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The Canada Farmer.

TORONTO, CANADA, APRIL 15, 1873.

The Pea Weevil.

J. W., writes us from Moore, on the subject of this pest. He says:

"For several years the *pea weevil* (Bruchus Pisi) has been exceedingly destructive to the pea crop in this section of country. So much have early sown crops been injured lately, that were it not that peas leave the ground in such fine condition for wheat, many would discontinue the cultivation of the pea crop altogether. Your excellent journal contains articles and discussions on almost every subject bearing on agriculture and horticulture, might I therefore take the liberty of enquiring if yourself, or any of the numerous readers of the Canada Farmer, know of any remedy that would tend to lessen the ravages of these pea devourers as their name signifies, or any variety of pea that will resist their attacks? Varieties of midged proof wheat were discovered, are there any *weevil proof peas* known, and if so where are they to be had? Three years ago, there was a mixture of gray or brown peas amongst mine, and scarcely a gray pea was injured, whilst nearly every white pea contained a beetle. Has this been the experience of any of my brother farmers? It may be they are like colorado beetles that prefer certain varieties of potatoes, but should these fail they take such supplies as nature furnishes, and eat all before them. Late sowing is the only remedy adopted, as the period of laying their eggs seems limited to a certain season. When late sown, however, drought, and mildew, frequently prove injurious to the crop."

Note by Ed.—We have observed in the "Crop return for 1872", contained in the report of the Commissioner of Agriculture, that the pea weevil has been very destructive indeed in the western divisions of this province, in some localities the average yield has been reduced to 15 bushels per acre in consequence of the ravages of this creature.

We have frequently noticed the comparative immunity of the wrinkled dark colored varieties of peas from injury by this insect; the immunity however, is by no means absolute, as we have sometimes seen a garden crop of large blue "marrow fats" totally destroyed by the weevil. The sowing of a patch of "Daniel O'Rourke's" or other common white variety, alongside of a larger quantity of dark peas, would be an experiment worth trying; probably, if there is anything at all in this idea of preference, the insects' attacks would be confined to the former, and the latter would be saved.

The great point is to get good seed free from any traces of the weevil. This may be done in some seasons by growing a very early crop, and then sowing the seed thus obtained for a later crop, which is to furnish the seed for the next year. The later crop thus produced will be free from the attacks of the weevil. Of course in a very dry season this is not practicable.

Another method is to immerse the seed peas first before sowing for *one minute only* in boiling water; this will kill the beetle and not destroy the vitality of the seed. *Four minutes* immersion would be sufficient to cook the germ of the pea, and prevent its growth; great care must therefore be taken in the employment of this method. The seed infested with these insects should be kept in tight boxes or bottles to prevent the escape of the weevil in the spring; indeed it would be a wise precaution to grind up all infested peas that are to be used only for feed, and thus effectually destroy the insect.

Farmers in the western districts of the province would confer a public benefit by trying careful experiments during the coming season with different varieties of peas, and different times of sowing, and letting us hear the results for publication. An experiment conducted in one locality only is not always to be relied upon, as other circumstances may interfere to make it a success or the reverse, and not be detected by the observer. It is only by numerous observations extending over considerable areas that we can arrive at any rule or law in these matters.

Cabbage Pests.

"Would you please inform me through the Canada Farmer how to get rid of the cabbage pests?"—*D. R. S., Picton, N. S.*

Note by Editor C. F.—Cut a sheet of rather stiff paper—an old newspaper doubled will answer very well—into strips seven or eight inches long by about four wide. Join the ends of each strip in such a manner that the article may assume the form of a common lamp-shade or funnel; place one of these, inverted, that is, small end down, around each plant, sinking it in the soil to a depth of about two inches, leaving the upper portion to form a rampart against the attacks of enemies above ground. Experience has proved that after a few unsuccessful attempts at "scaling," the disappointed assailants will "raise the siege" in disgust. Unleached ashes sprinkled on the plant in the morning before the dew has disappeared has effectually destroyed the leaf worm. To destroy maggots at the root of the plant, dissolve rather less than half an one of corrosive sublimate in a pailful of soft-water, and apply at the rate of half a pint or so to each plant, stirring the ground if necessary, to let the application find its way to the roots. Simple as the above remedies may appear, we are assured by a correspondent that he has used them with complete success, after every other means has failed. The only objection to the use of the corrosive sublimate is the fact that it is a *deadly poison*, and must be handled with great caution. We think that a weak solution of sulphate of iron (copperas) in water, say one ounce to the gallon, and applied in the same manner should answer the purpose quite as well. Try it and let us know the result.

