

Farmers' Clubs.

We give the following a welcome space in our columns. It has been kindly forwarded to us by the Secretary of the Society. We think it but right to inform our readers that this Hamilton Club does not belong to the city of Hamilton, but to a township in the County of Northumberland, over a hundred miles from the city. We think some of our cities, or farmers near the cities, might be taught a lesson by their distant friends. These Clubs are the very foundation of agricultural prosperity. It is our impression that some leading men in Canada will be impressed with this idea, and Farmers' Clubs will be established in each township. We are well aware there are great difficulties in the way: it requires time, patience and money to get one established; and oh! how tardy and penurious are some of our wealthy farmers! No appeal will affect them. Money has been heaped upon them more from luck than from management; but many would never expend one cent for any public purpose unless compelled to do so by the strict arm of the law. Those willing, laborious gentlemen who devote their time and abilities to aid the establishment or maintaining a Farmers' Club should be substantially encouraged. Their work increases the value of the poor-spirited miser's property, and he should be compelled to dole out an unwilling dollar to aid such. Township Councils might most profitably encourage such. There is not at this present time one farmer in one thousand that knows the name, or nature, or adaptability of one quarter of the commonest cereals or roots that are even raised in Canada, no, not either of wheat, peas, barley, oats, or potatoes.

These Societies teach us; they cause us to seek for knowledge; it is only the best who will venture to impart knowledge; many a stinging old cadger will even have the barefaced audacity to desire to ridicule the attempt of some poor, younger, more enterprising man than himself for doing his best to give information. We hope this will hit some; but they do not belong to the subscribers of the ADVOCATE, as that class do not take agricultural papers. Some of you may profit by these remarks; those are the persons for whom we write—namely, the Public. The class we speak of have never had spirit or enterprise enough to take an agricultural paper of any kind; they know more than the united knowledge of the country.

The Secretary will accept our thanks for his kindness. There are two other Societies in Canada—probably more—perhaps they will keep us posted. We wish you every success, and shall be pleased to hear of your progress and see accounts of your discussions.

TOWNSHIP OF HAMILTON FARMERS' CLUB.

A meeting of the above Club was held at Mrs. Wood's Hotel, on the 15th ult.—Mr. Edward Bellerby in the chair. Present—Messrs. McDonald, Bourn, Bellerby, Aitchison, Pratt, Young, Sibley, Burnham, McCallie and others.

Mr. Sibley introduced the subject for discussion, viz., "Barley, and its Cultivation," with the following remarks:—Gentlemen, I feel sorry that you have chosen me to bring before you the subject selected for discussion to-day, "Barley, and its Cultivation," knowing that there are some more competent, by longer experience, and better qualified to treat this subject than I am. But, considering the benefit that may be derived from the proper discussion of any subject pertaining to farming (and for which this Club was organized), I will endeavor to do what little I can to contribute to our mutual prosperity. In looking at this subject, I see it is divided into two parts, "Barley, and its Cultivation." About the first account or mention we have of barley dates as far back as the time of the Exodus, when we read of the barley being smitten in Egypt, and we read of Ruth that she came to Bethlehem at the "beginning of barley harvest," and no doubt it is indigenous to that eastern country. How it found its way to Britain I cannot say, but it has long been cultivated there to a great extent. And for the last ten or twelve years, the extent of ground over which barley has been sown in

Canada (especially in the Province of Ontario) has so increased that it has become one of our staple crops; the six-rowed being the principal variety cultivated in this country. In regard to the different varieties of barley, Professor Law divides the cultivated barley into two distinctions—the two-rowed and six-rowed. Lawson describes twenty varieties while the museum of the Highland Agricultural Society contains specimens of thirty or more. The classification of barley by the ear is of three kinds—the four-rowed, termed in Britain Bere or Bigg, the six-rowed, and two-rowed. Of these, the Bere or Bigg was that which was mostly cultivated about a century ago, but more recently the two-rowed has almost entirely supplanted it, and is now the most commonly cultivated barley in Britain, the six-rowed being rather an object of curiosity than culture. In classifying barley by the grain, there are only two kinds, Bere or Bigg, and barley. In the Bere, the medium line of the bosom is so traced as to give the grain a twisted form, one of its sides appearing larger than the other. In the barley the line passes straight, and divides the grain into two equal sides, whose shortness and plumpness give it a character of superiority. The Bigg has long been recognised in Scotland, and a two-rowed variety under the name of common or Scotch barley was for a long time cultivated; but several of the English varieties have been naturalized, and show a brighter and fairer color, plumper and shorter grain, mat's much quicker, but is less hardy and prolific than the common barley. The great bulk of barley is used for malting purposes, and is excellent food (when chopped) for fattening cattle and pigs, and also for horses when boiled, and more economical (considering the present prices of peas or oats.) Its fattening properties are ten per cent. more than that of peas, equal weight, while its nutritive properties are the same. In speaking of the cultivation of barley, I would say, in the first place, that a loam soil is the most suitable for its production. Although barley is not so hard on the soil as some of the cereals yet it requires a clean, rich soil, and land that has been made fit for a turnip or other hoe crop will give a greater yield than when sown after any other cereal. It does not require a deep seed bed, but it must be thoroughly pulverised, or you need not expect a large return. In preparing the soil for barley (if sown after a hoe crop), the ground should be ploughed once in the fall, so as to have the benefit of the winter's frost; it should be ploughed in ridges the proper width for sowing; if sown on wheat or oat stubble, plough as soon after harvest as possible, and harrow after to kill all weeds. If not rich enough, put on a good coat of manure just previous to ploughing again, before frost sets in. In spring, when the land is in a fit state for working, and just before sowing, the ground should be gone over with the cultivator, crossing the furrows, and single time with the harrows after, in order to give a loose and even seed bed. If clay soil the gang plough would be better than the cultivator. As to the proper time for sowing, much will depend on the season; if spring opens early, and continues fine, without frost, it might be sown in the last week of April, but generally I would not sow until the 5th or 10th of May, or even later, as the young brard is very tender, and when early sown is very apt to get nipped with frost, and be the cause of reducing the increase of the crop. There is much difference of opinion as to the quantity to be sown per acre. If sown early, less seed will be required than when sown late, two bushels per acre being sufficient at any time, but I would rather sow 14 than 2. A judicious selection of seed is an essential point to insure a good crop. We cannot be too particular on this point. If we would clean grain intended for seed, as we do that for exhibitions, we would not only have a better quality, but an increased yield. If the seed bed has been prepared as I have stated, a single time of the harrows each way will be all that is required to cover the seed before rolling. If grass seeds are to be sown, the ground should be rolled immediately after sowing, but if clay soil, the seeds should be harrowed in with light harrows, and the rolling left till the brard is well through the ground. I might say that I have found, from three to four years' experience, that from 100 lbs. to 150 lbs. of salt sown to the acre will have the effect of stiffening the straw, and is of great benefit where barley is sown on rich clay soil. Gentlemen, having given you my knowledge about barley, and my small experience in regard to its cultivation, it is now open for your discussion.

