

large, rangy, strolling stallions, as fine and valuable horses as the best, adding stride and size to their known good qualities; and I believe the day is near at hand, when this opinion will be generally adopted. The managers of our Stock Farm are of this opinion, it is evident by the purchase of six, two stallions and four mares, from the old Mambrino Chief, Abdallah, and Bashaw crosses, and Walkill Chief of the Hambletonian Star and Bashaw for the improvement of horses in Vermont. This is my opinion and has for sometime been, and it was distinctively upon this opinion that I purchased Mambrino Chief, one of the best sons of the old renowned trotter, Geo. M. Patchen, (the progenitor of Lucy, Geo. M. Patchen, Jr., Godfrey's Patchen, McDonald's Patchen, Griffin's Patchen, Victor Patchen, New Jersey, Danver's Boy, Ashland Patchen, and many others,) combining Bashaw and Messenger blood by repeated strains, of whom Hiram Woodruff says: "When every thing is considered, I am under the impression that Geo. M. Patchen was the best horse that Flora Temple ever contended with, and that, therefore, their names must go down linked together as those of the best mare and the best stallions that have yet appeared."

These considerations of facts, gentlemen, hastily and imperfectly made though they be, are facts, nevertheless, and warrant me in proclaiming, and I do proclaim *boldly* to the farmers and breeders of Vermont, to go on fearless and hopefully, and breed their small but truly valuable mares to larger sized, strong boned, well bred, trotting stallions, and reach a sure and satisfactory reward. But in all conscience, never breed a little horse to a little mare, they have large strains in common or are satisfied to breed what we are fast approximating, Mustang Kanucks, or Indian Ponies. E. S. STOWELL.  
Cornwall Vt.

## Vermont Farmer

T. H. HOSKINS, M. D., Editor.

Communications and letters relating to the editorial management of the paper should be addressed to the Editor. All others should be addressed to the Publisher, or simply to the FARMER. Both, however, may be reached in the same letter.

### "THEORY"—IS IT ANYTHING "PIZEN."

A correspondent of one of our agricultural exchanges says:

"What farmers wish to know is, not how to raise beets that cost the amateur and theory farmer fifty cents apiece, when they are worth but fifty cents a bushel, but how to sow and reap and mow with profit in their labor. There is any number of theory farmers who never performed a day's labor on a farm, but are fond of giving visionary advice. They crowd the world with their knowledge and wisdom. If farmers followed their directions it would be likely to leave them as poor as a church mouse. Any one can run a farm on theory with plenty of money at command. I had rather have good common sense with an abundance of manure,—with muscle laid out in the way of labor,—than all the theory in the world. If a man wishes to make money on a farm, the less theory he has the better, and the more successful he will be."

Now everybody will agree with the belief expressed above, in regard to "fancy farmers." There are plenty of them who do not know how to make their operations pay. Many of them are unable to bring the year round without a heavy loss. But is this owing to their having or using more of that remarkable article known as "THEORY?" What is "theory," anyway? If it is really something hurtful to the farmer we ought to know it, and also know what class of farmers use the most of it, and receive the most damage from it.

"Theory," according to Webster, has a number of meanings. By some it is used to express an idea in opposition to that of "practice," "theoretical" being used as the opposite of "practical." This is the only sense in which the writer we have quoted seems to understand the word. But men guided by such "theory" never attempt the practical; they despise it, and intentionally confine themselves to their theorizing, saying with disdain when opposing facts are brought to their notice—"So much the worse for the facts." Such theorists are, in fact, visionaries. In agriculture they cannot be fancy

farmers. They are above defiling their hands with any work at all.

But the meanings are assigned to the word, viz. :—

1. An exposition of the general principles of any science; as the *theory* of music.

2. The science, distinguished from the art; as the *theory* and *practice* of plow-making, or steam-engine building.

The philosophical explanation of phenomena; as the *theory* of plant growth, or of combustion.

