

THE MICHIGAN FARMER.

A Weekly Agricultural, Horticultural, Family and News Journal.

NEW SERIES.

DETROIT, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19, 1861.

VOL. III., NO. 42.

THE MICHIGAN FARMER,

A Large Weekly Agricultural, Family and News Paper, designed to interest and entertain Farmers, Stock-Raisers, Fruit-Growers, Mechanics, and the Families of all classes.

Published in the third story of *Free Press* Buildings, corner of Griswold & Woodbridge sta., Detroit.

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Important Reduction in the terms of the Farmer.

TERMS.—One copy \$1.50; six copies \$8; ten copies \$12; fifteen copies \$17; twenty copies \$22; thirty copies \$32; forty copies \$42; fifty copies \$50 (only \$1 each) payable strictly in advance.

☞ Trial Subscribers supplied until January 1st for twenty-five cents.

Leaves as a Fertilizer.

We believe in making use of such things as are at hand, when they can be made to subservise a good purpose, in preference to expending money on inflated foreign articles. Since plaster and salt, together with the more common fertilizers, are found in abundance in our own state, our farmers have no necessity for contributing very largely to the support of any foreign manure-mongers. Let it be the aim and pride of all to use home-grown and home-made articles, and sustain home enterprises, and general prosperity will characterize all occupations.

We know how it gratifies the vanity of a large class of people to be able to proclaim that they got such an article in New York and such an article they imported from Europe at immense expense, expecting to see your eyes stick right out when they tell you about it; but vanity is an expensive trait to gratify, and yields but poor returns, in solid value. That class of people would be quite likely to pay a round sum for a gingerly dose of bogus poudrette, for the name of it, when perhaps a dense forest lies contiguous to their acres, from which a moiety of the expense of a foreign fertilizer, bestowed upon gathering old leaves, would yield a larger return.

Leaves have usually been recommended more as an absorbent of the fertilizing qualities of liquid manure, to be used as compost, litter in stables, pig-pens, etc., than as an article containing any great amount of value in themselves. Says the *Maine Farmer*, "Leaves are valuable as a litter for stables being an absorbent of the liquids, and they may be used in the hog-pon with profit; but their greatest value is when used as a compost. This is also true of straw. Allowed to decay in the open air, the greater part of its value is lost, while buried in the compost bed all becomes saved, and makes a fine manure,"

and therefore sensibly recommends the gathering of leaves this fall for these purposes.

But we have a higher opinion of the value of leaves, independent of any admixture.—We deem it warrantable to conclude, in view of the very palpable fact that they are the chief fertilizers of dense forests, which, in many cases if not in all, had their starting point upon barren rocks, and for ages have gradually grown richer and richer, year by year, that, at least for orchards and nurseries, they alone are a valuable fertilizer, as well as mulch; and among their merits we give particular stress to the fact that they are not worm and insect harborers and breeders, as is undoubtedly the case with the more stimulating animal manures. The weight of this consideration will probably be best appreciated by those who have lost material portions of valuable crops by the depredations of these very worms and insects; and few are they who have not.

The objection is raised against leaves that they do not readily rot. Good sound hickory wood does not become ashes so readily as basswood, but this is because there is more substance to it, and it is consequently more valuable. May it not be the same with leaves? To our mind the fact that they do not readily rot is almost conclusive evidence in itself that they contain substantial and valuable substance, and are well worth the extra time and trouble required to incorporate them with the soil.

We submit these views as suggestions for consideration, and to elicit the experience and opinions of others on the subject. Let us all have a genial chat about these things.

Protection of Peach Trees.

Frost seems to be the principal destroyer of the peach crop, and the way to save this luscious fruit,—and probably the *only* way—is to protect the trees in winter. Wherever this has been tried, so far as we have learned, it has proved successful. In Berlin, Wisconsin, which is pretty well north in that by no means fruitful state, the experiment has been tried of taking peach trees up in the fall and burying them in dirt until spring, and a large yield of fine fruit was thus secured.

Of course this method would not prove profitable in this state, but we are of the opinion that if the trees were grown close to a tight board fence, and trained low, or in any shape so that they could be covered by drifts of snow, and kept covered, the certainty of a crop would render the culture of superior va-

rieties in this way profitable. There is abundance of testimony to show that such a protection will insure a crop. The following facts clipped from one of our eastern exchanges, have a potent bearing on this point:

"Mr. Elbridge Packard of North Bridgewater, raised twenty-four very handsome peaches upon one limb this season. The tree was situated north of a tight board fence, and this limb was partially broken off and was covered with snow during nearly the whole of last winter. It thus escaped the severity of the weather which completely cut the peach crop in this section.—[*Boston Journal*]."

