

# MARYLAND GAZETTE

T H U R S D A Y, A U G U S T 14, 1806.

## Miscellany.

From the Richmond Enquirer.

### CLIMATE OF VIRGINIA.

NO physical fact is more completely established, than that the climate of every country is undergoing important changes.

These do not so much proceed from any vicissitude in the earth, the air or the elements, as from the transcendent influence of man. It is the triumph of moral over physical causes. As these causes become powerful in their operation; or in other words, as man becomes enlightened, civilized and enterprising, the face and the climate of a country become gradually improved. In proportion as he returns to his primeval state of barbarism, the country or the continent which he inhabits, partakes of the same gloomy revolution. Is it therefore too hazardous an assertion, that as the progress of man towards civilization seems to be fully confirmed by the laws of his nature, the climate of the whole earth itself will experience a gradual and perhaps an important improvement? Is it even too bold to assert that the rapidity of this progress will be in a considerable degree, promoted to the dissemination of republican governments, which are so peculiarly favourable to the multiplication of the human species, to the increase of agricultural improvements; and consequently, to the clearing of the woods and draining of the morasses, that so considerably modify the climates of the earth?

If we would see this great vicissitude of climate strikingly exemplified, we must not resort to our own continent, which is too lately and too little known to furnish points of comparison, but to Europe, where the effects of the climate have been registered at distant intervals. It is there that the gradual amelioration of climate is demonstrated, beyond a doubt.

The historian Gibbon, in his "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," adduces two memorable facts to demonstrate the truth of this position. 1st. The Rhine and the Danube were frequently frozen over, and capable of supporting the most enormous weights, such as numerous armies of Barbarians, their cavalry and their heavy wagons. But the like phenomenon has not occurred in modern ages. 2. The Reindeer which is found on the rock of Spitzbergen, within ten degrees of the pole, and amidst the fogs of Lapland and Siberia, was, in Cæsar's time, a native of the Hercynian forest. But at present he cannot subsist, much less multiply in any country to the south of the Baltic. So great has been the vicissitude of climate, experienced by Germany, and the other cultivated parts of Europe!

"Modern improvements (says this ingenious author,) sufficiently explain the causes of the diminution of the cold. These immense woods have been gradually cleared, which intercepted from the earth, the rays of the sun. The morasses have been drained, and in proportion as the soil has been cultivated, the air has become temperate. Canada, at this day, is an exact picture of ancient Germany. Although situated in the same parallel with the finest provinces of France and England, that country experiences the most rigorous cold. The Reindeer are very numerous, the ground is covered with deep and lasting snow, and the great river St. Lawrence is regularly frozen in a season when the waters of the Seine and the Thames are usually free from ice."

Our own continent however has exhibited some changes, though not so striking as those of Europe. Almost every man will confess that it is not the same as it was in the days of his youth. He will admit that our climate has gradually softened and improved; that our seasons are changed; the autumn having now encroached upon the winter, and the winter upon the spring; that the season of ice and snow is later in coming and quicker in passing away. The whole history of the country, indeed, announces an amelioration of our climate, similar to that which has visited Europe.

This gradual and never ceasing change however may elude our senses. But there are others of a more transient nature, which force us into observation. One of these vicissitudes has occurred within the last few months; one of them is at this moment before us, with its consequences too deeply portrayed upon the face of the neighbouring country, to escape our notice.

When our last winter appeared, it was mild almost beyond the memory of man. This fine weather was succeeded in March by a few days of equally intense cold. The farmers were much alarmed about their crops of wheat; but their fears proved to be exaggerated. Then succeeded the host of caterpillars, of insects of various kinds, and among the rest, the poor Lombardy poplar worm; innumerable eggs of these animals having been no doubt preserved by the mild-

ness of the preceding winter. Meanwhile the harvests proved astonishingly fine; the heads of wheat not uncommonly numerous, but uncommonly full. At length a DROUGHT has succeeded, not less remarkable and much more alarming than the phenomena, which had preceded it. It has now extended to every part of Virginia from which we have had any accounts.—There has been no rain in this city for many days; the showers which we have enjoyed, have been rare and penurious. But let the degree of drought be told by its effects!

Many of the springs and wells of water have dried up; several who have depended upon their own springs for a supply, have been compelled to resort to other streams; and some who possess wells, that have never failed before, are now obliged to sink them several inches or feet lower, in search of a more abundant vein of water.

Most of the running streams of water which supply our corn mills, have experienced the same drought, and the farmers have either resorted to the hand mill, or sent their corn to distant mills, situated on the rivers or on more abundant streams. It is a fact that corn has been sent more than sixty miles to the mills in Richmond and its vicinity.

The James River is probably lower than ever it has been within the memory of man. A great part of its shore is laid dry, and so shallow at one time was the canal, (that great artery of our city) that boats could scarcely descend it. To remedy this inconvenience, the directors of the J. R. Company, have formed a dam, extending nearly half over the river to force into the canal a large volume of water. Two suggestions here present themselves to our notice. 1st. Will not this great scarcity of water retard the establishment of several very valuable manufactories, which might be advantageously erected on the canal, as paper-mills, forging-mills of various descriptions? The directors have already set a considerable price upon that water, on account of the quantities already consumed by the establishments on its margin. The armoury alone draws off 100 square inches. These are the drains which contribute to the impoverishment of the canal, during the present fall of the waters of the river. Will not this circumstance then contribute to raise the price of the water. 2dly. Does not the interest of Richmond therefore require, that the channel of the lower part of the canal and of the adjoining part of the river should be sunk several inches lower, to permit a larger mass of water to flow into it?

