EASTON GAZETTE.

WHERE THE PRESS IS FREE—Literature well or ill-conducted, is the Great Engine by which all Popular States must ultimately be supported or overthrown—RELIGION purifies the Heart and teaches us our Duty—Morality refines the Manners—Agriculture makes us Rich, and Politics provides for the enjoyment of all.

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ADVERTISEMENTS

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FLEMISH HUSBANDRY.

Of the cultivation of roots, potatoes, turnips, beets, carrots, parsnips, chicory.

If we are indebted to the Flemish for the introduction of clover and turnips into our agriculture, they are equally so to us for the valuable potatoes This root is now become a great substitute for corn throughout all Europe, and its influence on the population cannot be denied; when corn fails potatoes are generally most abundant, and thus prevent that distress, which is so great a check to population. In Flanders potatoes form a part of every rotation, the light soils being peculiarly adapted to the growth of this root; and as a great part of the produce is consumed by cattle, and thus gives an adequate return in manure, the objection often made to its extensive cultivation, that it exhausts the soil and returns little to it, is not well founded.—Were it not for potatoes to keep the cattle, during the latter part of the winter and beginning of spring when the supply of turnips fails a much smaller number could be kept: for hay is a dear fodder in most parts of Flanders

Potatoes were at first only known as an esculent root in gardens; and it was a long time before their real value was found out. In 1740 they were for the first time sold in the market of Bruges, in consequence of the zeal of an individual of that town, Mr. Verhulst, who distributed some sets gratuitously to the farmers in the neighborhood. From that time the cultivation increased rapidly, and spread all over the country. The varieties which are mostly sold in the towns are the earliest and best flavored, which are chiefly raised in sheltered gardens. The plant being a native of a warmer climate cannot bear the least frost. It is therefore not safe to plant it in the fields before March or April. The sets which are planted to produce an increase, are not seeds but buds, and as such perpetuate the qualities, good or bad, of the parent stock. Each variety proceeds from some original plant raised from seed, and is subject to age and decay with its parent. Hence varieties continually degenerate or wear out, and fresh or new varieties must be produced by sowing the seeds: recent experiments and observations fully bear out the truth of this assertion. It is therefare not sufficient merely to find a superior variety, the age of the parent plant should also be noted. Some will last longer than others, but all old varieties sooner or later show marks of decay, and the sooner they are exchanged for younger and more vigorous the better. In Flanders the principal crop of potatoes is planted in April. Potatoes require much manure to give a great return, although those which grow in poor soils are much pleasanter to the taste. For cattle, however, quantity is of more consequence than flavor. The soil in which potatoes are to be planted should be well prepared by deep and repeated ploughing or what is still better, by trenching with the spade. In Flanders the sets are planted in rows two feet wide or more, and the same distance between the sets so that each plant may have the earth drawn up to the stem, and a small hillock made round it. Sometimes the land is ploughed and manured as for other crops, excepting that the quantity of manure is at least double the quantity usually put on for corn. The sets are then dropped into holes regularly made with a blunt dibble, and filled up with earth. These sets are either small potatoes picked out for that purpose, or larger cut into pieces, taking care that there shall be at least two eyes or buds left in each piece. When potatoes are planted to any considerable extent, the method is similar to that which we describe for beans. the furrows being proportionably deeper; the sets are dropped upon the dung in every second or third furrow about eighteen inches apart, and covered by the return of the plough. In this manner nine or ten bushels of potatoes will plant an acre. The crop averages about three hundred bushels, if the land is well prepared, and the potato plants have been well hoed and moulded up. This is not a very great return, considering the quantity of manure The quality of the potatoes depends on the nature of the soil as well as on the variety planted; in light sands the potatoes are small, and mealy when boiled; in good loams they grow large and more juicy, but are not so well flavored: the latter producing a greater bulk, are preferred for cattle.