"That will do pretty well, but Mr. Cyrus Lane of Candia, N. H., beats that by just one. He raised on a single limb, which in like manner was covered with snow in winter, twenty-five peaches, very delicious in flavor."

As fruit, especially peaches, draws but very little substance from the soil, and fruit trees occupy no more room when bearing than when not, fruit saved from frost is almost a clear gain of its whole value, and well worth considering.

We would suggest, in consideration of these facts, a trial of this plan by erecting a short strip of tight board fence, and transplanting, close together on the northerly side, the low trees of some choice variety, and perhaps placing a winnow of straw or corn-stalks along the opposite side of the trees from the fence, thus making a sort of trough for retaining the snow, at the same time that a barrier is formed against cold winds.

Will not some of our enterprising readers try this, and report to us the result? Perhaps some have tried it. If so, let us hear about it.

Wash Your Pigs.

Pigs are not dirty when they have any encouragement to be clean. Ours are washed every week in warm soap and water, and are well scrubbed behind their ears and everywhere else to their great ease and comfort.—A highly economical remark of my man about this part of his work was, that he scrubbed his pigs on washing days, because the soap suds did just as well for manure after the pigs had done with them, "and that," said he "makes the soap serve three times over."

The above paragraph is from a book entitled "Our Farm of two acres." One of our subscribers says he always washes his pigs as often as twice a week, and keeps their pen clean and neat, by frequently and regularly cleaning them out. He affirms positively that

the hands of inexperienced buyers, as it is a well established fact in wine-making that an article of high quality can only be made from perfectly ripe fruit.

Plymouth, Oct. 9, 1861.

T. T. LYON.

Noted People of the Bible.

BY SLOW JAMIE.—NUMBER FIFTY-THREE.

JEREMIAH.

It has been remarked that when piety forsakes the earth, it lingers longest in the cabins of the poor, and it is remarkable that in Judah, when religion began to decline, the priests were the first to corrupt their morals. But there were some honorable exceptions. Josiah among the kings, and Jeremiah and Ezekiel among the priests, were shining lights in a dark age. Jeremiah and Josiah grew up together, the one lived at Jerusalem, the other at Anathoth three miles distant. The king might have been a little the older, but they were about the same age, and no doubt Jeremiah had much to do with the reformation which the king vigorously carried on.

At the early age of thirty-nine the latter was taken away, and Jeremiah was left to struggle alone. His charge was, "Gird up thy loins and arise, and speak unto them all I command thee; be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them, for behold I have made thee this day a defenceless city, and an iron pillar, and brazen walls against the whole land." Bravely did he carry out his commission. Whether he addressed prince or people, he spoke in the same plain style; whether they used words of flattery, or beat him and put him in the stocks, he still reproved their sin, and urged repentance. But although he has given a new word to the English language, and we associate the idea of severe reproof with his character, yet no man had a warmer heart or more tender affections. While he reproved them with all faithfulness in public, he made intercession for them in private, till God ordered him to cease to pray for them, telling him that as he, Moses and Samuel stood before him, they could not avert the judgments.

When he braced himself up to speak out boldly, his face was brass, and his heart iron, but when he returned to his chamber a reaction would take place, and showed the native sensitiveness of his soul. It was on such occasions that he gave expression to those feelings of despondency, which seem to us almost impious, as in chapter fifteenth, verse tenth, or twentieth, fourteenth.

If in these passages he seems too bold we see in the twelfth chapter with what reverence he approaches his Maker, when he expresses his perplexity and wonder that while some men were punished severely for their sins others, and they the wickedest, prospered in their iniquity. To this he received no answer but was warned that he would see even stranger things. As yet he was only running with the footmen, but soon he must contend with the horses. This was comparative-

ly the land of peace, but shortly he must struggle in the swelling of the Jordan. This was to admonish him to brace up his faith for trying times.

Men are generally patriots when they enjoy the favor of their country, and turn misanthropists when mankind misuse them.—But bad as Jeremiah was used by both rulers and people, his heart was always bound up in the welfare of his nation. Jonah was very angry because his threatenings were not fulfilled on Ninevah, but Jeremiah could appeal to God that he had not desired the woful day. And when he had a dream recorded in the thirty-first chapter, in which he saw the future glory of Jerusalem, he awoke from the only pleasant sleep he had enjoyed for a long time.

