

of the western wilderness, there to have enjoyed that blessing, without which a paradise would be disgusting, and with which the most savage region is not without its charms; that you, I say, should continue to be a slave-holder, a proprietor of human flesh and blood, creates in many of your British friends both astonishment and regret! It has been said by your apologists, that your feelings are inimical to slavery, and that you are induced to acquiesce in it at present merely from motives of policy: the only true policy is justice, and he who regards the consequences of an act, rather than the justice of it, gives no very exalted proof of the greatness of his character. But if your feelings be actually repugnant to slavery, then are you more culpable than the callous-hearted planter, who laughs at what he calls the pitiful whining of the abolitionists, because he believes slavery to be justifiable; while you persevere in a system which your conscience tells you to be wrong. If we call the man obdurate who cannot perceive the atrociousness of slavery, what epithets does he deserve, who, while he does perceive its atrociousness, continues to be a proprietor of slaves? Nor is it likely that your own unfortunate negroes are the only sufferers by your adhering to this nefarious business; consider the force of an example like yours, consider how many of the sable race may now be pining in bondage, merely, forsooth, because the President of the United States, who has the character of a wise and good man, does not see cause to discontinue the long established practice. Of all the slave-holders under heaven, those of the United States appear to me the most reprehensible; for man never is so truly odious, as when he inflicts upon others that which he himself abominates. The hypocritical bawd who preaches chastity, yet lives by the violation of it, is not more truly disgusting than one of your slave-holding gentry bellowing in favour of democracy. Man does not readily perceive defects in what he has been accustomed to venerate; hence it is that you have escaped those animadversions which your slave-proprietorship has so long merited."

I could enlarge my extracts from
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this letter of close and just remonstrance, but I fear to trespass too far on the pages of the Magazine.

When this letter is viewed in contrast with the eulogy of D. B. Warden, it may enable us to form a juster estimate of the character of Washington. To those who conceive themselves bound to defend a favourite character through all circumstances, this set off will not be acceptable. To them, as was the case with the man to whom they were originally addressed, the effusions of an honest heart conveying the language of reproof will not be pleasing....

....."They are too rough to suit
"Ears long accustomed to the tuneful
lute." N. K.

For the *Belfast Monthly Magazine*.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE LIVERPOOL BOTANIC GARDEN.

Extracted from an Introduction to a Catalogue of Plants belonging to it, just published.

THE Liverpool Botanic Garden, was established by public subscription, in the year 1800, and opened in 1803. About ten statute acres of land were purchased at a convenient distance from the town, and rather more than one half of them have been appropriated to the garden. Two lodges have been built for the residence of the Curator, a committee room, and other purposes; and the whole is enclosed with a substantial stone wall. The remaining land is sold; and such has been the rapid, and perhaps unprecedented advance in the value of property in the vicinity of Liverpool, that the sale of the half has nearly repaid the purchase of the whole. The land is held by a renewable lease, under the Corporation of Liverpool, who, with the same distinguished liberality and generosity, with which they have encouraged any proposal for the improvement or ornament of the town, have made a free grant to the Proprietors of the reversionary interest of the garden and buildings, "so long as the same shall remain appropriated to the purposes of the present Institution."

The disposition of the garden was suggested by William Roscoe Esq. to whose zeal and active exertion in the dissemination of science, the encouragement of the fine arts, the general

improvement of the mind, and cultivation of those talents which give dignity to character and happiness to life, this Institution owes its existence. The large Conservatory is an elegant and spacious range of buildings, 240 feet long, and in the centre 24 feet high; it is divided into five distinct compartments, heated to different degrees of temperature, adapted to the preservation of plants from every part of the world. There is also a small Conservatory, with bark pits, and an aquarium, of dimensions sufficient to contain, at least, one specimen of every rare and tender aquatic; and a large compartment, with small frames and wooden covers hath lately been appropriated for the preservation of such herbaceous plants as are too tender to endure the severity of our winter. When the funds of the Institution shall be adequate to the expense, it is intended to add a library of works of Natural History, with an apartment for the preservation of collections of specimens of dried plants; of which the Proprietors are already in the possession of about 3000, collected by the late Dr. Forster, in his voyages to the South Seas, with large and valuable contributions from his friends and correspondents.

The situation of the garden is peculiarly favourable, being so near a large sea-port town, from which the communication is direct and frequent to the most remote parts of the earth; and the merchants and masters of vessels are entitled to the thanks of the Proprietors, for their numerous and valuable presents of plants and seeds to the Botanic Garden. They wish also gratefully to acknowledge their obligations to the several Proprietors of private collections; to some of the most eminent cultivators of plants for sale; to many gentlemen who have favoured them with the most rare indigenous plants of Great Britain, discovered in their botanical excursions; to the universities of Oxford, Cambridge and Dublin; and to the superintendant of the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew, for their several valuable additions to their present collection.

To the perseverance, assiduity and zeal of the Curator, Mr. John Shephard, the Proprietors owe the greatest

and most valuable part of their plants; to whose knowledge, accuracy, and industry in the discharge of the several duties of his office, the garden affords the most ample testimony; and they are happy in paying this public tribute so justly due to his meritorious services.

