

AGRICULTURAL.



IMPORTANCE OF BIRDS TO AGRICULTURE.

In the French Senate, lately, M. Bonjeau read a report on four petitions, praying that measures might be taken to preserve birds which destroy insects hurtful to agriculture. The report, which occupies five columns of the *Monteur*, is an amusing essay upon insect-eating birds, their habits, anatomy, and species of food. It treats, at length, of the ravages of insects, and the importance to man of the objects they destroy. France is infested with thousands of species of insects of terrible fruitfulness, nearly all of which prey on what should serve the purpose of man. The first section of the report is headed, "Importance of birds to agriculture." It states the wire-worm consumed £160,000 worth of corn in one department alone, and was the cause of three deficient harvests which preceded 1856. Out of 504 grains of colza, gathered at hazard at Versailles, all but 296 had been rendered worthless by insects. The reduction of yield in oil was 32.8 per cent. In Germany, according to Latreille, the *Phalena manacha* consumed whole forests. In Eastern Prussia, three years ago, more than 24,000,000 cubic meters of fir had to be cut down, because the trees were attacked by insects. Man is unable to cope with these destroyers of the produce of his labor. His eye is too dull to perceive, and his hand too slow to catch them. Without the aid of birds, he would be vanquished in the struggle. The commission excludes birds of prey, such as magpies, ravens, etc., with the exception of buzzards and rooks, from the benefit of its protection, because the buzzard consumes about 6,000 mice yearly, and the rook an incalculable amount of white worms. Sparrows are rehabilitated, and their usefulness shows by reference to the facts, that when their destruction was attempted in Hungary, winged insects increased so rapidly, that rewards for the destruction of sparrows were suppressed, and given for bringing them back.

Frederick the Great ordered the destruction of sparrows because they ate his cherries; but in two years he found his cherries and all other fruits consumed by caterpillars. In a sparrow's nest on a terrace in the Rue Vienne were found the remains of 700 cockchafers. Owls, and birds of that class, which agricultural ignorance pursues as birds of evil omen, ought to be welcomed. They are ten times more useful than the best cats, and not dangerous to the larder. The martins that were killed were found to have in their stomachs the remains of 243 insects. After further illustrations of the same nature, the report proposes the prohibition of all means of destroying birds, save by fire-arms, with the exception of nets for wild ducks, and palm-pedes generally, and the prohibition of bird nesting and destruction of eggs to young birds. The petitions were referred to the Minister of Commerce and Public Works.—[Ohio Farmer.]

RINGING, SUMMER PRUNING, AND THE TRUE SAP OF TREES.

The Isabella grape may be accelerated in ripening, and produce large berries, by a process of ringing the shoots in June and July. Vines treated in this manner produce fruit nearly twice the usual size, when girdled an inch in width; the shoot operated on to this extent, dies of course, the following winter; but on the contrary, when the ring of the bark is taken off only one-half an inch in width, the fruit grows larger, but the bark coming together before the winter, a connection is formed, and the shoot is not thus destroyed. In explanation of this effect we would say that the crude sap of the vine, after passing up through the *Alburnum* or sap wood to the leaves, where it is concentrated, returns through the nerves of the leaves, to the base of the leaf stalk, and then downward between the bark and young wood called *Cambium*. This is the true sap of trees; it is wholly generated in the leaves, descending to the extremities of their roots, depositing in its course the matter which is successively added to the tree. When the enlargement and more early maturity of fruit be the object, the operation of ringing may be performed as above; but if made on the small branches of the new wood, the fruit does not acquire a proper state of maturity; it should be done on the previous year's shoots. The effects of ringing are more obvious on the grape, pear and apple, than upon some fruit; we have attempted it on the peach tree without any seeming effect. If, by the agency of leaves, the gases extracted from the atmosphere by these organs, and the juices drawn from the earth by the roots are mixed, assimilated and rendered subservient to the tree, thereby increasing its growth, and perfecting its fruit, the question arises, Is summer pruning beneficial or injurious? We apprehend that it is improper; for by the process, we diminish the resources of the tree, in thus removing so many leaves, as we must of necessity, in this operation. The above, if true, shows the folly of taking off the leaves of any fruit tree, to accelerate the ripening of its fruit.

The *Alburnum* is the outer coating of young wood, often called sap-wood. The *Cambium* is mucilaginous matter found between the bark and young wood.—[J. M. Ives, in New England Farmer.]