He is no less pleasing as a poet than faithful as a preacher. His lamentations consist of five distinct songs, one chapter in each.—They were probably composed at different times. He wrote a lamentation when the good king Josiah was killed, but whether it forms a part of this book or not, I cannot say. If it does, it must be the third chapter.

His finest passages of poetry are scattered through his prophetic writings. Everything that is beautiful, picturesque, or striking in nature comes ready to his pen. The simple partridge sitting fondly on addle eggs, the wild dromedary traversing the wilderness, the bullock reative under the yoke, the healing balm of Gilead, the flourishing tree as opposed to the wilting heath, and the living waters of the fountain as opposed to the stagnant pool, are specimens of the lively images with which he illustrates the folly of man, or the goodness of God.

With a modesty worthy of himself he puts his finest sayings in the lips of others. In the thirty-first chapter eighteenth verse, it is Ephraim that says, "Thou hast chastised and I was chastised as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke. Turn thou me and I shall be turned, for thou art the Lord my God," &c. The same in chapter third verse twenty-third.

When the Chaldeans took Jerusalem they found him in prison nearly famished with hunger. They let him out, gave him food and money, and permitted him either to go to Babylon or remain in Judah. He preferred to remain along with a number of the poor folks, whom the king of Babylon allowed to stay there when he carried the rest to Babylon. He found them as unwilling to receive his instructions as their rich neighbors. They carried him to Egypt and some say stoned him there for reproving their sin. He was now an old man, having prophesied forty years.

Wm. H. Castle of Colon sends us a new subscriber's name, and says: "I operated some for Mr. Johnstone, and shall act the same for you, if you hold out as you have commenced." He is of the opinion that long windy articles in an agricultural paper are behind the age. Some subjects require lengthy articles, but as a general thing, subjects may be justly dealt with in articles of sufficient brevity to avoid tediousness.

A Few Words to Mothers.

One great trial and source of depression to a married woman surrounded by a family of little children, is the small amount she can do. It seems as month after month rolls by, as if she accomplished nothing. Life seems a blank, only filled up with petty cares, that wear out, and corrode, and canker the frail tenement of the flesh, but leaves no trace behind.

"Oh, if I could only live for something, I could cheerfully bear all the burden time brings to me!" is the desponding cry of many a mother; but, mother, look back on your own childhood and then tell me if you do not live for something. Years ago, tired, hungry from out door play, who brought you the nice sweet bowl brimming with milk, that tasted sweeter to you than the rarest dish to the epicure? Who folded you in her arms, and rocked you to sleep as gently as the bee in its bed of roses? Who gave bright smiles and soft kisses when your heart was quivered with pain from the harsh, unfeeling word of some playmate? Whose soft steps and light touch, and whispered words of prayer, drove away the dark images of fear that darkness, to the child, is so often peopled with, and left brightness in the belief of a protecting sleepless care over all? Who fanned your fevered brow, and held the pure cooling draught that dripped from the gray rocks in the woods, which you had dreamed of all night, to your lips, and talked pleasantly of Heaven, when your little feet seemed almost ready to step into death's dark river and you shrank trembling back from the hurrying waters? Who gave you the pleasant memories of childhood, that have stolen to your ears as gently as the dew to the flowers, through the long, long years, and brought light and joy to the darkest hour of your life?

Name your price for these memories, and then I can tell you what you are accomplishing! What if God had said to your youngest, that pet one, with soft silken ringlets, red rosy dimpled fat hand, who is catching at the buttons on your dress, "He is a little thing; I will not mind about his sight?" Think of those laughing sparkling eyes as sightless orbs; never again, turning to his little crib, to find him watching you from under the soft lace; never starting from sleep as he clasps his arms around your neck, and raising your head from the pillow to catch a view in the clear moonlight of his loving eyes; never again joying at the glimpses of baby's mind through the mind's windows.

What if God had said, "He is a little thing; I will not mind about his intellect!" Just look at your baby, laughing, cooing; forever touching some chord of hope and joy, and then clasps a soulless casket in your arms.—His cheek is fair and delicately tinted, his hair golden as the sunbeam, but his poor little mouth and eyes! No answering smile, no grieved look, no wondering gaze, nothing