There is a potatoe called *Schelde Windeke* potatoe, from the name of a village near Alost; they grow in a strong soil, and are remarkably mealy and good; but they rapidly degenerate when planted in a different soil. The potatoes which are preferred for cattle are called *Elsen Mollen* and *Kattenbollen*, both very large. A variety was introduced from England into the neighborhood of Ghent some years ago, by a gentleman of the name of Lankman, which are in great repute, and go by his name. It would be difficult to point out the variety from which these sprung, as the soil in which they are transplanted has, no doubt, had a great influence on their present quality. A few small Flemish potatoes, which we once sent to a friend at Kenilworth produced in that rich soil some of the largest potatoes we ever met with. None of the original potatoes were so large as a hen's egg.

When we were on the subject of manures, we mentioned the pond weeds as highly useful in planting potatoes. Long litter and even old thatch is excellent to plant the sets in, if the soil is not very light. Potatoes are usually taken up in the end of September; this is done by means of a three-pronged fork, which is less apt to cut the roots than the spade. The ground is at the same time cleared of the roots of couch grass, and other perennial weeds; and when the harrows have gone over the field, and all the potatoes are picked up which had escaped the fork, no other preparation is required to sow wheat, or winter barley. When the seed is sown, the stitches are marked out by the plough, the intervals dug out, and the earth is spread over the seed, after the urine cart has deposited half the usual quantity of liquid manure in these intervals. This is sufficient on land which has had a double manuring for the potatoes.

Turnips are not often cultivated as a main crop, or a substitute for the old fallows, as it is in England & Scotland; but mostly as a second crop after barley or rye, which we call *rdlish turnips* in England. But as the barley and rye harvest are early in Flanders, and not an hour is lost in getting the turnip-seed sown, they are often of a very good size before winter.* The crop however can bear no comparison, in point or weight, with a turnip crop in Norfolk, still less in Berwickshire and Northumberland: but is obtained at a small expense, and does not interfere with any other crop. In a farm of twenty acres, if five acres were set apart every year for turnips, the remainder would scarcely give sufficient occupation to the farmer and his family, and produce sufficient corn to feed them and to pay the rent. It is by the quick succession of crops that a small farm is made to produce much more in proportion than a large one, and that every member of a family is constantly and busily employed. As soon as the corn is cut, the portion of the field which is cleared is ploughed and harrowed, liquid manure is poured over it, and the seed is sown; so that in twenty four hours an acre, which was but just cleared, is again producing a fresh crop. The ploughing and sowing goes on every day, and follows on the heels of the reapers; of such consequences may be the delay of two or three days, that the seed sown first will be out and in the rough leaf, when that which was two or three days later is only just coming up, and is subject to all the depredations of insects. When the turnips are fairly up, they are watered with diluted urine; and their growth is rapid beyond belief. We have seen turnips sown in the middle of July after barley harvest, which in the end of August already showed very promising bulbs. If it were not for this acceleration of the growth, no crop of any weight could be raised by the end of September, when they are usually pulled up.

The cultivation of the beet root had been introduced into Flanders under the dominion of Bonaparte, for the manufacture of sugar; it was then a forced cultivation, and was abandoned as soon as peace had restored the usual supply of sugar from the colonies; and although the revival of this manufacture in France where considerable fortunes have been lately realized by it, has induced several speculative individuals, and also a company with a large subscribed capital to re-establish manufactories of beet root sugar in different parts of Belgium, the Flemish farmers in general are not much disposed to raise the beet root for sale. They imagine, whether correctly or not that the land suffers from this crop when there is no return of manure, as much as it would from potatoes sold off the farm, while the latter are much more profitable; and the carriage of this heavy produce to any distance through roads almost impassable in autumn greatly diminishes the return. The manufacturers of sugar have found, in consequence, that they cannot rely on a regular supply from the farmer, and that they must enter into the cultivation of the beet root to a large extent on their own account, to keep up a proper supply. The company established near Waterloo have purchased a large tract of land, a great part of which is in woods, which they are cutting down and converting into arable land for this purpose; on this fresh soil, which is by no means rich; the beet root appears to thrive well. A large sugar manufactory is erected at Bruges, another near Ghent, and a smaller nearer Dixmude, and various other places, which will require many hundreds of acres for beet root annually, and thus make this root an important article of cultivation. The mode in which this root is cultivated has nothing peculiar in it. The land is ploughed and well manured, the seed is dibbled, and as in the garden, in rows a foot or eighteen inches wide, and a foot asunder in the rows; when the plants are up they are weeded and hoed by hand; the seed is put into the ground in the beginning of May, and the roots taken up in September and October. A common crop is from fifteen to twenty tons of roots from an acre of land.