It is evident, according to these definitions, that there may be false and true theories. There may be a theory of plow making that is erroneous, and plows made according to it will not do good work; while another plow maker may hit upon the true theory, (as Gov. Holbrook seems to have done,) and make plows of the greatest service to the farmer. Now nobody will say that that kind of theory has done any harm.

Every man who thinks at all, usually has some kind of a theory about everything he has to do. The writer we have quoted not only has a theory that theory is a bad thing for the farmer, but it is easy to gather, even from the short extract given, that he has other theories, as that manure and hard work are essential to successful farming, and that common sense is a great help,—both of which theories seem to us sound, and valuable when put in practice.

There are theories prevalent to a considerable extent which attribute great power to the heavenly bodies, especially to the moon, over many of the interests of the farmer. Even some people who profess contempt for theory in general hold strongly to these, and believe that if you do not kill your beef or your pork at the right time the meat will shrink in the pot; [also that if certain crops are not planted in the right sign they will fail. If these theories are true, they are very valuable, but if as others contend, they are all moonshine,—that a good breed, good feeding and good management will give good meat, no matter under what sign it may be killed, while a bad breed, bad feeding and neglect will give poor meat under all circumstances,—then the latter theory is preferable.

Even fancy farmers who fail to make their farming pay, do not always do so because their theories are bad. It is quite often the case that their failures are attributable to other reasons. Mr. Greeley and Mr. Beecher would no doubt be successful farmers if they gave their whole time and attention to the business. The same talents and industry that made the *Tribune* a success, or that built up the Plymouth pulpit, and commands a salary of \$20,000 a year, would, if given entirely to agriculture, have been crowned with a parallel success. Other fancy farmers fail because they are lazy, and see to nothing themselves, delegating all oversight as well as all labor, to hired help. Usually if they have theories that are ever so false, such men do not usually apply them so extensively, or run them so far, as to lose a great deal of money by them in comparison with what they lose in other ways.

A correct theory may be so badly worked as to give bad pecuniary results. Here it is that the practical man has the advantage of the mere theorist, and indeed it is almost always the practical man that makes the money out of a good theory. The theory of deep tillage is a good one, but it is only the practical man who is likely successfully to apply it to practice and make it pay. The same may be said of the theory of under-draining, of special fertilization of the soil, of selection in the breeding of animals, of improving seeds, &c., &c. It is the practical man who, if he

does not originate them, takes these theories and demonstrates them successfully in practice.

We submit, therefore, to the reader's consideration, inasmuch as we all have some theories in regard to what we do, and are more or less guided by them, whether it is a sensible thing altogether to condemn theories. Theories may be correct or incorrect, and it is for our interest to satisfy ourselves in regard to them before applying them, condemning the bad and adopting the good. And the man who has acquired most knowledge in relation to his business is the most likely to choose the right theories and apply them successfully. It is not at all likely that the intelligent farmers will have more theories than his uneducated neighbor—indeed, as a rule, the less a man knows the more full he is likely to be of absurd theories. But the man who understands, because he intelligently studies his business, will be by far the most likely, when he adopts a theory, to adopt one that has a solid foundation, and that will work profitably in practice.

Col. Stowell's very able paper on Horse Breeding is given in this number. From the discussion that followed the reading of this paper at Brandon, it is evident that public opinion is in an unsettled condition on many points in connection with this important topic. We shall, therefore, welcome communications upon it from breeders of experience.

We are glad to learn that a new edition of "The Principles of Breeding," by Hon. S. L. Goodale, Secretary of the Maine Board of Agriculture, is in process of preparation for the press. It is a work greatly needed by every intelligent farmer, and Mr. Goodale is eminently qualified by education and experience, to give us a book that can be relied upon.

Mr. H. F. Black, whose barn was burned by lightning in Coventry, informs us that he had a new one erected and all finished, ready for use in just twenty-one working days from the fire.

He desires to express his thanks to his neighbors and friends, who have generously come forward and helped him in the time of need.

