

wheat or of potatoes, with very little additional expense of time or trouble. And as to the cultivation of the tropical fruits, scarcely any labour is required for that purpose: so that to the less hardy natives of those climates the assertion of the poet is strictly applicable,

“ Fundit humi facilem victum justissima tellus.”

A further analogy is observable in the degree of fertility of the respective vegetables and animals. Among the animals which are destined for the food of man, the species are upon the whole prolific in proportion as they are either small in size, or inferior as to the nutritive quality of their flesh. The cow, which is a large animal, produces one usually at a birth; the sheep very commonly two; swine, several. Poultry, which are comparatively small, are capable of rearing a numerous brood; and fish, which are of a less nutritious nature, and generally smaller than quadrupeds, are still more prolific. And, similarly, in the vegetable species which are destined for the food of man, the numerical quantity of the product in a given area is greater or less, in proportion to the individual size of the fruit produced. Dates, which are smaller than cocoa-nuts, are produced in greater number than the latter; and in a square yard of soil, a much greater number of grains of rice or wheat is produced than of roots of the potato.