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On Stone Fences

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one more good than harm; other-
harm than good." Dr. Franklin went to France on
tionary mission, his eminence as
phier, his venerable appearance,
use on which he was sent, ren-
extremely popular, for all ranks
tions of men there entered warm-
the American interest. He was
feasted and invited to all the
ties. At these he sometimes met
uchess of Bourbon, who being a
yer of about his force, they very
played together. Happening
ut her king into prise, the Doctor
'Ah,' says she, 'we do not take
'We do in America,' said the
ne of these parties, the emperor
L. then at Paris, incog. under the
ount Falkenstein, was overlooking
e, in silence, while the company
aged in animated conversations on
frican question, 'How happens it,
ante,' said the duchess, 'that while
eel so much interest in the cause of
ricans, you say nothing for them?'
king by trade,' said he."
en the Declaration of Indepen-
was under the consideration of Con-
ere were two or three unlucky ex-
as in it, which gave offence to some
rs. The words 'Scotch and other
ies,' excited the ire of a gentleman
of that country. Severe strictures
conduct of the British king, in ne-
our repeated repeals of the law
permitted the importation of slaves,
disapproved by some southern gen-
tlemen, whose reflections were not yet ma-
to the full abhorrence of that traffic.
ugh the offensive expressions were
nately yielded, these gentlemen con-
their depredations on other parts of
continent. I was sitting by Dr. Frank-
so perceived that I was not insensi-
these mutilations. 'I have made it
' said he, 'whenever in my power, to
becoming the draughtsman of papers
reviewed by a public body. I took
esson from an incident which I will
to you. When I was a journeyman
r, one of my companions, an appren-
tice, having served out his time,
out to open shop for himself. His
concern was to have a handsome sign-
board with a proper inscription. He com-
menced it in these words: 'John Thompson,
hat-maker, makes and sells hats for ready
money.' with a figure of a hat subjoined.

and I am inclined to think that the pro-
duct would have been greater if the expe-
riment had been made earlier in the year,
before the cobbs had lost much of their sub-
stance by evaporation. (My experiment
was made in the month of March.) The
distiller mentioned an important fact that
occurred in the process. He found that
the fermentation of the mixture took place
much sooner and was perfected a day or
two earlier than the other. His expression
was, that it *mashed* easier and better than
any thing he had ever tried before, and
which he accounted for by supposing that
the particles of the cobb being lighter and
coarser than those of the grain, but mixed
together prevented too close and heavy a
deposition of the mass at the bottom of
his brewing tub.

These facts are particularly worthy the
attention of distillers, and I think are per-
fectly satisfactory as to the value of the
corn cobbs in the production of spirit.
Whether they are equally so, in relation to
their value as a food, is left to the chemists
to determine. We are aware that the sac-
charine particles, or those yielding spirit,
are not the only constituents of nourish-
ment. We know that oily and mucilagi-
nous particles are also component and ne-
cessary parts of food. But which prepon-
derates, or in what proportion to each other
they are required to exist in order to con-
stitute a healthy food, I do not pretend to
know. It is certain however that the two
latter do exist in some degree in the cobbs
of corn; and since the experience of all
who have tried it concurs in reporting it to
be the most healthy mode of feeding corn,
perhaps it will not be unfair to infer that
they maintain a due proportion to the spi-
rit. If so, the experiment must be satis-
factory, and the conclusion I have drawn
from it undeniable.

