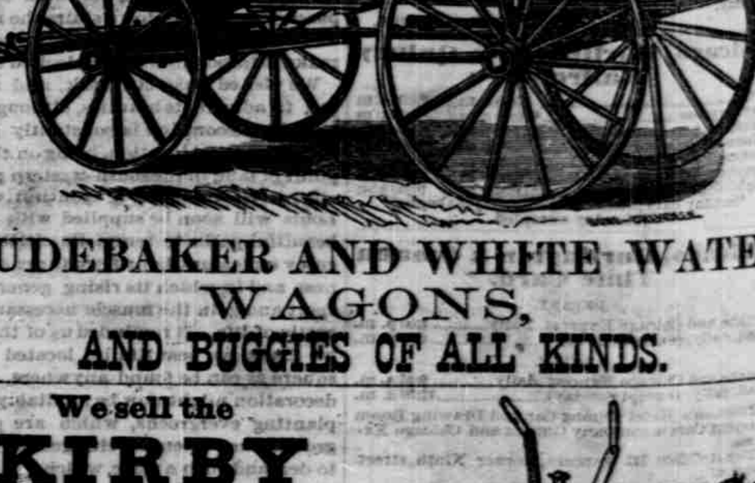

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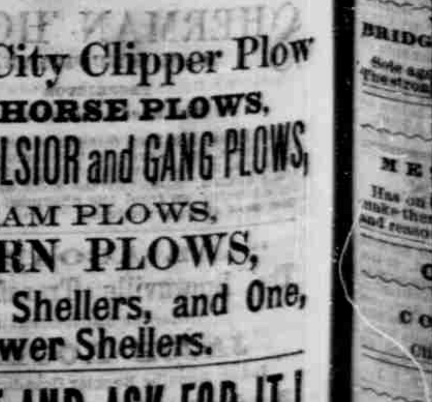

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