This cultivation has not been adopted for a sufficient number of years to ascertain what rotation is most profitable, where beet-root is the principal object. Those who are sanguine think that alternate crops of beet root and corn may be kept up by good tillage and manuring. The old farmers are of opinion that there will soon be a great falling off in the crops. Time will show who are right. In the meantime the cultivation of the white and yellow beet, which contain most saccharine matter, is extending rapidly. A small portion only of these useful roots is raised for the cows. They are not supposed to be so good for the milk as turnips, and they take up the whole season. Should the cultivation be greatly extended, it may have a great effect in causing a variation in the usual rotation of crops, now generally adopted. The advantage to agriculture of the beet-root sugar manufactory, where good land is not over-abundant, is still problematical.

The *Ruta Baga*, or Sweedish turnip, which is so highly valued by the British farmer, is not generally cultivated in Flanders. If a few small patches of it are seen, it is only as an experiment made by some rich proprietor. It does not enter into the regular system of cultivation, and is not so well suited to sandy soils as the turnip.

Carrots grow well in light soils, which have been trenched to a good depth, and they consequently form a part of the regular rotations in all light soils, when they are sown as a principal crop it is generally next after potatoes, buckwheat, or turnips. The land, having been well stirred for these crops, is ploughed before winter and manured with half the usual quantity of cow dung, or of the sweepings of streets, with which is mixed a third part of pig's dung, from the notion that the smell of this dung keeps off the moles and field mice, who otherwise would injure the crop. This is ploughed in six or seven inches deep, and the land is left so all winter. In the beginning of April a very deep ploughing is given, two or three inches deeper than the last: twenty hogsheads of liquid manure are then poured over this, and 2 1-2 lbs. of carrot seed are sown. The harrows reversed are drawn over the land; the intervals between the stitches, are dug out with the spade, and the earth thrown evenly over the seed. It is then slightly roiled. Some put on no dung, but only liquid manure, on the land intended for carrots. If the preceding crop was potatoes, the ground is already sufficiently manured, and any additional quantity would have a tendency to produce forked carrots, which is the consequence of over manuring; but if they follow buckwheat, which has had no manure, a fresh supply is necessary to ensure a good crop of carrots. The more the manure decomposed an intimately mixed with the soil, the better for this crop. When the carrots come up, they require to be most carefully weeded; this is the principal expense. It is done by women and children, who go on their hands and knees and pull up every weed. If carrots were sown in drills much of this labor might be spared, by using horse hoes between the rows, and small hand-hoes between the plants in the rows. Should the carrots fail, turnips or spurry are immediately sown, that no time may be lost. In May the carrots are thinned out where they grow too close, and those which are pulled out are given to the cows; they are left about six inches apart.