In the ornamental part of the garden where the plants grow promiscuously, a legible large label is affixed to every plant, with the initial letter of the general division to which it belongs, and a number corresponding with the number in the Catalogue under the same division, where in the same line will be found the Latin and English name of the plant, with its class, order, &c. With this Catalogue, as a manual, a visitor, without the trouble of inquiry may discover the name and family of any plant in the garden.

In the first establishment of this Institution, the number of shares was limited to 500; it was afterwards extended to 375; but the funds proving inadequate to the necessary expenditure of the garden, and a very considerable debt having been contracted for the expense of building the conservatories; upon the report of the Committee at the general meeting of the Proprietors, in May, 1807, they unanimously resolved further to increase the number of shares to 450, by a subscription of the Proprietors only, which subscription was filled up in a very few days; and it is now confidently hoped, that by a liquidation of debt, and a great increase of annual income, the plans that have been suggested for the improvement of the garden will be fully completed, and the permanency of the Institution effectually secured. *Liverpool, 1808.*

From the foregoing sketch it may be seen, that by the exertions of a few spirited individuals the public taste may be directed to useful pursuits; an example is held out to other places to follow so good a mode of disposing of superfluous wealth. It is also worthy of observation that in the catalogue, the common names of the plants are given in addition to the Latin; a practice worthy of imitation, that unnecessary difficulties should not be thrown in the way of a pleasing pursuit, nor beginners discouraged by an affectation

of learned terms, or led to suppose that the science is a mystery known only to the initiated few.

To the Editor of the *Belfast Magazine*.

ON THE NATURAL HISTORY OF THE
POTATOE.

I PROMISED to send, from time to time, such articles as might strike me in the course of my reading. I have been lately reading a report of the committee of the board of agriculture, in London, concerning the culture and use of potatoes. Much of it is, to be sure, not new to Irishmen, who already are practically so well acquainted with the culture and use of this excellent vegetable; but I thought it might not be unacceptable to your readers to have some account of its history, and an analysis of its component parts; as the subject may probably be novel to most of them, and at least it must be acknowledged to be more interesting than the theatricals and other stuff, which so frequently fill the pages of your Irish contemporaries. I hope you will always aim to *instruct*.

A READER.

From the *Communications of Dr. Wright, of Edinburgh, to the Board of Agriculture*.

Solanum tuberosum, Linn. *Specie plantarum*.

COMMON POTATOE.

History.....The potatoe is a native of America, and was well known to the Indians long before the conquest of Mexico and Peru. Gomara, in his *General History of the Indies*, and Josephus Acosta, are amongst the early Spanish writers who have mentioned the potatoe by the Indian names, *O Penanck*, *Papes* and *Papos*. Clusius, and after him Gerard, gave figures of the potatoe plant. Gerard was the first author who gave it the name *Solanum Tuberosum*, which Linnaeus and his followers adopted.

In 1584, Sir Walter Raleigh, so celebrated for his worth, his valour, and his misfortunes, discovered that part of America called *Novembega*, and by him Virginia. Whether the admiral was acquainted with the potatoe in his first voyage, or whether it was sent to him by Sir Thomas Grenville, or Mr. Lane, the first governor of Virginia, is uncertain. It is probable

he was possessed of this root about the year 1586. He is said to have given it to his gardener, in Ireland, as a fine fruit from America, and which he desired him to plant in his kitchen-garden, in the spring. In August this plant flowered, and in September produced a fruit; but so different to the gardener's expectation, that in an ill-humour he carried the potatoe-apple to his master. "Is this," said he, "the fine fruit from America, you prized so highly?" Sir Walter either was, or pretended to be, ignorant of the matter, and told the gardener, "since that was the case, to dig up the weed, and throw it away." The gardener soon returned with a good parcel of potatoes.

Gerard, an old English botanist, received seedlings of the potatoe, about the year 1590; and tells us that it grew as kindly in his garden as in its native soil, Virginia. The plant was cultivated in the gardens of the nobility and gentry, early in the last century, as a curious exotic; and towards the end of it (1684) was planted out in the fields, in small patches, in Lancashire; from thence it was gradually propagated all over the kingdom, as also in France.

In 1683, Sutherland has the *Solanum Tuberosum* in his *Hortus Medicus Edinburgensis*; and it is probable that many others in Scotland cultivated the potatoe in their gardens about that time. It was not, however, cultivated in open fields in Scotland, till the year 1728, when Thomas Prentice, a day-labourer, first cultivated potatoes at Kilsythe. The success was such, that every farmer and cottager followed his example. Thomas Prentice, by his industry had saved 200*l.* sterling, which he sunk for double interest, upon which he subsisted for many years, and died at Edinburgh, in 1792, aged eighty-six years.

Extract from an analysis of the potatoe-root, by George Pearson, M. D. F.R.S.

1. It appears from experiments, that 100 parts of potatoe-root, deprived of its skin or bran, consist of

1. Water,	63 to 72
2. Meal,	32 to 28
	100 100