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# Spirit of Jefferson--Supplement.

JULY,

CHARLESTOWN, VA.

1866.

**JOHN S. REESE & CO.**  
**GENERAL AGENTS,**  
**71 South Street,**  
**BALTIMORE.**



**FOR**  
**Soluble Pacific Guano**  
**IN THE**  
**SOUTHERN STATES.**

A. R. H. RANSON. J. ED. DUKE.  
**RANSON & DUKE,**  
 DEALERS IN  
 Agricultural Implements and  
 Machinery,  
 SEEDS AND FERTILIZERS,  
 AND  
 General Commission and  
 FORWARDING MERCHANTS,  
 Charlestown, Jefferson County,  
 WEST VIRGINIA.

**INTRODUCTION.**

The attention of farmers and planters is invited to this "Supplement," as containing matter in which they have a direct interest. This method of communication is adopted because it affords ample space to make known the grounds and principles upon which the matter treated rests. The subject of "concentrated fertilizers" is one of the greatest importance to our readers. Their annual consumption by farmers and planters involves the outlay of immense sums of money, and the amount of capital thus invested is becoming greater every year.

The subject is susceptible of very interesting and intelligent consideration, and its importance fully justifies the attention required to understand it.

The recent changes in the labor system of the country, must tend greatly to increase the consumption of concentrated fertilizers, for it is now the manifest policy of every farmer to realize the maximum product from every acre under cultivation, hence the importance of an intelligent consideration and understanding of the subject to which the attention of farmers is called in this paper, and we therefore ask a perusal of the articles here presented.

**The History of Soluble Pacific Guano in the Southern States, its introduction and Success.**

Soluble Pacific Guano was first brought to our knowledge in 1864. We had no interest in it, and knew nothing of its qualities or value. Not long after, we were tendered the agency for the company and the consignment of a small cargo was received and put in store. We still knew nothing of its value, and it lay in store. We could not recommend it, because, although its appearance was favorable, we could not judge from that any more than if it had been copper ore. After awhile, the company wrote us to have it inspected, when we advised Dr. Liebig to go to our warehouse and take samples from the packages and make an inspection, which he did. Upon receiving his report, we discovered that we had stored away the best cargo of guano that ever came to Baltimore, and that the price put on it was less, by far, than its actual value, compared with other fertilizers. We may be asked how we knew its value, as it had not been "tried." We reply that, from the inspection, we knew how much animal matter, how much ammonia, how much soluble phosphate, and how much bone phosphate of lime it contained; and knowing exactly how much of these substances are contained in Peruvian guano, and the various other fertilizers which had been fully tried, it was no matter of doubt as to its value, for we were just as certain that it could not fail, as we were certain that a tobacco plant could not grow from a grain of corn; in either case there would be a miracle.

After ten years of the study and prosecution of this business, we attach far more importance to proper inspection, as a means of ascertaining value, than a "trial" by one or twenty persons, for in the one case you have exact value, while in the other, it is only approximate.

Discovering the great value of the cargo of Pacific guano we had stored away, we at once called the attention of our customers to it, though the spring season was far advanced, and farmers were supplied. A number, however, procured small supplies.

We also apprised the Pacific Guano Company of the great importance to the country of their en-

**NOTICE.**—We call the especial attention of the reader to the following inspection reports of seven cargoes of Soluble Pacific Guano. The original manuscript reports, certifying that the samples were taken from the packages at the wharf by the inspectors, are at our office, where we shall be glad to exhibit them to dealers and consumers. We also publish an average analysis of Peruvian Guano, by which a comparison may be made. We would also publish the inspection of the various Super Phosphates, but those articles are not inspected; hence we can not publish what manufacturers and dealers withhold.

