





BRIDGEPORT

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JAMES B. FERGUSON, -Editor.

## POTATOES.

Mercer, Prince Alberts and Peach Blows.

The extreme uncertainty of procuring a full crop of our favorite potato, the Mercer, has induced many of our enterprising agriculturist to endeavor to procure a substitute for it, that will possess the excellency of its flavor, and at the same time yield a large return. For thirty years or more, the Mercer has been the leading potato in this state, commanding a ready sale at a better price than any other in the markets of New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore. From some cause which we do not feel able to explain altogether, although having our ideas about it, the mercers of Jersey growth, are thought to be superior to those raised in other States, and when brought into competition with them, bring a higher price. From the very fine flavor obtained, it has been argued that our soil is particularly adapted to their cultivation. But if this were so, we should not so frequently hear of a failure in the crop.

If the natural adaptation of a soil to any particular crop, is not of itself sufficient to keep that crop to its original standard of excellence and productiveness under a proper system of cultivation, the query will very naturally arise, how, if at all, such a defect can be remedied. The popular theory, that grain, plants, fruit and vegetables are susceptible of great and permanent improvement by skillful management must be received with caution, so far as regards any special variety. That kind of improvement, that, while it improves the flavor, shortens the crop or renders it uncertain, is of a very questionable kind. After all the pains taken in grafting and selecting choice varieties, apple orchards are not near so productive as formerly, and many kinds that were formerly ranked as the foremost in the market, have so sadly degenerated as to fall below mediocrity. Among this class, may be mentioned the spicé apple, bell flower, pippin and romanesco. It certainly does seem plausible that a careful selection of seed, with a still more careful cultivation of the crop, would bring an increasingly remunerative yield.

The subject of Mr. Willits' lecture on this occasion, viz.—"Patrick Henry as an Orator and the Elements of Effective Eloquence," is one well calculated for him to display his oratorial powers, and we doubt not that all who hear him will be highly entertained. By special request he has consented to recite at the close of the lecture, "Longfellow's 'Exorcist,'" which was so highly appreciated when delivered by him in this place last winter.

Those who cannot be present at an early hour are informed that the lecture will not commence until nearly eight o'clock. This will give an opportunity for all to enjoy a rich literary feast.

The services of several of the most eminent lecturers in the country, have been secured. They have positively agreed to come to Bridgeton and lecture during the present course, which will be continued, if duly appreciated by the people of this part of the State. The time will be duly announced, when Park Benjamin, Rev. D. Moore, Dr. W. Curris, Rev. J. Dowling, D. D., Dr. Chapin, Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, and others will lecture in this place.

## Mr. Hastings on Choirs.

The following excellent thoughts on the management of choirs and the duties of choir members, are extracted from the admirable dissertation of Mr. Hastings on "Musical Taste," and will be read with profit by our musical friends generally, and members of choirs especially. Mr. Hastings is a man of extraordinary talents and great erudition, has added more, perhaps, to the store of musical literature in our country than any one else, without we except the father of Music in America—Dr. Lowell Mason."

He has for many years ably plead the cause of church music and been the means of instructing thousands to show forth more acceptably the praise of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light." Mr. Hastings is now an old man. His earthly labor must soon cease. He may die, but his memory will live after him. Old "Zion" and "Luthier" and "Ortonville," and others of his composition will still continue to be sung until rolling years shall cease to move.

White Christians on earth are waiting in their cultivation. The potato has become one of the leading articles of domestic consumption, it is fast a necessity to every family. There are but few families that would not expect to do without their supply of meat almost as soon as of potatoes.

Hence every family in the country is interested in their culture. Every fact connected with its successful cultivation should be disseminated amongst the agriculturists of the country, as well for their profit as for the general benefit.

Our columns are always open to the discussion of agricultural topics, and we cordially invite them to use them.

The discussion of these matters in a local paper is more advantageous to the immediate community through which it mainly circulates, than if made in the city weekly or even in the excellent agricultural journals published in the country, because the experiments being made in similar and contiguous territory would be much more likely to produce a practical and satisfactory result than that tried a hundred or thousand miles off.

An experiment might be perfectly successful and profitable in Illinois, or even in New England, but the results of such an experiment would not be likely to be secured.

The preparations and performances of a choir should be directed under the influence of a gentle, affectionate spirit. A regular orchestra may be ruled as by a rigorous master, but here, perfect decorum and subordination may generally be secured through the influence of Christian sympathy, and affection. The duties of a choir may be readily inferred from the nature of their employment.

The members must become good singers, and be as familiar with the practice of their art as possible. Their minds may be another object of their attention, while in the schoolroom, and in the study. They may then have a more decided interest in their studies.

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