

AGRICULTURE.

EXTRACTS FROM A LECTURE DELIVERED BY PROFESSOR JOHNSTON, BEFORE THE HIGHLAND SOCIETY, AT THE LAST MEETING IN EDINBURGH.

Professor Johnston commenced the lecture by observing, that an impression had long existed in the minds of many persons connected with agriculture, that various departments of science, particularly chemistry and geology, were capable of being applied to it in such a way as to improve the cultivation of the land. But the difficulty was for such persons to answer distinctly the question which was frequently put by practical agriculturists, 'What can science do for agriculture?' Now he appeared there to endeavour to answer that question. Science may impart a practical money benefit to the cultivation of the land, either by enabling farmers to raise larger crops with more certainty and of better quality, or by teaching them how land, previously of little value, may be made capable of raising better crops, which crops again will tend to produce a greater quantity of production of another description, that is, beef and mutton. In illustration of the subject which he had chosen for his lecture, a multitude of subjects presented themselves, and the difficulty was, how to select a number of topics which were connected together in their nature, and might be bound up by their common form in their memories. Perhaps the best course for him to follow with such an object would be to take up the seed when it is first put into the ground, and to follow it through its different processes of development till it arrived at maturity. With regard to the selection of seeds, they were all aware what an important matter it was, and how much depended upon it; but it was only chemists who could understand the scientific causes of these differences. They also knew that seeds would grow on one kind of soil, while they refused another kind; now, the reason of this could only be cleared up by chemical examination of the soil and of the seed. It was a common practice to steep the seed before it was sown, for the purpose of destroying the eggs of minute insects, which injured the plant as they grew up. That might be one effect; but another effect of the steeping was chemical; and that effect was seen in the great luxuriance of the crop. When the seed was put into the ground, it sent forth a little sprout in its germination. Connected with this there was a beautiful chemical process. It must be understood that there were two substances which were important parts in the composition of every plant—sugar or starch, and gluten or albumen. Both of these were in the seed in a solid state; but when the plant began to germinate, it was necessary that these substances should become soluble, to be sent from the seed to the stem. Now, it was remarkable, that at the root of every stem, just where it joined to the seed, there was a substance called clear star—and this substance, according to a well-known chemical process, renders the starch and the gluten soluble, and thus enables it to ascend to the stem of the young plant, in proportion as it is required for nourishment. Accordingly, along with it, there would always be detected, by a microscope, a portion of the gluten and the starch in a soluble state. So soon as the plant reaches the surface, it expands into a leaf. Up to this time, it lives at the expense of the seed; but as soon as it reaches the air, it lives at the expense of the air. All plants require three substances, or rather four—oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, and carbon. These substances are only known in the form of gases. After explaining the nature and properties of those gases, he proceeded to say that the plant derived from the air a large portion of carbonic acid; and to obtain that supply, it spread out its leaves in every direction, thus sucking in the carbon from the atmosphere. As there was comparatively only a small portion of carbonic acid in the atmosphere, it might be supposed that the vegetable kingdom would extract the whole; but by a wise adaptation of Providence, which connected together the animal and vegetable kingdoms, it was provided that the same gas which was so greedily inhaled by plants was that which was thrown off as noxious by animals. A full grown healthy man threw off at every breath he took 25 ounces of carbon; a horse and a cow each would throw off about 4 pounds; so that in this way a constant equilibrium was maintained. Another ingredient in the composition of plants was nitrogen, which existed in large portions in the atmosphere; but the plants did not derive their nitrogen from the air, but rather from the manures applied to them. The knowledge of this fact was of the utmost importance in regard to the application of manures to the soil. Well, the plant had now got above the surface of the ground, and had thrown out its leaves.