One curious phenomenon is, that in spite of the intense heat of the weather, there has been very little thunder and lightning during the summer; but the lightning when it has acted, has appeared in torrents. To what is this owing? Is it that the diminution of electricity during the summer, has arisen from the diminution of the snow during the last winter?

But our crops of Indian corn are exposed to the greatest injury from this drought. It is now in that state, when it most particularly requires light and frequent showers. The tassel becomes parched and withered up; and the farina is impeded in its growth. Should the rain be suspended for several days longer, it is impossible to estimate the destruction which will fall upon our crops. Some have calculated the loss at a fifth, a fourth, and some even at one half. But these calculations are most probably exaggerated.

### ON MARRIAGE.

EVERY man who marries ought to have three views, viz.—To live quietly and happily in the matrimonial state; firmly to establish his house according to his situation in life; and to give some gratification to his senses. The pleasure of a peaceable life ought to outweigh all the others, and the establishment of his fortune ought to be preferred before views of sensual pleasure. The temper and virtue of a wife give the first; riches the second; and agreeableness of person the last. But by a misfortune, or rather a strange blindness, most people reverse this order of things, and prefer pleasure and fortune to the happiness of life; and from thence proceed so many unhappy families among those who have only views of pleasure or interest; for pleasure glides away and extinguishes itself, either by profession which allays the desire, or by age, which destroys personal charms; and often riches take themselves wings, and leave a man only an idol, strip of the gold which constitutes its value. But good sense and virtue always remain, and are not subject either to disgust or change.

It is common to hear both sexes repining at the change which their marriage produces, relate the happiness of their earlier years, blame the folly and rashness of their own choice, and warn those whom they see coming into the world, against the same precipitance and infatuation. But it is to be remembered

that the days they so much wish to call back are the days not only of celibacy, but youth; the days of novelty and improvement, of ardour and of hope, of health and vigour of body, of gaiety and lightness of heart. It is not easy to surround life with any circumstances in which youth will not be delightful, and whether married or unmarried, we shall find the vesture of terrestrial existence more heavy and cumbrous the longer it is worn.

From the Doylestown Correspondent.

### COMMUNICATION.

Extraordinary growth of Indian Corn.

IN the year 1804, the weather about the commencement of harvest, was intensely hot: one of the warmest of those days, there was an excessive fall of rain, in continued showers, with little or no intermission the whole afternoon, and on clearing away, the warmth had not abated; I placed a pole by a thrifty hill of corn in my field, flattened on one side for the purpose of seeing and stretching a single stalk to the extreme point, scored across, repeating this at sunrise for several days, and accurately measuring the spaces, I noted as follows: July the 9th, until July the 10th, 24 hours, 4 inches and 3/4ths of an inch: July the 10th, until July the 11th, 24 hours, 2 inches and 1/4 of an inch: July 11th, till the 12th, 24 hours, 2 inches and 3/4 of an inch: July 12th, till the 13th, 2 inches and 1/4 of an inch: July the 13th, till the 14th at sunrise, 24 hours, 2 inches and 3/4ths of an inch: July 15th, the corn shot out in tassel. July 9th, 1806. J. E.

From the Hudson Balance.

THE common, coarse, grey flint stone, is known by its coolness till late in the morning, to be very slow in yielding to the influence of heat; and by its temperature through the day, joined with its moisture in excessive dry and warm seasons, may be seen its properties of counteraction to heat. When I planted my cucumbers, and other vine seeds last spring, I covered the hills with small flint stones, until time for them to sprout, when I removed them till the plants were out of the ground, and then carefully replaced the stones. As the plants grew, I removed the stones and hoed the plants twice; they continued to flourish, blossom and grow till since the present drought. I was gone twelve days to New-York; on my return they shewed some small symptoms of decay; and as the drought continued very severe, (so that some few vines began to wilt,) I removed the dirt around those to the depth of two or three inches, and then on the moist earth laid larger stones of the same kind; filling the crevices between with fresh and moist earth.

I had the satisfaction immediately to see my plants revive, even within twenty hours, and they have not shewn any symptoms of want of sufficient moisture since; they grow, blossom, and bear exceedingly.

The bugs, worms and drought, have almost wholly destroyed the tenderest of our garden plants, excepting where the stones have been placed for their protection.

If people would consider that melons, cucumbers and squashes grow mostly in the night, because the intense heat of the day, in our climate, is oftentimes too great for their constitution; then they would see the necessity of counteracting the solar influences, and of changing in some degree the temperature of the air around such plants, from the scorching heat of day into the cooler and moister temperament of night air, and would learn the means.

I remain thy friend.

P. S. I meant to inform thee also, that some few plants, which I have tended otherwise equally well, having stonied, yielded long since to drought and vermin.

### HISTORICAL ANECDOTE.

A SPANISH soldier perceiving the palace in flames, and knowing the king's sister was in an apartment from which it was impossible for her to escape, generously resolved to attempt saving her life at the hazard of his own; and rushing through the flames for that purpose, bore her triumphantly away in his arms. By this brave and humane action the Spanish etiquette was totally destroyed, and the next day he was summoned before a bench of judges. The crime of breaking into the presence of a Princess was now fully and completely proved against him, and the reward of his valour was to be an ignominious death. The lady however in consideration of his services, condescendingly requested the sentence might be revoked, and the judges in compliance with her desire, generously forgave the atrocious crime.