There are two sorts of carrots sown in the fields; the one is the large Dutch orange carrot common in England, the other is a white carrot which is very hardy, grows to a great size, and is more productive in light sands than the orange. It has lately been introduced into England; some fine specimens of the root were exhibited at the Smithfield show in December 1836. From a trial on a small scale we are inclined to think that it will be a valuable addition to our roots for cattle in winter. The white carrot is that which is generally preferred for sowing in another crop, as flax or barley, which is a common practice. In this case the carrot seed is sown a week or two after the principal crop. The flax or corn grows faster than the carrot, which is thus kept down, and only pushes its slender root deep into the ground without making much top, or swelling to any size. In weeding care is taken not to pull out the carrots, which are easily distinguished from weeds—After the flax is pulled, the ground is gone over and weeded again; liquid manure is then spread over, and the carrots soon begin to grow, and the roots to swell. If the main crop was barley, the stubble is carefully pulled up, and the carrots are then treated as before. Thus by the middle of October a good weight of carrots is produced on land, which had already given a profitable crop that season; and a great supply of winter food is obtained for the cattle. Carrots are occasionally sown amongst peas. The peas ripen in July, and are pulled up; and then the carrots are treated as we have been describing. If the row culture were introduced, and the carrots and peas drilled in alternate rows, the success would probably be more complete. This is done in the intervals of the colza or rape with good success. About fifteen small cart loads of carrots, or about ten or twelve tons per acre, is considered a fair crop. Judging from the produce of about one eighth of an acre of good land, in which the white carrot was sown in England, in March 1836, without manure, the rows a foot apart and well weeded and hoed, the crop would have reached twenty two tons per acre; the common orange carrot in the same ground did not produce half that weight.

Parsnips are sown in land too heavy for carrots; and in a deep rich loam, the produce is very great. They have the advantage of bearing the severest frost, and therefore do not require to be housed, but may be left in the ground until they are required for use. They are not thought so good for milch cows as carrots, but superior for fattening cattle. The quality of the soil must decide which of the two may be sown to most advantage.

There is another root, the cultivation of which is often very profitable, although of comparatively small use on the farm. This is chicory, of which the dried roots are roasted and used instead of coffee. A considerable commerce in this root has sprung up lately, which has caused a duty of £20 per ton to be laid on its importation into Britain. It is the same plant which Arthur Young so strongly recommended for its leaves for cattle and sheep; but it has not been found to answer the expectation in this point of view. The roots contain a strong bitter, which may be extracted by infusion; it is also used in the brewing of beer to save hops. It is wholesome, and if it does not impart an unpleasant taste to the beer, there can be no objection to its use. At all events the cultivation of it, whether for beer or coffee, is a part of Flemish agriculture, and deserves to be noticed. The seed is sown in the end of March or beginning of April. It is treated exactly as the carrot, when sown alone. The ground should be mellow and deep, rather heavy than light, and ploughed or trenched to a good depth. It is sown broad-cast in Flanders, as everything else is, but it would be much better if it were sown in rows eighteen inches apart. The leaves may be given to sheep or pigs; but they give a bad taste to the milk of the cows who eat them. The roots are taken up in September, and are then of the size of a small carrot; they are cut into pieces and dried in a kiln. In that state they are exported. The price varies much, according to produce and demand. It is not an object of general cultivation, but only by particular persons and in particular soils; the market is overstocked at one time, and a great demand exists at another. Such a produce can never enter into a regular course, but may be raised as circumstances may afford a prospect of sale and profit.—*Library of Useful Knowledge.*

*Mr. Van Aelbroelk sowed some turnips in May, 1837 and they were of sufficient size in August to be given to the cows Large turnips are not thought so sweet as the smaller which do not give that disagreeable taste to the milk, which prevents many farmers in England from giving them to milch cows.—The introduction of early turnips in Flanders might be of great advantage If winter tares were sown to be cut in May, and turnips to follow immediately, these two crops, with the intermediate ploughing, would prepare the land admirably for wheat or colza, and not only give two useful crops, but have all the manuring and cleansing effect of a fallow,

GREAT CROPS OF RUTA BAGA.

We have often made the assertion, that in no way could so much food for stock be obtained from a single acre of land, as by the cultivation of roots—such as Ruta Baga, Mangel Wurtzel, Sugar Beet, &c. We think ourselves very well paid for our labor if we obtain a ton of hay from that amount of land—better paid if we get two tons,—and have done uncommon great thing should we get three. But by cultivating roots properly, we can increase the amount of cattle-food in a tenfold ratio.

Mr. Nathan Foster, of Winthrop, informed us, the other day, that he gathered from a single quarter of an acre, 245 bushels of Ruta Baga. This crop was taken from land that had been cultivated with this crop for several successive years. This is 1080 bushels per acre, and allowing 54 lbs. to the bushel, it makes more than 34½ tons to the acre. Now we are aware that there are various opinions in regard to the nutritive powers of Ruta Baga, but from our own limited experience, and from the more extensive experience of others, we do know that a ton of Ruta Baga and a ton of hay is better for cows and young stock than two tons of hay alone will be.