LEAF CURLING CATERPILLARS.

The curling of the leaves of the shrubbery and some of the trees in our gardens, is quite annoying to many people at this time, and the question is often asked what can be done? This is one of the minor evils, and seldom requires personal attention except in gardens where the birds have no chance. The expanding buds of your grapevines are often knotted and tied together so that the leaves come out irregularly. Open one of these and you will find it has been fastened together by minute silken cords, finer than the threads in the web of a spider—examine closely and you will see a light-colored little caterpillar less than half an inch in length. It ties these growing leaves together so that they shall not spread out naturally, and this forms a place of concealment from many of her enemies, where she feeds in fancied security. The leaves on your rose and currant bushes are sometimes very much deformed—the sides folded together or formed into rolls—open these and you will find a dark-colored worm, with a black head—this is a lively squirming little fellow, that will probably spin a thread and let itself down some distance, and be concealed amongst the leaves below.

A similar little worm will be found upon some pear and plum trees, sometimes so numerous as to deform the foliage and even to injure the fruit. The canker worm, sometimes in such vast numbers in the apple orchards has been a serious injury. This last appears irregularly, like the plagues of old, beyond human control.

If you have induced the wrens to take up their abode in your garden, by preparing cosy little places for them to build their nests in, they will soon clear your shrubbery of these leaf-curling caterpillars. If you are in the neighborhood of some of the large trees of this city, and especially the grand old elms, where the Baltimore Orioles make their nests, your fruit trees will suffer but little from this class of insects, but if you cannot have the assistance of the birds, the best plan to subdue these pests, is to crush them between the thumb and fingers as fast as the expanding buds or leaves show signs of their presence. The washes and powders recommended are very troublesome, and very few, if any, are effectual.—[Newark Mercury.]

BREEDING NEAT CATTLE.

Major Otis F. R. Waite, in the course of an address delivered before the Claremont (N.H.) Agricultural and Mechanical Association, communicated the following facts:

In England the breeding of neat cattle is regarded as a science, and gentlemen have brought to it years of patient study, reflection and experience; and although a great degree of perfection has been reached by some, yet the true principles of the art are not more generally understood there than in this country. Some who have succeeded best as breeders have never communicated to others the secret of their great success.

Robert Bakewell, in 1755, when thirty years old, after long and patient study and reflection, resolved to carry out a plan he had matured for the improvement of domestic animals. On the farm where he was born, and where his father and grandfather had been tenants, he commenced his operations. He was a man of education, genius, energy and perseverance, and though he had many obstacles to contend with, not the least of which was the want of means and the opposition of his neighbors, he set adily and confidently pursued the course he had marked out.

In ten years his breed of sheep, still so famous all over Europe, began to attract attention, and he inaugurated the system of letting his rams instead of selling them. The first he let for 17s. 6d. each for the season; then for a guinea each, soon for several guineas each, until in 1784 they brought him one hundred guineas each! Five years later his lettings for the season amounted to \$30,000.

He died without giving to the world in writing the benefit of his knowledge and experience, but his example has been followed by many who have lived since his day.

Charles and Robert Colling devoted many years to the improvement of cattle, and the result was the improved short horns, a breed more valuable for the climate and country where bred than any that had been known before them. This and other equally distinct breeds made England famous all over the world for her thoroughbred neat stock, and she is enabled to export thousands of animals annually at almost fabulous prices, to propagate their kind in other countries. Charles Colling bred the famous bull Comet, and sold him for one thousand guineas.

YOUNG COW MOTHERS.—The *Mariposa Gazette* says:

A friend of our's in the farming business in Merced, says that recently he saw a cow two years old giving suck to her daughter, a yearling one year old, and she, the heifer, likewise giving suck to her calf, then about two weeks old.

SHOW OF GRAPES AND WINES.—The Grape Grower's Association of Cleveland has passed a resolution to have a grand show of grapes and wines at the city early in October. "All the world are invited to bring or send samples."

IMPROVEMENT IN CHURNS.—The ordinary mode of churning butter in Chile is to put the milk in a skin—usually a dog's skin—tie it on a donkey; mount a boy on him, with rowsels to his spurs about the length of the animal's ears, and then run him four-mile heats.

ARRIVAL OF CAPTAIN BRUNSON'S COMPANY.