The "green worm," to which our correspondent referred in his note, is no doubt the larvæ of the English Cabbage Butterfly (*Pieris rapæ*); it may be kept in check by sprinkling ashes and salt liberally over the affected plant.

We know no better remedy for the little turnip flea-beetle (*Haltica nemorum*), than that employed by our correspondent, viz.: knocking the insects off into a pan of hot water; it is troublesome but very effective.

The Best Green Crop.

A correspondent at Drummondville writes us to know if lucerne, sainfoin, or vetches can be safely cultivated in Canada to resist the frost of winter and also on other points. In reply we have to say that neither of these crops will answer for spring feed. Lucerne has yet to be tested in Canada on such a scale as to determine, beyond doubt, its value as a crop here, and its power to resist severe frost. The same may be said of sainfoin and winter vetches. Spring Vetches alone, or with oats, or with oats and peas, are admirable summer feed and give a large yield. There is a Canadian or wild vetch, very similar to a wild pea that grows on the prairies in the west; we have no doubt this plant would prove valuable. We have a few stalks of this variety that come every year in our garden, and they appear hardy and prolific. The best mode of treating new land, full of stumps, that cannot be ploughed, is to sow swedish turnips in June, dragging the land well first, passing the harrow in all directions then sowing the seed—about one pound to an acre—and bush-harrowing it well in, passing the bush over the land three ways so as to catch all the land that would be missed on account of the stumps if less often bush-harrowed. Chicory can be procured at any seedstore, and the plant does well in Canada. Vast quantities are grown in many sections as a substitute and addition to coffee, the price is usually about $50 to $70 a ton of dried cut roots. There is, however, a great deal of labor attending its cultivation, and when once the roots get into a piece of land that suits them, they will endure more or less for years; any small piece will grow. They are very similar to the common dandelion, both botanically and practically; but, of course, are much larger, as a field crop they afford no foliage for food, that will pay to grow, and the winter will not kill the root.

Soda-Ash for Wire-Worms.

G. M., Meadowvale, writes to know whether soda-ash is a good remedy for wire-worms. We have no opportunity of practically testing the fact, as to whether soda-ash applied to green crops will prove efficient as a destroyer of wire-worms. As there is no fertilizing effect likely to be produced—outside any benefit derived by the crops from the destruction of these pests—we should consider the remedy an expensive one. We have known the refuse of soap factories applied, and as these consist of lime, and soda, with some animal matter, it would appear to be likely to be valuable, but although the application and experiment referred to, cost nothing but the hauling the refuse away, which was applied in large quantities, we believe the application was a failure, as it was never repeated. Salt and lime will be more likely to be efficient, but that must be applied at this season, or during the coming spring, as all practical tests go to prove, that the benefits derived from this mixture, are comparatively inert, unless these substances are thoroughly amalgamated, and decomposed to a certain extent, by remaining in contact for at least three months. Opinions differ greatly as to the principle on which this compost acts, and why three month's amalgamation is requisite, before applying, but the facts are as stated.

Prolific Cows.

The maternal ancestor, "Old Noggy," 28 calves in 15 years, viz.: 6 single, 8 double, and two treble. One of her heifers, "Venus," dropped 14 calves in 7 years, viz., 3 single, 4 double, and one treble. "Vesta," the twin sister of "Venus," had twins to begin with—all of which is not bad for the down trodden cows of old England, and it ought to settle the question, heretofore a matter of discussion, and a source of inquietude, "are twin cows barren?"—*Mark Lane Express.*

Our English contemporary is in error, in supposing the notion to prevail that "twin heifers are barren." We have seen it stated that twins, when one is a heifer and the other a bull, the heifer will not breed or in other words is "barren." This is not always true, for "Brighteyes," bred by Mason, in England, dropped 6 calves, though her mate was a bull. "Chilton," (136), bred also by Mason was twin brother of "Brighteyes." The female twin of a bull has been called a freemartin, a hermaphrodite according to the technological nomenclature.—*Boston Cultivator.*