**INSPECTION REPORTS OF SEVEN CARGOES OF SOLUBLE PACIFIC GUANO.**

| NAMES OF CARGOES.             | Per-cent. Animal matter. | Per-cent. Ammonia yielded. | Per-cent. of Bone Phosphate Soluble. | Per-cent. Bone Phosphate of Lime. | By whom inspected. |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| Sch. Lacon.....               | 41.24                    | 3.40                       | 17.07                                | 24.32                             | Dr. Liebig.        |
| Sch. Paladium.....            | 39.71                    | 3.65                       | 15.75                                | 24.71                             | Dr. Liebig.        |
| Sch. Fly-away.....            | 35.11                    | 3.52                       | 12.90                                | 28.40                             | Dr. Liebig.        |
| Sch. Ira Lafronier.....       | 37.83                    | 3.41                       | 15.10                                | 24.51                             | Dr. Pigot.         |
| Sch. Clara W. Elwell.....     | 40.55                    | 3.63                       | 15.10                                | 23.75                             | Dr. Pigot.         |
| Sch. Mary E. Amman.....       | 38.94                    | 3.21                       | 14.79                                | 28.08                             | Dr. Pigot.         |
| Sch. Lucy A. Orcutt.....      | 36.05                    | 3.25                       | 14.80                                | 28.12                             | Dr. Pigot.         |
| Average of Seven Cargoes..... | 38.90                    | 3.47                       | 15.13                                | 26.46                             |                    |
| Peruvian Guano, (average.)    | 50 to 55                 | 12 to 15                   | 2 to 3                               | 23 to 25                          |                    |

J. S. R. & CO.

terprise, and made it a stipulated condition of our agency that every cargo of Pacific Guano consigned to us, must be rigidly inspected, as we could not consent to sell to our customers any fertilizer, without first positively knowing its value, and also having it within our power to show them its value also. The company cheerfully acquiesced in these conditions, regardless of the expense incurred thereby, which amounts to no insignificant sum.

Being thus fortified and protected ourselves, and being able thus also to give positive assurance as to results to our customers, we sold, the first fall of its introduction to this market, four cargoes of Pacific guano.

It had never been seen or "tried," yet many of the best farmers of this State and Virginia put in their entire crops with it alone. We commended it highly to our friends, with positive, absolute assurance. We could not afford to run the risk of selling an inferior article, yet, though this guano had never been "tried," we knew it could not fail, unless by a failure of the laws of nature, and they cannot fail.

Pacific guano was distributed throughout Maryland, parts of Delaware and Virginia. We venture to assert that none have been disappointed in its results; on the contrary, it has realized more than we said in its favor, which is no small gratification.

Having pursued this trade for many years, we have made a class of customers, who will use anything we recommend, and it is a source of no little satisfaction that it is now within our power to furnish them with a guano of such high excellence, at so moderate a cost, compared with Peruvian guano on the one hand, and Super Phosphates and fertilizers of other names on the other; and we may add, under our system of inspection, we at once protect our customers, ourselves and the Pacific Guano Company.

JOHN S. REESE & CO.

**PACIFIC GUANO VS. PERUVIAN GUANO.**

Those who have given attention to the composition of Peruvian guano, will notice, upon an examination of the Inspection Reports of Pacific Guano, that the character and composition of the two guanos are almost identical.

The difference exists simply in the relative proportions of precisely the same elements of fertility. Now the practical point of inquiry is, whether the proportions of the elements as found in Pacific Guano, constitute it a fertilizer of equal or greater value than Peruvian Guano; and this is a question of the very highest importance to the agricultural interests of the entire South.

It is important, first, because the price of Pacific Guano is \$30 to \$35 per ton less than the price of Peruvian, hence there would be a saving in money of \$1,750,000 in the purchase and use of 50,000 tons. It is important, secondly, because it would break up the monopoly of the Peruvian government, which has been most odious from the beginning. It is important, thirdly, because its use would give to the soil of the country nearly 100 per cent. more earthy phosphates than would a like quantity of Peruvian Guano, the benefits of which would endure to the next as well as the present generation.

In 200 lbs. Peruvian Guano there are 100 to 110 lbs. animal matter, 25 lbs. ammonia, and 50 to 55 lbs. phosphate of lime.

In 200 lbs. Pacific Guano there are 75 to 80 lbs. animal matter, 7 to 8 lbs. ammonia, and 80 to 90 lbs. Phosphate of Lime, 28 to 30 lbs. of which is in an immediately soluble form. Now how is the truth to be arrived at, as to whether the latter proportions of the elements will produce as good or better results than the former?

