

THE MICHIGAN FARMER.

A Weekly Agricultural, Horticultural, Family and News Journal.

NEW SERIES.

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Sorghum Convention—Preliminary Meeting Suggested.

The question of holding a Convention in this state for the purpose of advancing the cane-growing and sirup-manufacturing interest is already attracting public attention, and rapidly assuming a degree of importance that argues well for its complete success.—The Press in many parts of the State have seconded the motion of our correspondent Mr. TOOKER. The Monroe Commercial sensibly remarks:

"In view of the increased culture of this crop, and its importance and profitableness, we should think the idea a good one. The Farmer thinks premiums for best samples of sugar and sirup should be offered. A similar convention is to be held in Columbus, Ohio, in January next. In the early part of the present year a Convention of cane-growers was held in Illinois, where the growth of cane and the manufacture of sugar and sirup has been largely stimulated. At the present time, when foreign made sugar and sirup is very high, and likely to go still higher, the importance, and we might almost say the absolute necessity of increased attention to the growth of sorghum must be apparent to every one. As the crop needs nothing more than good care culture, its growth is not difficult or uncertain."

The Jackson Patriot suggests Jackson as the most central and accessible point for holding the Convention. It is central and accessible to at least the central and southern counties, and from the nature of the Oniseo Cane, requiring the climate of the warmest portion of the state, it is probable that the majority of those most interested in the subject would be well accommodated at Jackson, which is the point also suggested by the originator of the movement.

As to the time, we would suggest about the middle of the last week in February, so that notice may be generally circulated. We would also suggest that premiums be offered for the best Cane-Crushing mill's, Evapora-

tors, Sacharometes, etc., as well as for best samples of sugar and sirup, so that all may become familiar with the best implements.—But all this should be settled by a preliminary meeting, and we suggest that one be called at Jackson as soon as practicable. Let those interested in that vicinity call it.

Sirup manufacture promises to speedily become an important item of Michigan produce, and a properly managed Convention will doubtless have a material bearing upon the value of the coming year's crop. Therefore let every step in the matter be well and thoroughly taken, and in good season.

Prospects of the Farmer

Many anxious friends of the Farmer have some fears that we shall suffer, at least for a time, by adopting the prompt paying system. We thank them for their kindly solicitude, and would re-assure them by stating that quite a large number of those who were hitherto in arrears, have within a few weeks past not only paid up all arrearages but for a year in advance also.

We have a goodly pile of letters approving our course, both in this and other respects, and the prospects of the Michigan Farmer are now indeed most cheering. We feel that we are in no small degree indebted to the disinterested generosity of the Members of the Press of Michigan, the notices of many of whom we have copied; and we would call especial attention to those in this number.

The following from Mr. J. M. HOLDEN, of Brighton, is a specimen of letters we are now receiving by almost every mail:

"I am much pleased with the improvement of the Farmer since it changed hands,—like its present form much better for binding; and as it will be kept by many subscribers as a paper for reference, I would suggest that you add a table of contents to each number, it will save much time and trouble, if we wish to refer to any particular article or subject.

"I will do all I can for you in the way of increasing the circulation of the Farmer, believing it will not only be for your interest, but the interest of every agriculturist.

"I have always endeavored to impress upon the minds of farmers that we ought to sustain our own paper, even if it were not as ably edited as some others, (which is not the case.) If we sustain it as we can and ought, the improvement lies in our own hands, rather than in the editor's, for no man can publish an able paper with a niggardly support; and I would wish to place you peculiarly above the necessity of advertising quack medicines, or the temptation to publish anything from produce speculators detrimental to the interest of the farmer. In short, I believe the farmers of Michigan may have just as able a paper as they are willing to support. If we do not it is our own fault.

"I hope you will adhere strictly to the terms pay in advance, for any person who has not interest enough to thus pay ought to be deprived of its benefit."

We shall give you a table of contents hereafter; we have kept casting out Quack Medicine advertisements as fast as the contracts expired, and refused new ones; will never be a cat's-paw of speculators; and shall most strictly adhere to the advance system. Many thanks to Mr. HOLDEN for the friendliness he manifests.

Let this Answer All.