But besides the actual economy, there is
another advantage in this way of feeding
corn, which ought to engage the attention
of every farmer. It is notoriously true
that the unground grain of corn is heating
to the stomach of all animals and of diffi-
cult digestion, producing cholick and other
inflammatory disorders, particularly in
horses, which tend greatly to shorten their
lives. They are deprived of the benefits
derived from the stimulus of distention (so
necessary to the proper health of all ani-
mals) by being unable to eat a sufficient
bulk to produce it before they become
gorged. But when ground into meal along
with the cobbs, and mixed with cut hay or

straw of any kind, this necessary disten-
tion is produced without any danger of
disorders arising from eating too much. It
is now 8 years since I have been in the
habit of feeding corn in this way, and out
of six to ten horses, which I have annually
kept in that time, there has been but one
case of sickness among them, which was a
slight cholick. Indeed since I have lived
in this county, which is now eleven years,
there has been but one death among that
description of stock on my plantation, and
that occurred to a mare with a young foal,
in a distant clover field, without having
been fed for many weeks, and which took
place two or three days before it was
known. This uncommon health of my
horses, I attribute in a great degree to the
use of ground food. Yours, with esteem
and friendship,

P. MINOR.

Gen. Cooke, Vice President Agricultural
Society, Albemarle.

ON STONE FENCES.

Read before the Agricultural Society of Albemarle
(Va.) on the 11th October, 1819.

Sir—In a former communication to our
society on the subject of secret or covered
ditches, among other arguments in favour
of using stone for that purpose, I mentioned
that we thereby often cleared our fields of
a great nuisance. Certainly a more obvious
and more effectual means of accomplishing
this end, is to use the stone as a material
for fencing; and though every one, perhaps,
will agree with me in this opinion, and in
allowing the great advantages of having
our arable lands cleared of large stones, yet
we scarcely see any attempt towards the
construction of stone fences, even where
the material is most abundant. At the
same time it is not uncommon to observe
large piles of stone heaped together at a
great expense of labour and occupying in
some places a fourth or fifth part of a cul-
tivated field. The dread of innovation and
the want of experimental enterprise have
heretofore been the reproach of our farm-
ing. I know many persons fully convinced
of the efficacy of gypsum in improving the
soil, who forego the use of it, for the sole
reason that they have not been accustomed
to it. In like manner, many can give no
better reason for not adopting the horizon-
tal culture of corn in our hilly country, than
that their fathers did not practise it. This
horror of change can certainly be the only
reason for heaping stones in a field instead

of disposing them along the sides of it in a fence. Perhaps the dread of encountering a tedious and untried undertaking may have deterred many from an attempt to construct stone fences. I can assure all such that this dread is in a great measure unfounded. More than 18 months ago I made my first essay in this business, without experience of its ability to withstand frost, or knowledge of the method of erecting it. I commenced I confess with considerable anticipation of encountering a tedious business, but was agreeably surprised to find that when the materials were in place, that one man could erect ten yards in a day. The fence which I made was 4½ feet high, 3 feet wide at the base, and tapering equally on both sides to the width of 18 inches at top. It has barred every kind of stock but sheep, and stood the frost of last winter without injury.

The mode of erecting it was regular and simple in the extreme. Take 4 stakes about a foot longer than the proposed height of the fence—point one end to be driven into the ground, and round the other end to receive a wooden cap or collar with two holes bored at the distance of the intended width of the fence at top. Place two of those stakes in the ground as far apart as the proposed base of the fence is wide, and draw the tops together until they receive the cap. Do the same with the other two stakes, in the direction of the fence, at the distance of the lines you work by. Notches at 6 or 8 inches apart should be cut in each stake, to raise the lines to, and as you proceed to work, the position of the stakes always affords the proper level. Mr. Thomas Moore, the present engineer to the Board of Public Works, was with me last fall, and gave me some valuable information on the subject of stone fencing. He had resided in a part of Maryland where it had been long and extensively practised. He stated that general experience had proved, that it was necessary in erecting such fences to attend to these rules. "Dig no foundation, unless it be to smooth or level the surface, taking care to leave no loose earth for the stones to lie on. Then make the bottom course throughout of the smallest stones you have, and these as nearly of the same size as possible. Let no stones reach *through* the fence until the finishing course, when if practicable most or all of them should reach through, thereby binding all the work tight." As frost is the only enemy to stone fences, the propriety of using small equal sized stones for the

foundation, is manifest; for the expansion of the earth in freezing and thawing being uniform and regular, and the whole foundation being acted on alike, you thus avoid all risk of the fence being partially thrown down by the frost. The other suggestions of Mr. Moore seem just, but I cannot speak from experience of their advantages.