GREATER CROP YET. Since writing the above, we have been informed by Mr. Isaac Bowles, of Winthrop, that he has actually raised and gathered this season 1120 bushels of Ruta Baga from one acre of land.

Now this crop, allowing 64 lbs. to the bushel, will make more that 35¼ tons to the acre. Mr. Bowles planted them on land which had been highly manured a year or two ago, and on which he raised his great crop of corn. His mode of planting them was as follows. He took a light piece of wood of suitable size and length, and bored holes in it twenty inches apart. Into each hole he put a pole & fastened it in. On the end of each he tied a brick bat. Two men draged this instrument, back and forth, and thus made furrows or drills; while himself and a young hand followed after and scattered in the seed. He then passed a heavy roller over it, and the work was done.—[Yankee Farmer.

SOWING GRASS SEEDS.

It is a bad system to mix seeds of different plants before sowing them, in order to have fewer casts. It is better to sow each sort seperately, as the trouble of going several times over the ground is nothing compared to the benefit of having each sort equally distributed.

Grass seeds cannot well be sown too plentifully, and no economy less deserving the name can possibly exist than the being sparing of grass seeds. The seeds of grain may easily be sown too thickly, but with respect to those of grass, it is scarcely capable of occurring. The smaller the stem, the more acceptable it is to cattle; and when the seeds of some grasses are thinly scattered, their stems tend, as it called, to wood, and the crop is liable to be infested with weeds.—Some think that if ground is well manured, good grasses will come in of themselves. Perhaps so; but how long will it be before that happens! Clean seed, and that which is known to be suitable to the soil, should always be sown. For though grasses will gradually com most in, no great crop is to be expected the first year, unless it be a crop of rank & useless weeds. And he that misses the first year's crop, loses much, as the longer the land lies, the more compact or bound it will become, and produce the smaller crops.

Every farmer should carefully examine his fields that are coming into grass for next summer's mowing, and carefully note all the bald spots, where, by the lodging of grain or from any other cause, the grass roots have either not taken or been destroyed. On all such spots grass seeds should be applied at as early a period in the spring as possible. Failures of this sort generally are found where the soil is strongest, and if grass seeds is not resown, there will be an abundant supply of weed to annoy the careless farmer.—[Farmer's Cabinet.

PRESERVATION OF THE POTATOE.

One can form something of an estimate how extensively the potatoe enters into use as an article of food among the American people, from the complaints we hear from all parts of the country, or at least with very few exceptions, of the partial failure of that crop the present season. We frequently hear people when instituting a comparison between that root and bread, declare they would sooner part with their wheat bread, than with their potatoe; and these are not the poorer classes but respectable wealthy people. Now, though we do not carry our affection to this esculent as far as this, yet we are 'free to acknowledge' that a good potatoe is a good thing, and an inferior one, the worst of bad things. An unripe or defective potatoe, is one of the most indigestible and unwholesome kinds of ailment that can be taken into the stomach, if indeed there is any ailment about it at all; and from the specimens we have seen at numerous tables this year, we have no doubt that many of the cases of illness that have been charged upon hot weather, bad water, malaria, and a variety of other things, are justly due to swallowing potatoes as hard and as heavy, as well as about the size of ounce balls.

The potatoe, in its original uncultivated state, is decidedly poisonous; and when ever it is used in an imperfect or unripe state, the result is not widely different now. Owing most likely to the hot dry weather, potatoes, this year, are generally of an inferior quality, and hence more pains and care should be taken in selecting those intended for food, and greater attention paid to preserving them, than in years like the last, when among thousands of bushels there was scarcely a defective one. Ireland on the other side of the Atlantic, & Nova Scotia on this side, are the most celebrated for the excellence of their potatoes, and both have a temperature comparatively low, and an atmosphere moist and humid. If such a climate and temperature is required for the perfection of this root, will not the hot weather we have had the present year, account most satisfactorily for its little value, and also show why its growth is impossible in our more southern states, or still nearer the equinox.