We are asked if such and such persons can have the Farmer for ten shillings. NO—except in clubs at club terms. All shall be used alike, so don't try to Jew us down twenty five cents when we need every cent to get up a good paper for you.

Those who solicit and obtain NEW subscribers for us are authorized to retain 25 cents for their time and trouble in presenting its claims; but what old patron will expect us to hire somebody to solicit his subscription, when he can just as well send it right along himself? We reiterate that we do not want subscribers who are not willing to pay a remunerative price for the Farmer. If we would twist into all shapes on this point there would soon have to be another change in proprietors!

Farewell to the "a's".

When a person receives the Farmer, hereafter, the bare receipt of it will be evidence that the recipient, or some other person, has paid for it, or else that we intend to make a gift of it.

This will enable us to do justly by all, and save all ill-feelings arising from mistakes and misunderstandings, which are exceedingly annoying to both parties. To toil and furnish a person with a weekly paper for weeks and months, supposing that a little stringency in money matters delays payment, and then be cursed for not stopping it when the time was up, is a felicity which we purpose to deny ourself. Probably there is no person who really wants the Farmer who cannot pay one dollar in advance for eight months; if there is, to all such, we will send the Farmer at the rate of \$1.50 a year, or one shilling per month, for any sum as large as 25 cts. Surely there will now be no good reason for asking credit, for even if only two shillings are mailed to us at a time, requiring six letters per year, the cost will still be about 25 cts. less than the old price of \$2 per year. Away, then, with the credit and dunning nuisance, henceforth and (we venture to say) forever!

Farmer Contributors.

Noted People of the Bible.

BY SLOW JAMIE—NUMBER SIXTY ONE.

JOHN THE BAPTIST.

The old testament closes with a promise that the prophet Elijah should return, and the new testament opens with an account of him. Yet it is remarkable that when the Sanhedrim or grand council at Jerusalem sent a deputation to inquire if he was Elijah the prophet, he said, in plain terms, that he was not. But the secret was that the Jews expected Elias to come down from heaven, whereas the prophecy of Malachi only meant that a prophet of Elijah's genius and spirit would rise up, and like him be a faithful re-prover. Now if John the Baptist had answered, yes, although he would have said the truth, he would have deceived the people; for they would have thought him the identical prophet who had reproved Ahab nine hundred years before.

John the Baptist was born and raised in Hebron, a town in the hill country of Judea, in such a retired locality that he is said to have lived in the wilderness. His mother, as we learn from one incident in her life, was a very modest woman, and the son inherited her diffidence. This kept him withdrawn from public notice, till, at the age of thirty, he was called to preach the kingdom of God.

Everything contributed to make his ministry noticed. His descent from the house of Aaron, the well known piety of his father and mother, the peculiar circumstances of his birth, which old folks would remember and tell their children, the plain food and coarse clothing which he used, and the eloquence of his preaching, all would please the common people and secure attention to his words. Besides it was not long before this, that Judea had been turned into a Roman province, and as Jacob had prophesied that the scepter should not depart from Judah till Shiloh should come, all men were in expectation of the Messiah.

The burden of his preaching was, that they must repent. Although he preached in the country among plain and simple farmers and shepherds, yet they needed to reform, too.

Jerusalem lies south of Hebron about fifteen miles, and Bethabara on the Jordan better than twenty miles south-east of Jerusalem. Thither John went preaching, probably halting at every village on the way. At the river Jordan he was attended by great crowds, not merely from the neighborhood, but from a great distance, as far south as Jerusalem, and as far north as Bethsaida, sixty miles up the river. Andrew and Peter were of this village. How long he had been engaged in his active ministry when Jesus came from Nazareth, a distance of fifty miles, to be baptized by him, I do not know; but it is generally supposed to be about six months.

The Baptist bore public testimony that this was the promised Messiah. He pointed him out to his disciples, saying, "Behold the

Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." It was in this way that he was the greatest prophet that ever rose. Other prophets described him at a distance, but John pointed with his finger, and said, "That is the man."

Nevertheless, as he died before Christ's work was perfected, the least child in the New Testament dispensation has a more accurate knowledge of Christ's sufferings, and of the glory which followed, than he. Great as he was, and strong as his faith had been, yet when imprisoned by Herod, it began to waver, and he sent messengers to Jesus, inquiring whether he was the expected Messiah, or whether they should look for another.