We say, in reply, that the truth of questions of this kind is arrived at in two ways:

First, Theoretically, by rational deductions from known and observed facts.

Secondly, By the disinterested testimony of competent persons, giving the results of practical experience. This sort of testimony must be accepted, for without it no truth could be established. In regard to the first method, we assert that certain facts, upon which nearly if not all consumers of Peruvian Guano agree, give rise to a rational inference that the proportions of its elements are defective. Among these facts are, that it produces an excessive vegetable growth, the product of grain rarely, if ever, being in proportion to straw; again, that cotton and tobacco grown from it suffer materially from drought or excessive rains; again, that its continued use tends to exhaustion of the soil. These facts we say, with others, give rise, upon reflection, to a rational inference that ammonia and Phosphate of Lime in Peruvian Guano, exist in defective proportions, and we are sure no intelligent man can fail to become satisfied upon full investigation, that the truth is that Peruvian Guano contains a large excess of animal matter and ammonia, and is largely deficient in Phosphate of Lime; and further, that this misproportion constitutes its material defect.

In regard to the second method of ascertaining the truth, we say that if a theoretical truth suggested by rational inference, is confirmed by the uniform, concurrent testimony of disinterested witnesses, as the result of practical experience, then no rational mind can resist the conclusion. It must be accepted as truth. Prejudices must give way. Now we assert that it is true, that Pacific Guano is a better fertilizer than Peruvian, that an equal application of lbs. per acre, produces in many instances better results at one-third less cost, and has never failed to produce equal results, and that the cause is found in the fact that its elements exist in better proportion.

In evidence of these assertions, we refer, first, to the reason of the matter as indicated above; secondly, to the correspondence from the following named gentlemen, farmers in Virginia and Maryland, whose testimony is direct. These gentlemen are well known in their respective regions, and some of them widely known. Their original letters may be seen at our office:

- B. W. Leigh Blanton, Cumberland Co., Va.;
- T. A. Ball, Prince William Co., Va.;
- Allison & Addison, Richmond, Va.;
- Jos. S. Lewis, Pittsylvania, Va.;
- Wm. B. Morton, Esq., Botetourt, Va.;
- Grasty & Rison, Danville, Va.;
- Thos. R. Joyner, Accomac, Va.;
- Wm. D. Reynolds & Bro., Norfolk, Va.;
- Harris & Spooner, Charlottesville, Va.;
- Dr. J. L. Adkins, Talbot Co., Md.;
- S. Ogle Tilghman, Queen Ann's Co., Md.;
- Edw. A. Richardson, Worcester Co., Md.;
- Isaac Conner, Worcester Co., Md.;
- John B. Timmons, Worcester Co., Md.;
- E. C. Wade & Co., Savannah, Ga.;
- J. R. & P. A. Dunn, Forrestville, N. C.

In view of the above it must be manifest to all, that whatever preconceived opinions may be, that it is the material interest of the farmers of Virginia and the South to at least satisfy themselves of the value and economy of this Guano by its use to greater or less extent.

JOHN S. REESE.

**CONTRAST.**

The vast importance of Pacific Guano to the agriculture of the country, compared with Peruvian Guano, will be clearly seen by the following contrast, and it is worthy of the careful attention of all consumers of guano.

Assuming 50,000 tons of Peruvian Guano are used in the United States per annum, the cost to the farmers of the country, at the present price, would be \$6,000,000, (six millions of dollars,) and would restore to the soil of the country 12,000 tons of earthy phosphate of lime. The same capital invested, in Pacific Guano would purchase at present prices, 92,307 tons, which would restore to the cultivated soil of the country 39,692 tons of precisely the same phosphate of Lime, which is 27,690 tons more than would be received from the Peruvian Guano; in fact there would be more soluble phosphate alone received from Pacific Guano, by 1,000 tons, than would be received altogether from the Peruvian. Are not these important facts for farmers to consider? The truth is, the farmers and planters of the South have been, and are wasting money for ammonia in Peruvian Guano, and depreciating their soils by restoring less phosphoric acid than is removed by their crops,

which system must terminate in exhaustion. The phosphate of lime contained in an ordinary application of Peruvian Guano, is totally inadequate, while the ammonia contained in the same application is far more than is either desirable or necessary.