On Friday last, about four o'clock, Capt. Lewis Brunson's company of Saints, which left Florence on the 17th of June, arrived in this city, and camped on the Public Square, in the 8th Ward. The company consisted of 212 persons, with 48 wagons, 75 yoke of oxen, 68 cows, 17 horses and 10 mules.

The following is the organization of the company, as furnished by the clerk:

Lewis Brunson, captain; John Henderson, chaplain; Joseph S. Wing, clerk and captain of the guard; Samuel Williams, O. C. Hoskins, John H. Robertson and Thomas Hunt, captains of tens.

In the company were natives of England, Scotland, Ireland, Germany, the Canadas and other British American Colonies, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, North Carolina, Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee and Missouri.

The following is a list of the names of the principal members of the company:

Lewis Brunson, returned missionary, S. Williams and wife, Jos. S. Wing and family, Peter Van Volkenberg and family, W. A. Biggs, D. M. Griffin and family, Andrew Prior and family, L. Dangresen, John Molson, D. C. Allen and wife, S. E. Rogers, J. M. Turpin, O. C. Hoskins and family, Patterson Moss, David Hall and family, David Forsyth, Miles Hall and family, T. J. Phipps and family, J. W. Robertson and family, Jane Robertson and family, C. Fuller and family, D. Fuller and family, John Farrole and family, Margaret Vaughn, Jacob Sterry, John Henderson, A. C. Etchel and wife, James Corbett and family, Thomas Hunt and family, James Fisher and family, Richard Howells and family, A. Bostwick, W. Linzy and family, John Knighton and family, Geo. Jackson and family, Harriet Oterway, Herbert Longson, C. P. Lander, Adelia Sparks, Wm. Lane and family, Wm. Miller, John Tranter and family, James Spain, E. Tadlock and family, Sophia Smith, J. T. Griffith and family, T. C. Foreman and family, Elizabeth Kirkham, Jane and Louisa Gittins, T. Griffin, A. W. Landers, S. J. Wing, Mary Ann Sanders and family, D. P. Metcalf and F. Rich.

There were only two deaths in the company while crossing the plains—Mercy Ross from England, aged 21 years, and Wm. Mails, aged 16 years, from Indiana. One birth reported. We understand that no accident worthy of note transpired during the journey.

GREAT WAR MEETING AT WASHINGTON.

A grand war meeting is reported to have come off at East Capitol Square, Washington, August 6th. It is said to have been a great day for Washington, and free speech for a vigorous prosecution of the war echoed loudly from the forum. A series of resolutions were adopted, of which the following are samples:

Resolved, That we, residents of the District of Columbia, but having among our numbers citizens of every portion of the country, regard the dismemberment of the Union as an event not to be contemplated in any contingency whatever—it being forbid en alike by our geographical, commercial, social, and political condition; by our domestic and foreign interest; by the shame which would attach to us did we suffer its accomplishment, and the worthlessness of what would remain to us afterward; by the mighty interests involved in the Union, and the vast sacrifices which have been made for its defence; by the hopes of the living, and the memories of the dead; and we, deliberately and solemnly declare that, rather than witness its overthrow, we would prosecute the present war until our homes and cities should be reduced to ashes, our fields should be desolated, and we and all that are dear to us should have perished with our possessions. Let the Union be preserved, or the country be a desert.

Resolved, That convinced as we are that the leaders in the rebellion, and those who heartily act with them, will never sincerely return to their allegiance to the Union, or quietly submit to its laws, we are of the opinion that they should be regarded and treated as irreclaimable traitors, who are to be stripped of their possessions of whatever character, and either deprived of their life or expelled from the country.

Speeches were made by L. E. Crittenden, of the Treasury Department; L. Swett, of Illinois; Gen. Shipley, Military Governor of New Orleans; Gen. Shields, Hon. R. J. Walker, R. W. Thompson, James Harlan, Jas. S. Rollins, Mr. Close, of Virginia, General Carrington, U. S. Marshal for the District of Columbia, President Lincoln and ex-Governor Boutwell, of Massachusetts, are Commission of Internal Revenue, breathing the same spirit of the above resolutions.

PHILOSOPHICAL.—Two distinguished philosophers took shelter under one tree during a heavy shower. After some time one of them complaining that he felt rain—"Never mind," replied the other, "there are plenty of trees; when this is wet through, we will go to another."