An inquiry naturally presents itself on this subject. What is the relative value of a farm fenced with stone compared with one fenced with dead timber? Take the following data.

From the best accounts I have been able to obtain from others, and from my own experience, it may be fairly stated that one full month of the whole annual labour of every farm is consumed in the various operations of cutting, mauling, hauling, and putting up fences. This is one-twelfth of the year, or one complete year in twelve, that is devoted exclusively to making and repairing dead fences; and as the expense is annual, it is clear that the condition of such fences is no better at the end of any year than at the beginning.

Again.—I think it may be fairly stated, that when the materials are in place, the expense of erecting a stone fence does not exceed that of erecting one of rails, including the various operations above mentioned. The value of the timber (which is not taken into the account above) and the advantages of clearing the land of stone, will balance the expense of moving the stone 3 or 4 hundred yards. So that on a farm abounding with stone, and where the transportation does not exceed this distance, I think a fence of stone will in the first instance be as cheap as a common rail one. Suppose then two farms of 500 acres of arable land each, in all other respects equal, except that one is fenced with stone and one with dead timber. Each of them employs 12 labourers, at \$100 apiece per annum. One is at no expense, while he who fences with timber consumes one month in every year in making and repairing his fences. This is an expense of \$100; being the labour of one hand during a complete year. At annual compound interest, this would amount, in less than 33 years, to \$10,000, which is the entire price of the farm, supposing the land to be worth \$20 per acre. Thus in 33 years the one farm would be able to buy the other from the expense saved, by the different mode of fencing. It is true that there are not many farms capable of being entirely fenced with stone,

but there are scarcely any that admit of it in some degree, and advantages would be derived in a degree to any part of a farm thus enclosed.

Mr. Madison, President Agricultural Society, Albemarle.

Miscellaneous

LIFE OF COMMODORE D

Commodore Stephen Decatur is descended by the male line. His father was a native of La Rochelle, in France, and a lady of Rhode Island. His father, Stephen Decatur, was born in Newport, Rhode Island, and when a very young man removed to Philadelphia, where he married the daughter of an Irish gentleman by the name of Decatur, bred to the sea, and commanded a vessel out of the port of Philadelphia. He was established of the navy, when he was ordered to command the Delaware, which continued in her until the frigate was built, when the command was given to him, at the particular request of the merchants, who had built her. In this situation he remained until he made a treaty with France, when he resigned his commission, and retired to his residence from Philadelphia, where he died, which happened in November.

His son, Stephen Decatur, Commodore, was born on the 5th of January, on the eastern shore of Maryland. His father had retired, whilst the British were in possession of Philadelphia. They were in the city when he was a few months old, there educated and brought up. He entered the navy in March, 1793, as a shipman, and joined the frigate under the command of Commodore Decatur, who had obtained the warrant for her. He remained for some time with that officer, and was promoted to the rank of lieutenant. At that time the States at that time required no more ships, and he was ordered to join the brig Norfolk, the Spanish Main. He performed his duty as first lieutenant, and on the 15th of August, 1795, he returned to the States, where he remained until he was discharged with France.

He was then ordered to the rank of lieutenant, and sailed with the frigate on a squadron to the Mediterranean. On the 15th of August, 1795, he was ordered to the frigate York, one of the second Mediterranean squadron, under the command of Commodore Decatur. When he returned to the States, he was ordered to take command of the frigate Argus, and proceed in her to join the second squadron, then in the Mediterranean. On his arrival there to resign the command of the Argus to lieutenant Hull, and to take command of the frigate Enterprise, then commanded by Commodore Decatur. After making that exchange, he was ordered to the frigate Syracuse, where the squadron was. On his arrival at that port