Potatoes almost instinctively shun the light and air. These things so indispensable to the perfection of many other things, are most injurious to the potatoe, and the grand secret of its preservation lies in the most perfect exclusion of these silent but active agents. To perceive the difference between roots exposed, and those secluded, we have only to take one which has grown partially above ground, and one that has ripened in its proper place. The one will be green on the interior, hard, heavy, and bitter in the interior, while the other will be of the natural color, farinaceous, and fine flavored. Farmers should take lessons from these facts, and conform their practice to the teachings of nature in England and Scotland, where most serious complaints have arisen from the failures of the planted tubers; it is acknowledged by all, that roots which are allowed to remain in the ground during the winter never fail of vegetating, and that those secured by pitting are more likely to succeed than those put into cellars, and thus partially exposed to light and air.

The most common method of preserving potatoes is to put them into bins in the cellar, where they are left without any covering or other preparation, and used as wanted. It is also customary to get in as little dirt with them as possible, and one standard of good farming has been the clean state of a farmer's potatoes when deposited in his cellar. For the reasons given above, and, from our own experience, we think both these modes of securing potatoes, or preparing them, erroneous. If put into bins, they should be covered as closely as possible from light and air; and if there is dirt enough thrown into the bin to completely fill all the interstices between them, so much the better for the roots. It has been recommended by some potatoe growers, and the practice is founded in reason, to line the sides of the bins with turf, the lower sides placed inwards, and when the bin was filled, to cover it closely in the same way, and with the same material.

Owing to the severity of our winters, potatoes cannot be allowed to remain where they grow; else their mealiness and freshness, would be much increased by allowing those that are to be used the coming season to remain where they are till the spring opens. Since this cannot be, the method of preservation that approaches the nearest to this will be found the best, and this method doubtless is pitting, or as most of our farmers term, it, burying in holes in the field. In burying this way care should be taken not to put too many in a pit, or in other words, not to make the heaps too large. Twehty or twenty-five bushels is quite enough; and some prefer even a smaller number. The cone should be regular so as to be covered equally. The covering of straw and earth first put on should not be too thick, as otherwise the roots will heat, and be injured: but at the latest period allowable, the thickness of the covering should be increased so as effectually to prevent freezing. In covering potatoes in the fall, it should be remembered that the great object of the first covering, is simply to exclude air and light, and preserve them from rain or unfavorable weather, and the last covering is the one to be relied on as a defence against the frost. If the roots are dug and pitted immediately without unnecessary exposure, and if the ground and the process of covering is properly selected and performed, the potatoes will come out in the spring, in excellent order, rather improved than deteriorated by their winters keeping.

Farmers who are in the habit of making their pork from potatoes, or feeding them extensively to their stock, will undobtedly see the propriety, from the present high prices, of sorting their roots more carefully than they have hitherto done, in order to sell, or preserve, as many as possible. The apprehended scarcity of this root will also prompt to this course; and should induce all to adopt the best and most effectual measures to preserve through the winter uninjured, or, if possible, improved, this root on which so many rely for sustenance.

Indiana Farmer.

ADVICE TO PARENTS.

There is nothing so destructive to the *morals* and we may add to the *peace of* any community as the neglect of parents, rich or poor, to teach their sons, the importance of being early engaged in some active employment. Too many of the citizens of every place, under the influence of a *false pride*, suffer their sons, after quitting their accademical studies, to lounge about the public offices and taverns of their place of residence, rather than cause them to engage in some important branch of the mechanical art, or force them by the dint of their own industry and energies, to seek their fortune in some other pursuit. Nothing is more detestable in our eye than to see a healthy good looking youth breaking loose from the restraints of honorable industry, returning to his father's domicil for support, and *loafing* it about, rather than be pursuing some occupation which will not only support himself, but give gratification to his worthy parents.

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