A JUDGE IN A FIX.

An awkward affair, which once occurred to one of the judges on the Western Circuit, has been the subject of much mirth. It appears that the pious judicial, having finished his labors, and having cast off his forensic wig at his lodging, had retired in the next room to wait for his brother judge, with whom he was to accompany some of the local aristocracy to dinner. The female servant of the house had entered the bedchamber by a side door, and not knowing the judge was in the next room, in a frolic arrayed herself in the judge's wig. Just at the moment when the fair Mopsy was admiring herself in the looking-glass, the judge unexpectedly entered the room; and poor Mopsy, catching a sight of the stern countenance looking over her shoulder in the glass, was so alarmed that she fainted, and would have fallen to the ground if the learned judge, impelled by humanity, had not caught her in his arms. At this critical moment his brother judge arrived, and opening the dressing-room door, with a view to see if he was ready, discovered his learned brother with the fainting maid in his arms. Not wishing to interrupt what he thought to be an amour, he quickly attempted to withdraw, when his brother judge vociferated: "For heaven's sake, stop and hear the matter explained."

"Never mind, my dear brother, the matter explains itself," and he left his learned brother to recover the fainting maid as he could.—[Anecdotes of the Bench and the Bar.]

"WOMAN'S RIGHTS" NOT USUALLY TALKED ABOUT.—Martha Homebred, in *Fun*, gives the following list of "Woman's Rights," which have been sadly overlooked:

It is woman's right to stay at home. For what other reason did her husband marry her?

It is woman's right to have her home in order whenever her husband returns from business.

It is woman's right to be kind and forbearing whenever her husband is annoyed.

It is woman's right to examine her husband's linen, and see that it wants neither mending nor buttons.

It is woman's right to be satisfied with her old dresses until her husband can buy her new ones.

It is woman's right to be content when her husband declares he is unable to take her to the seaside.

It is woman's right to nurse her children, instead of leaving it to a maid.

It is woman's right to get her daughters married—happily or not at all.

It is woman's right to feel pleased, though her husband unexpectedly brings a friend to dinner.

It is woman's right to feel content with her own garments, without encroaching on those of her husband.

And, finally, it is a woman's right to remain a woman, without endeavoring to be a man.

THEOLOGY AND THIRST.—It is a current story in Teviotdale, (Scotland,) that in the house of an ancient family of distinction, much addicted to the Presbyterian cause, a Bible was always put in to the sleeping apartment of the guests, along with a bottle of strong ale. On some occasion, there was a meeting of clergymen in the vicinity of the castle, all of whom were invited to dinner by the worthy baronet, and several abode all night. According to the fashion of the times, seven of the revered guests were allotted to one large barrack room, which was used on such occasions of extended hospitality. The butler took care that the divines were presented, according to custom, each with a bible and a bottle of ale. But after a little consultation among themselves, they are said to have recalled the domestic as he was leaving the apartment. "My friend," said one of the venerable guests, "you must know, when we meet together as brethren, the youngest minister reads aloud a portion of Scripture to the rest; only one bible is, there one, necessary; take away the other six, and in their places bring six more bottles of ale."

AN OLD ANECDOTE.—When General Lee was a prisoner at Albany, he dined with an Irishman. Before entering upon the wine, the General remarked to his host, that after drinking, he was apt to abuse Irishmen, for which he hoped the host would excuse him in advance. "By my soul, General, I will do that," said his host, "if you will excuse a trifling fault I have myself. It is this: whenever I hear a man abusing old Ireland, I have a sad fault of cracking his sconce with my shillalah!" The General was civil during the whole evening.

WENT AWAY AS WISE AS HE CAME.—A professional gentleman, making a call, remembered the number of the residence, but forgot the name of the occupants. Ringing the bell, he was ushered into the parlor. Presently the lady of the house appeared. After a little preliminary talk, thinking very shrewdly to conceal his ignorance, and acquire the knowledge he wanted, he quietly asked—"Madame, how do you spell your name?"

"Our family," was the reply, "always spelt it with two 's's'."

—A newly married gentleman and lady, riding in a chaise, were unfortunately overturned. A person coming to their assistance, observed it was a very shocking sight.

"Very shocking, indeed," replied the gentleman, "to see a new-married couple fall out so soon."