At this stage it was usual in many parts of the country—he believed not very common in this district—to apply what was called a top-dressing. When a crop of oats, beans, or turnips, came up of a sickly character, the farmer sprinkled over it a quantity of common salt, or gypsum, or nitrate of soda, or mixtures of these; and in the course of a single day, the plant would appear to be altogether renovated. What was the precise chemical effect produced in this case, they had not yet been able clearly to make out; but they could trace it to some extent. He then mentioned the estates of Mr. Alexander, of Southbar, and Mr. Fleming, Barrocham, Renfrewshire, as places where a great effect had been produced by the application of these top-dressings. He then came to the turnip. It was necessary for the safety of the turnips, that they should rush up as it were, and throw out their leaves quickly. Now, this was a condition of things totally new; and it was only by knowing all the plant required that they could obtain this rapid rushing up of the turnip crop. In connection with this subject, he might mention a curious fact. A farmer could tell by the odour that was exhaled whether the turnips were coming up healthy or not. He (Professor J.) had often endeavoured to detect this odour; but he could not—it required a long experience in practical farming to enable a man to do so. But upon the cause of this odour, so delicate to the sense, chemistry threw a beautiful light. All plants in growing throw off certain substances, which were unnecessary for them at that particular stage. It is that exudation of substances which causes the odours in question; and it is the same principle that causes the odours to delight us so much in the sweet smelling flowers in the garden or the green house. Let them observe what a beautiful arrangement it was, that while Nature, or rather the Lord and Governor of Nature, caused the plant to throw off those substances which were unnecessary or even unwholesome to itself, it threw them off in a manner which was agreeable and delightful to man; thus, even in the most trifling and minute circumstances, providing for our comfort and gratification. Nothing could be more beautiful than the exhibition of the wisdom and beneficence of the Deity; as exhibited in this arrangement. Then, with regard to the proper time for cutting down the crop when ripe, that could only be ascertained by an examination of the

straw and other parts. He then referred to the failure of the potatoe crop, and stated it to be the result of very extended observation, that potatoes, when full ripe, contained more starch than albumen, or saline matter, of which three substances, potatoes which contained the largest quantity of starch were those which were most likely to fail; while those containing greater quantities of albumen and saline matter were more likely to succeed. They would farther observe, that if they top-dressed a portion of a field of potatoes with a saline substance, and left the other portion of the field undressed, the latter might prove a failure, while the former would prove an enormous crop. It has been still farther ascertained, that if they planted seeds next year taken from the top-dressed potatoes, they would find their produce much greater than those raised from the undressed portion of the potatoes. It was in this manner they were proceeding; and when they had worked out their operations, he had no fear but they would be able to find a remedy to the failure of the potatoe crop. But it opened up a field which applied to various crops, and would lead them to obtain such a control over it that they could not only increase the quantity, but improve the quality of the produce. He then referred to the ashes of the plants, which remained when their substance was burnt. After giving a history of various chemical opinions which had been held at various times regarding the origin of the matter which composed these ashes, and of their use in the plant, he stated that it had now been ascertained that these ashes contained no fewer than eleven distinct substances—potash, soda, lime, magnesia, &c.—that they existed in different plants, and that all the substances thus presented in the plant must also be presented in the soil, as it was from the soil that the plant derived its supply of this earthy matter. This threw a beautiful light upon the cause why plants would not grow in certain situations; for if a plant required a large proportion of lime, for instance, and there was little or none in the soil, it was clear that the plant would either refuse to grow, or that it would be stunted in appearance, and would soon exhaust the land. To remedy this it was necessary to supply the deficiencies of land, so to speak, and to supply lime if lime was wanted. On the other hand, if lime was not wanted, as he believed it was not in this district and in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, then it was unnecessary, and injurious to the land, to apply lime. He concluded by urging upon farmers to economise their manures, and compensate to the land as much as possible for what was annually carried away by the produce.—Canadian Agricultural Journal.

QUEER CALCULATION.—Some singular genius has perpetrated the following calculations, which, we think, will do:—I have been married 32 years, during which time I have received from the hands of my wife three cups of coffee each day, two in the morning and one at night, making about 35,040 cups, of half a pint each, or nearly 70 barrels of 30 gallons each, weighing 17,520lb., or nearly nine tons weight. Yet from that period I have scarcely varied myself in weight from 160lb. It will, therefore, be seen that I have drunk, in coffee alone, 218 times my own weight. I am not much of a meat eater, yet I presume I have consumed about eight ounces a day, which makes 5,806lb., or about ten oxen. Of flour I have consumed, in the 32 years, about 50 barrels. For 20 years of this time, up to 1831, I have drunk two wine glasses of brandy each day, making 900 quarts. The port wine, madeira, whiskey, punch, &c., I am not able to count, but they are not large. In champagne I have been extremely moderate, as I find from my bills that I have paid for 53 baskets in the last 13 years, which is about one bottle a week, and this not all consumed by me. When we take into the account all the vegetables in addition, such as potatoes, peas, asparagus, strawberries, cherries, apples, pears, peaches, raisins, &c., the amount consumed by an individual is most enormous. Now, my body has been renewed more than four times in 32 years, and taking it for granted that the water, of which I have drunk much, acts merely as a diluent, yet, all taken together, I conclude that I have consumed, in 32 years, about the weight of 1,100 men, of 160lb. each.—Paris Paper.