### A BEGINNING IN VERMONT.

By reference to our column of "Correspondence" it will be seen that a Grange of Patrons of Husbandry has been constituted in Caledonia County. This inauguration of a work calculated, as we believe, to be of great benefit to the farmers of Vermont, as it has already been to those of other states, is due, in a great degree, to the efforts of our friend and correspondent, Jonathan Lawrence, Esq., who has received from the National Grange at Washington, the appointment of General Deputy of the order for Vermont.

Those who know Mr. Lawrence are fully aware that he has not accepted this task from any motives of personal ambition. No man in the country could be more free from that importation than he. A true and earnest devotion to the cause of agricultural progress has always characterized his course, and no man has given more time to it, without fee or hope of reward, than has Mr. Lawrence. And not only does he possess zeal—his reports of the proceedings of the Passumpsic Farmers' Club, his exceedingly able paper read at the St. Johnsbury meeting of the Board of Agriculture, with all of which our readers are familiar, testify to his capacity for the work he has consented to undertake. We trust that the year will not expire without seeing, at least, one Grange of Patrons organized in every county of Vermont. Those desiring reference to the matter should put themselves in correspondence with Mr. Lawrence at once.

### NOT TRUE.

It seems that the statement in regard to the graduating class of the Massachusetts Agricultural College which has been rushing round in the political papers, and to which we adverted last week, is false. The *Boston Times* states authoritatively that the intended occupations of the class are as follows: agricultural (general,) 11; agricultural chemistry, 1; agricultural engineering, 1; market gardening, 1; agriculture and medicine, 1; horticulture and journalism, 1; civil engineering, 5; draughting, 1; business, 1; professions, 8; undecided, 4. The 4 undecided ones will probably engage in agriculture at some time, sooner or later. It will be seen that the number of graduates who propose to follow agriculture is about 50 per cent., which is a very good exhibit.

### NOTES AND QUERIES.

#### Stock Sale.

—Thomas Baker, of Barton, has recently sold two very fine Holstein calves and a fine Chester White sow pig to Judson Spoford. B.

Brownington, Vt.

#### Butter Making in Hot Weather.

—When it is very warm and dry, we cool our milk room by keeping wet sheets, wrung out of cold well water, hung up in the warmest part of the room. Put a small quantity of milk in a pan, and if shelves are used, set upon slats an inch or two thick, so to let the air cool the bottom of the pan; be sure to skim before the milk gets sour or thick, in twenty-four or thirty-six hours, and sometimes in very warm weather in twelve hours. Throw a handful of salt in the cream pail, put in the cellar or other cool place, and stir all the cream well every time more is added. The greatest care and neatness in every particular is necessary to make a good article of butter. Mrs. W. T. S.

#### The Currant Worm.

This mischievous depredator often makes sad havoc with our thrifty and prized currant bushes. It begins its depredations to-day, and in forty-eight hours is down to the utter frustration of all our well cherished hopes for rich dishes of this most excellent saucer-fruit. But there is death to the currant worms, and that in a preparation of the common field poke root. Boil the root and leaves and sprinkle the bushes liberally with the decoction on the first appearance of the worm, and the young depredator will very soon cease its troubling, and lie down to pleasant dreams. Let such as are thus afflicted, try it! I. W. S.

The Indian Poke or Green Hellebore (*Veratrum Viride*) is so similar to the White Hellebore that botanists are not agreed as to its being a distinct species. D. W. Robinson, Esq., of Barton, informs us that he has also used it with success to destroy the currant worm, but says a strong decoction will kill the leaves also. Mr. R. has also killed the worms by sifting plaster over them, but does not feel sure that this remedy is infallible.

Annie Brown, the notorious snake woman, who has been puzzling the doctors for years, has at last turned out to be a fraud. She has lately been at the Wayne county, N. Y., infirmary, and the physician seeing the snake's head protrude from her mouth, seized her by the throat to prevent swallowing, and made her disgorge the reptile, which proved to be nothing more nor less than a piece of black India rubber, that she had been accustomed to slip down her throat and then, with her convulsive movements, raise up and let down again.