Herod, the tetrarch, son of the Herod who had slaughtered the children of Bethlehem, in hopes of destroying the child Jesus, had waited on his preaching, and reformed in many respects. But he had divorced his wife to marry Herodias, his brother's wife. She was his niece, as well as his sister-in-law, for she was a grand daughter of Herod, the king. When John reproved Herod for his sin in this matter, Herodias wanted to kill him, but Herod was afraid to do that, and only imprisoned him. Soon after he was induced to cut off his head, which was carried on a waiter to this blood-thirsty woman, who is said to have stuck a needle through his tongue.

If John's faith for a moment wavered when he lay in prison, it soon triumphed. His last sayings, recorded in John 3; 27—36, indicate a spirit rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. Every word breathes poetry, and smells of heaven. When the executioner came to behead him it was simply knocking the gate off its hinges, that the spirit, freed at once from the prison of the flesh, and the castle of Macherus, might speed away to the regions of bliss. A gale from Paradise had already filled his soul with joy, and he hastened to enjoy its fruits.

Herod sometime afterwards incurred the displeasure of the Romans, and was banished to Spain, where he and Herodias died. The Herod who killed James and imprisoned Peter was a nephew of his.

For the Michigan Farmer.

Such is Man.

BY C. B. HOWELL.

The murderer, when he is attempting to escape from the officers of the law, after leaving his victim in death's gore, looks upon these in pursuit with all the fear, and bitter hate that his dark mind possesses, and would spurn them from him, if they came near to perform their duties as agents of justice. — But when that murderer is caught, and is led on his way to the dungeon, and the mob presses in their fury around, and would fain inflict summary punishment upon the one whose hands are imbrued in the blood of his brother man, that murderer clings for protection to those officers who have him in charge, and whom he but an hour ago spurned with a felon's hate and fear.

The miserly millionaire looks with pompous

dignity upon those beneath him in wealth and position, and drives from his door the deserv-ers of charity. But that man's riches take flight, ill health shatters his once strong frame and he is brought to know the sufferings of poverty and sickness. But his pompousness is gone; his hard heart is softened, and he looks with envy upon those he once despised. He gazes beseechingly on those whose cry for "bread" once fell insensibly upon his ears.

Thus is man the creature of circumstances. The tide of fortune favors one and wealth flows in upon him. His equally promising associates meet with disaster and disappointment. One finds his way to the high hill of earthly opulence; the other, when once on his way, perhaps sinks lower and lower, till squalid poverty meets him in his path.

Brothers start out in life equally favored. They compare notes when the frosts of age sit on their foreheads. One is known far and near. Wealth and fame are his to repletion. The other is but one step above beggary, and still earns his daily bread by the sweat of his aged brow.

O! Circumstance—what grief ye bring to some, and what essence of woe to others.—Ye makest the strong man bow, and the weak one to grow strong and rejoice.

Pontiac, Dec. 1861.

Tile Draining.

MR. EDITOR—Never having written anything for your paper, I have a short article on Tile Draining. I thought I would give you my experience, and its results, for the benefit of others, if you think it worthy of an insertion in your valuable sheet. [Just the kind of articles we want, Mr. Hurd.]

I have a small field of 3 acres and 8 100 that I commenced my tiling upon. In 1860 it was planted to corn in the usual manner, and I got about fifty bushels to the acre of good and poor—and about 1-4 was poor. Last spring I thought I would tile it, for parts of it was very wet—so wet that corn would not grow well. It was not wet with what would be called a swale, but with water oozing out of the commonly called sand knolls of which there were two.

I put 45 rods of the two and three inch tile in it, and on the high ground I put a coating of manure. The depth of the tile was from 2 to 3 1/2 feet; the tile was run around under these hills, with a main drain for an outlet; the result was that I got off the piece this year 327 bushels of ears of corn, (with very little poor corn,) or about 107 bushels to the acre; so that I feel pretty well paid for my trouble and the expense of the first crop.

Now, brother farmers that have not tried tiling, don't be afraid to begin; don't let the trouble and expense scare you; put it in and you will be paid in a ten fold ratio. Make a beginning; you will never regret it. The kind of corn was the large, yellow Indiana dent.

G. E. HURD.