The Farmer's Column.

☞This column is edited by one of our Caroline farmers of considerable experience.

Mounding up Peach Trees.

The following questions were recently propounded to Mr. E. A. Thompson—a celebrated agriculturist, vinyardist, etc., of Cincinnati—who has given what is known as the *Bolmor* plan of "mounding up peach trees" a thorough trial:

"What is the *mounding* plan with peach trees as practiced by you? How high above the general level of the ground are the trees mounded? Do you allow the dirt to stay around the trees all the time or only a certain season of the year? What *bulk* is the mound; that is, how far out from the tree, or what diameter? How soon after the young trees are set out do you mound them up?"

To which Mr. Thompson replies, through the St. Louis Journal of Agriculture, as follows:

HILLSIDE, near Cincinnati, Nov. 10.

I proceed to answer the above inquiries briefly, as follows: The mounding system was first practised, so far as I know, by Isaac Bolmar, of Warren county, Ohio. I visited his orchards some years ago—acquainted myself with his system—and concluded to try it upon my orchard of 4,000 trees—then one year planted. I plant my trees in the fall, and in the spring following cut them back to six inches above the bud. The tree, then, instead of having one body, has several—from three to six. The second summer I plough both ways, turning the furrows toward the trees. The men follow with shovels, throwing the loose soil around the tree to the height of about one foot. In the fall I cut the trees back, taking off about one-third of the year's growth. The next spring or summer I pursue the same method, raising the mound another foot, which finishes the job. The mound will then be about three feet high at its apex and six feet in diameter at its base. The mounding need not be done in the summer, or at any particular season; it is just as well done in the fall when the hurry is over. The dirt is never taken away from the trees—in fact it cannot be removed without injury to the tree—for the young rootlets each year keep climbing up through this mound. I had occasion to remove one of these mounds a few days since and found it a mass of healthy roots.

Now for the benefits. First, you have no trouble with grub or borer; he must have light and air, and the mound is too much for him; he comes out, and that is the last of him. I have never wormed my trees, or hunted for the borer, and an orchard of healthier or thriftier trees cannot be found. It has been asserted that the borer will reappear again near the top of the mound—but I am satisfied this is not the case; I have never thus far been able to find one.—Second, the system imparts longevity to the tree. I saw a tree in Warren county treated in this manner, *thirty* (30) years old, still healthy or bearing annual crops. Third, trees thus treated are not subject to disease. I have never had a case of *yellows* in my orchard. Fourth, the expense is trifling—one man can mound fifty trees per day. The system can be applied to old as well as young orchards; but if old trees are thus treated they should be first severely cut back, when they will make a growth of young wood.—*E. A. Thompson, in Mobile Register.*

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The Journal of Chemistry says that one of the very best fertilizers used upon the farm for all the cereal grains and root crops may be made in the following manner:

Take one barrel of pure, finely-ground bone, and mix it with a barrel of wood wash ashes; during the mixing add, gradually, about three pailsful of water. The heap may be made upon the floor of an out-building or upon the barn floor; and by the use of a hoe the bone and ashes must be thoroughly blended together. The water added is just sufficient to liberate the caustic alkalies, potash and soda, and these act upon the gelatine of the bone, dissolving the little atoms, forming a kind of soap, and fitting it for plant aliment. In this way the most valuable constituents of the bone can be made immediately available, and the addition of potash and soda aids in the formation of a fertilizer of inestimable value. A gill of this mixture placed in a hill of corn will work wonders. It is excellent for garden vegetables, and for all kinds of roots. It will be ready for use in a week after it is made.

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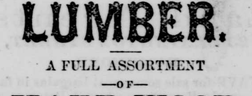
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