ANOTHER NEW SYSTEM OF MEDICINE.—The Siccle states that Dr. Junod, of Paris, has invented a new method, which he terms mesoplastic, for the treatment of a number of diseases. This method consists in the employment of a pneumatic apparatus of a peculiar construction, in which the arm or leg is so placed as to attract the blood to the extremities without diminishing the mass of this liquid. This apparatus, which has been for some time in use, both amongst the public and in the hospitals of Paris, has obtained the approbation of the most eminent physicians in Paris. It gained for its author the Montyon prize, together with the congratulations and the thanks of the Council General of the Hospitals of Paris.

THE PROTESTANT CHURCH AT JERUSALEM.—Letters have been received from Dr. Alexander, the Bishop of Jerusalem, dated Jan. 3, from which we learn that the prospects of the mission are of a very encouraging nature. In consequence of some late heavy rains the "upper chamber," in which Divine Worship had been performed for two years, became so dilapidated that it was found necessary to provide another place, and a suitable room having been prepared, it was opened on the Sunday before Christmas. This room is large enough to accommodate 150 persons. The bishop mentioned in affecting terms the death of Mr. Bateson, late M. P. for Londonderry, and states that he had the happiness of administering to him the day previous to his death the memorials of our Divine Redeemer's death. On the afternoon of Christmas-day the bishop baptized six converts, among them were a Jewish doctor and his wife and daughter. The hospital is rapidly advancing towards completion, and the whole of the affairs of the mission suggest the most pleasing anticipations.

The Pope consecrated as bishops four of the cardinals on the 11th ult. This is the first instance, it is said, for 150 years, of the Pope having performed this ceremony in person.

Modesty is a thin transparent veil which shows with superior lustre the graces it would seem to cover, as the new blown rose is more beautiful when its leaves are a little folded than when its glories are fully displayed.

PRIDE.—Pride is as loud a beggar as want, and a great deal more saucy. When you have bought one fine thing, you must buy ten more, that your appearance may be all of a piece; but it is easier to suppress the first desire than to satisfy all that follow it.—Franklin.

An Athenian, who was lame in one foot, joining the army, was laughed at by the soldiery on account of his lameness. "I am here to fight," said he, "not to run."

MARRIAGE.—In marriage, prefer the person before wealth, virtue before beauty, and the mind before the body; then you have a wife, a friend, and a companion.—Penn.

HEALTH! FOR ALL!! PATRONIZED BY THE GREATEST NOBLES IN THE LAND.



HOLLOWAY'S PILLS.

Copy of a Letter from His Grace the Duke of Portland to Mrs. Ann Mellish, (one of his Tenants,) whom His Grace was pleased to send as a Patient to the Proprietor of this extraordinary Medicine.

Madam, If Mr. Holloway will undertake to Cure you perfectly, when the Cure is complete, I will undertake to pay him £2 10s. You may shew him this Letter.

SCOTT PORTLAND.

Welbeck Abbey, May 31, 1842.

Copy of a Letter from the Most Hon. the Marquis of Westminster, K. G. Lord Westminster has just received Mr. Holloway's Medicine, for which he returns him his best thanks.

Eaton Hall, Cheshire, Feb. 12, 1842.

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All Diseases, (and whatever may be their symptoms, however they may declare themselves, yet one cause is common to them all, viz., a want of purity in the blood and fluids), are cured by this Wonderful Medicine, which cleanses the stomach and bowels, while its balsamic qualities clear the blood, give tone and energy to the nerves and muscles, invigorate the system, and impart strength to bone and sinew.