JOHN S. REESE.

**The Guano and Fertilizer Trade. Its character and importance. How it should be conducted.**

Considering its extent and importance, we presume there is no trade less understood by those interested as purchasers, than the trade in fertilizers. Farmers generally do not give attention to the composition of the fertilizers they buy, or consider what constitutes their value. That they should do so, is manifest upon the least reflection.

All articles of merchandise may be divided into two general classes. The first class embraces all those articles of trade, the value of which can be determined by observation and handling. As all men are possessed alike of the faculty of sight and the other senses, the ability of all to judge of the value of merchandise of this class is varied only by experience or practice. All men, for example, having experience, can judge of the quality of grain, provisions, groceries, drygoods, &c., and are hence competent to protect themselves in their purchase of merchandise of this kind.

The second class of merchandise referred to, embraces all articles of trade and commerce in which the value is hidden, and consequently, in the nature of things, cannot be judged of or determined by the evidences of the senses. Their value cannot be seen, tasted or felt; hence no man can judge of their quality as in the case of merchandise of the first class named.

Fertilizers, metallic ores, such as copper, lead, &c., belong to this second class of articles of trade and commerce, and their value can be determined only by men whose especial education enables them to discover the proportion of value by inspection. It is a well known fact that one copper ore is worth more money per ton than another, because it contains a larger per cent. of copper. It is the quantity of copper contained in the ore which constitutes the actual value. Now that cannot be determined by observation or handling, hence the dealers in copper ore, and other merchandise of this class, must furnish the buyers with the evidence of what amount of metal there is contained in the article for which he is required to pay a given price, and that can only be done by inspection, and it is true that in the sale of all merchandise of this class, except fertilizers, the buyer is furnished with authentic reports of inspection, and the consequence is the buyers of copper ore always get what they pay for. But the dealers in fertilizers do not furnish inspection reports of what they sell, and the consequence is, persons have no assurance of the value of what they buy, and not unfrequently lose both money and crops, as many can testify.

Now, the elements or substances which constitute the value of all fertilizers, are precisely the same, and what they are is well known, and how much of them is contained in any fertilizer can be easily ascertained with absolute certainty, so that there is no reason under the sun why farmers should not be furnished with the knowledge of what they receive in value, when they buy a fertilizer, the same as the buyer of copper or other ores.

Everybody knows, that animal matter, ammonia, soluble phosphate and bone phosphate of lime, are the only substances in Peruvian and other guano, and fertilizers of whatever name, which gives them their value, and one is better than another just exactly in proportion as they contain more or less of these things in proper proportion and condition. This is a matter of common sense; there is nothing mysterious or complicated about it; and all it wants is a little attention and reflection, on the part of farmers, to place them in a position in which they cannot be deceived. We have been and are surprised that intelligent farmers will come to our cities and invest large sums of money in fertilizers, without the least knowledge of what they get as to value, except perhaps that they had bought something of the same name before, which turned out well. Whether it is worth the price asked, they cannot tell. Whether they could buy more of the substances for the same or less money in an article of some other name, they do not know. Is not this grasping in the dark, when light is highly important and easily had? Surely it is time for farmers to give attention to this matter.

In England, fertilizers are sold, as copper ore is sold, under inspection.

Farmers can establish the same rule and custom in this market, if they will refuse to buy from dealers who do not furnish reliable inspection reports of what they sell. These reports must be authentic; the dealer must be able to exhibit to his customers the original written report of the chemist, certifying that the samples were taken by himself from the bags or bbls. which are delivered to customers. This is the only way in which this business can be done for the protection, both of consumers and the legitimate trade.

Surely the extent and importance of the trade demand that the same protection should be extended to farmers that is given to the buyers of ores and other merchandise of the same general class.

JOHN S. REESE.

