

The soils of this section are, for the most part, similar to those of the Eastern Shore, a mixture of sand and loam, and easily cultivated. In the counties of St. Mary's, Calvert, Prince George's and Charles, there is found a very remarkable variety of soil, consisting of *tripoli* more or less mixed up with sand and vegetable matters. On the bluffs of the Patuxent this deposit of tripoli is found to vary from 5 to 30 feet in thickness. Tripoli is composed of the skeletons of a microscopic vegetable, (or animal,) which float upon the water of most streams, invisible to the eye, but furnishing the food of oysters and other mollusks. It is calculated that a cubic inch of tripoli contains thousands of millions of these skeletons. It is the minute size of these forms, so thin and fragile that they are easily broken, and their sharp edges, which make them serviceable in polishing, while the grains are too small to make a visible scratch. For polishing metals and all articles which are to be varnished, this is the best substance known. At some future day, when the mechanic arts have been developed to a greater perfection, tripoli will have a high commercial value. With such facilities for transportation as Maryland possesses, the tripoli might be profitably exported to Europe at prices cheaper than the Bohemian tripoli, which it far exceeds, and which has heretofore almost had a monopoly of the world's markets.

Tobacco, wheat and Indian corn, with about the usual proportion of smaller grains and vegetables, have engrossed the attention of the agriculturists of this section of the State. In the northern portions of it, within the last four years, much attention has been given to hay and grazing, and with decided success. The demands of the markets of Baltimore and Washington—large and rapidly increasing—for the perishable but more profitable esculents, fruits and vegetables, have in the vicinity of those cities, along the lines of the railroads, and near the bay and river "landings," to a great extent, divided attention from agriculture proper, to horticulture. The result is seen in the almost unlimited supply of strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, cherries, peaches, apricots, melons, canteleupes and table vegetables generally, of the finest quality, with which, in their season, those markets abound. The unconsumed surplus, passing through the numerous manufactories of hermetically sealed fruits, furnishes to our commerce and our navy the luxury of summer fruits, in all their varieties, in every climate and latitude.

Sorghum has recently been cultivated with decided success in the Northern portion of this District, mills established for its manufacture, and a convention or association of sorghum growers has been formed to aid each other by imparting information, the result of private experiments.