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Bowel complaints Piles Ulcers
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N. B.—Directions for the Guidance of Patients in every Disorder are affixed to each Box.

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THE celebrated Life Pills and Phoenix Bitters, prepared and sold by Dr. Wm. B. Moffat, 375, Broadway, New York may now be said to be the most respectably established and extensively adopted family medicines in the United States. They have not only won the sanction and recommendation of all the candid and philanthropic portion of the medical profession, who have observed their invincible efficacy in general derangements of the stomach and bowels, and their astonishing effects in many varieties of acute and chronic disease, but that is far better, these medicines have recommended themselves, and fully and fairly achieved the distinguished and now certainly pre-eminent position which they now occupy in public and domestic estimation. They are proved by their works, and make no appeals to vulgar credulity. If the proprietor were disposed to make an invidious comparison between these self-established medicines and any others, he might confidently assert and challenge contradiction that there is no medicine known to the medical profession, or named in their books, concerning which so many clear, unquestionable and conclusive evidences of usefulness and remarkable cures are recorded as those which he can adduce concerning the Life Pills and Phoenix Bitters. If it be admitted that sufferers are the best judges as to whether a remedy has relieved them and restored them to health and strength, then is the evidence in behalf of these medicines decisive and irresistible. Dr. Moffat is in possession of an immense accumulation of voluntary testimonials from respectable persons and families in all parts of the Union, far and near, who give their names and residence to the unsolicited statement that they have been completely and speedily cured of the following diseases, and of many others not here enumerated, by these Life Medicines alone, when other remedies had been long employed in vain, viz.: Scrofula, in its most difficultly advanced and almost destructive stages, when large portions of the flesh and bones of the face had been destroyed; Piles of five, ten, twenty, thirty and even thirty-five years standing; Rheumatism, both acute and chronic, of the most feeble character; Turgescence of the Liver, and various other liver complaints; Bilious Cholera, and every conceivable variety of bilious affections; Marasmus, Tabes, or Decline, and Marasmus Phthisic, or Consumption, in more advanced stages than any on record; Dyspepsia, in all its chronic and acute varieties, with its frightful train of distressing symptoms; Worms of all kinds, both in children and grown persons; Diarrhoea, both serous and bilious; Costiveness, both habitual and occasional; Fever and Ague, in its three principal varieties, and intermittent and remittent fevers, of all kinds; Hypochondriasis, and other extremely complicated nervous affections, with nervous debility in general; Salt Rheum, Ringing Seal, and eruptive diseases generally, including Eczema, Erysipelas or St. Anthony's fire, and scall, unhealthy complexion; Palpitation of the heart, and Determination of blood to the head, settled pains in the organs, limbs, back, head and side; affections of the bladder, kidneys, spleen, throat, and pleura; jaundice, dropsy and gout; together with those general affections of the system which arise from complicated causes.

The certificates of these cures are in the proprietor's possession, and will readily be shown to all who desire to see them. A small selection from them have been published in Moffat's Medical Manual, of which a new and enlarged edition is preparing for the press. The reason why these medicines, which in ordinary family use operate merely as mild and effectual laxatives, cure so great a variety of formidable diseases is, that while as cathartics, cleansing the alimentary canal, and relieving the liver and the absorbent vessels of all impurities, they lay the foundation for the cure of all specific diseases, they are compounded of unique and unprecedented variety of choice and exquisite ingredients, some of which are almost unknown to the profession, which exert a specific action upon many complaints, without in the slightest degree affecting the general system, otherwise than as simple purifiers, when those complaints are not present. Both the Pills and the Bitters are mild and agreeable in their operations, causing neither prostrations nor nausea, and requiring neither continued nor peculiar diet. Their effects are uniformly to produce an immediate sense of renovated health, and new life and vigour to both body and mind. They cannot be taken without benefit, and should be procured both by individuals and heads of families, and constantly kept on hand, not only as remedies but as preventatives of disease. They are prepared and sold wholesale and retail, by Dr. William B. Moffat, 375 Broadway, N. Y., and also by the AGENTS.—NEW YORK, May 20. J. B. COOPER, Agent for Prince Edward Island.

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