

AGRICULTURAL.

MANURE.

The manure-heap is the farmer's gold mine, which he should constantly strive to increase and enrich, inasmuch as his avocation cannot be followed up with any degree of success without the possession, and intelligent application of its ore. Although the collection and making of manure is of primary importance, and has been rightly termed the first step in good husbandry, yet our farmers are noted for their inattention to the subject; collections in trenches by the roadside and in the barnyard are made, it is true—but the sink washings, the accumulated richness of ponds and ditches, the inexhaustible supply of leaves in our woods, and innumerable other sources from which they might obtain a sufficiency are overlooked; or if remembered, remembered only to be neglected. When this state of things shall have passed away, and not till then, shall we have reason to expect prosperous farmers and well-tilled farms; in furtherance of this event, permit me to offer a few remarks on the collection and application of manures, (although they may have already become familiar to the agriculturist,) will still serve in a humble measure to encourage their introduction into his *practical operations*.

The barn yard is the first spot to which the farmer looks for a supply of manure, and it certainly is the principal reservoir upon which he should depend—and on that very account in its selection or construction he should manifest his foresight and intelligence. Some select a spot perfectly level, and others with a considerable outward slope, and in either case their judgment is thoughtless and incorrect. A place should be chosen which has a natural slope towards the centre, inasmuch as it prevents all rich liquid matters from finding their way out, and wasting themselves upon ground annually which does not require their fertilizing properties, if the husbandman cannot find a place of this description in a situation convenient, and well sheltered for the cattle which are to inhabit it; he should not grudge the small expense attendant upon *constructing* one elsewhere. Let him rectify the natural deficiencies of the spot, and annually, either in Spring or Autumn, cart in a substantial layer of loam, or meadow mud that he may obtain in ditching; this in the course of the season becomes amazingly enriched by the rains, washings, and droppings of the cattle—and constitutes a strong and excellent manure when mixed with ashes and horse dung, for corn, the top dressing of grass lands, &c.

Another mine which should be diligently explored and worked, is the hogstye; from this place, the farmer has an excellent op-

portunity of supplying his fields with a valuable and fertile dressing. In its situation or construction it should be similar to the barn yard, and should also be well filled with loam, potato vines and other refuse portions of the crops—which being rooted over and mingled together by the swine soon become a manure exceedingly precious and acceptable. Their house should also be continually supplied with leaves or vines, which not only tends to make them comfortable and expedites their fattening, but being wet through in a few days and thrown into the outer stye contributes vastly to the increase and betterment of the manure there made.

The washings of the sink are generally permitted to run without guidance where they list, or are thrown out of the kitchen door into the very path, to the no small annoyance and objection of every visitor; if instead of this unprofitable and slovenly custom our farmers would consent to spend a little time and money, they might boast of tidy door-yards and a small addition of exceedingly rich manure. Let them dig a small square pit of four or five feet in depth under their sinkspout, stone it well as they would a cellar, and throw into it two or three loads of loam, which would absorb the washings, become fertilized by them, and at the close of the first year would yield him a return, equivalent at least to the labor he spent in preparation of this receptacle. The same course might be advantageously pursued in regard to our vaults; it would in a slight degree lessen their unpleasant effluvia, increase the quantity taken therefrom, and render it more fit for immediate service—inasmuch as the strength of this kind of manure forbids its free usage, till it has undergone a partial decomposition—the rapidity of which, this method would in a small measure assist.

The sweeping of ditches and ponds, which are drained off, or become dry in the course of the season, form an excellent acquisition to the farmer's stock of manure. These sweepings very few who have the opportunity avail themselves of—either because they imagine that they have matters of weightier importance to attend to, or because they affect to doubt their superior value;—the first objection a farmer should never urge, for he certainly has time to collect all the manure his lands can afford in any shape, and it is of vital importance that he should do it,—in regard to the second, I have merely to state, that these sweepings contain an immense quantity of the putrid matter of decayed vegetables, which have been gradually gathering and imbedding themselves there, and which necessarily form in their separate state, or when mixed with other substances a strong and profitable manure.

The last method of making manure which I shall here recommend, is the collection

and use of leaves. With little difficulty the husbandman can supply himself with these from our woods and forests, and I therefore lament to see them so seldom used. Twenty substantial loads would be sufficient for the daily and thorough litter of a stock of eight or ten cattle, from the time they were housed in the fall till they were pastured in the spring, and a few days spent in collecting them would be nobly repaid by the extra quantity and extra quality of manure. Let them be put under some sheltered shed where they will be protected from the winds, and dealt out in the necessary quantity; when the cattle floor is cleaned, they should be chopped up finely with the dung, and thrown out upon the heap—there after awhile they decompose and become fit to carry out to the fields. The fertilizing properties existing in this kind of manure are truly astonishing, and I do not hesitate to affirm, that a field in which it is used will produce a crop of potatoes one fourth greater than the crop harvested from another spot of the same size, which was planted with any other manure. In another respect, leaves may be made to augment and improve the farmer's stock of manure; before filling his yard, stye, or any other deposit, he would be vastly benefited by throwing in a heavy layer of leaves, which being completely covered by loam or whatever else he may cast in, soon begin to decompose, and add not a little to the value of the stuff when removed.

The application of different manures to the various soils, which has been so ably treated of by Kirwan in his admirable essay upon Manures—is a subject too extensive, and requiring too thorough a knowledge, to be entered upon here. The effect we look for in the application of manure is not only an abundant production of crops at the time, but a lasting fertility; and therefore it is better to manure moderately for a succession of seasons, than to crowd an over quantity at once upon the land which may not again receive assistance for years; this should be attended to especially if the subsoil is of a spongy nature—for in this case, the manure though it produce a heavy crop the first year it is applied, will be gradually drawn in till it entirely disappears; thus the only reward you reap for your liberality, is one or two copious harvests which leave the soil more barren and unproductive than before. Your arrangements should be such as to allow a thorough annual dressing to all lands under cultivation, and a gradual reclaiming of waste land by ditching and draining—for these operations (in addition to others which benefit land), are included in the general term manure, as well as substances which have the same tendency. In this way, you enter upon a system of improvement and an application