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Mr. A. McDonald said that he thought he could not add much to Mr. Sibley's address,

as that gentleman had touched on most of the subjects connected with barley that he could think of. He thought the six-rowed variety was most suitable for us, chiefly on account of our market—the Americans liked it best. He thought the two-rowed barley yielded best, especially on clay soils, but that the six-rowed ripened earlier, and was not so easily discolored if we happened to have showery weather during harvest; that a dry, heavy soil was best for barley, as it was easily hurt with wet; that he thought it did best either after a summer fallow or a root crop that had been well manured, with the ground well ridged up in the fall, in ridges say from 15 to 18 feet wide, then in the spring cultivating across the ridges, two or three days before sowing. He would not sow too early, as barley was a tender plant, and was apt to be hurt with frost if sown early. He had found a great advantage in dressing the ground for barley, by drawing out short well-rotted manure even during winter or early spring, and spreading it over the ground, the cultivator mixing it with the top soil; he had found it beneficial to apply plaster to barley it came up (especially if the season was dry) at the rate of 100 lbs. to 150 lbs. to the acre. He thought salt would be an advantage; he had not tried it as yet, but intended to try four or five hundred weight of salt to the acre on his barley this year. Barley was sown too early on a clay soil; if the ground was lumpy it was apt never to come up through the ground at all. One year he sowed his barley, the next day a heavy rain came on, and one-half of the barley never got through the ground, it was baked so hard. He thought the ground ought to be well prepared before sowing barley, made mellow on the top, not too deep, as barley drew its nourishment from near the surface; he thought that to apply about 150 lbs. of superphosphate of lime along with the barley, harrowing all in together would be a great advantage. He had seen bone dust applied at the rate of six bushels per acre on part of a field of barley. That part yielded ten bushels an acre more than the rest of the field where no dust was applied.

Mr. Bourn said he had no experience with barley; he had only grown one crop, and found it did not answer on his light soil; he thought it did best either after fallow or else after a root crop; he would prefer it after a root crop on a fertile soil; he thought the land required to be made very fine for barley, more so than for wheat; he thought spring wheat would do well on ground that was too rough for barley; he saw that barley did not do well on light, sandy land; it would dry up and come to nothing.

Mr. Francis Aitchison said that of all the cultivated grains there is, perhaps, none which comes to perfection in such a variety of climates as barley. It is found in most parts of the habitable globe, and maintained itself in spite alike of tropical heat and drought, and the cold of regions bordering on the frigid zone. Linnaeus found it growing in Lulea, Lapland, in latitude 67°; in genial climates, such as Egypt, Barbary and the south of Spain, two crops of barley may be reaped the same year, one in spring from seed sown the previous autumn, and one in autumn from a spring sowing. This explains a passage in the Bible (Exod. ix. 31), where the effect of the hail which desolated Egypt in consequence of Pharaoh's refusal to let the children of Israel depart is thus described:—"The flax and the barley were smitten, for the barley was in the ear and the flax was balled, but the wheat and the rye were not smitten, for they were not grown up." It is agreed among commentators that the event thus narrated took place in the month of March; the first crop of barley was therefore nearly ripe and the flax ready to pull, but the wheat and rye sown in spring were not yet sufficiently advanced in growth to be hurt by the hail. Barley grows best on light, fertile soil, well cultivated and free from weeds, which are more injurious to it than to any other grain; it should, therefore, follow a hoe crop, if possible. Root crops require a well-pulverized soil, and so does barley. In Scotland, it is almost always sown after turnips, which have been either fed off by sheep or drawn to winter quarters for cattle food. This grain does well on heavy soils, provided they are worked and stirred until a proper tilth is secured; but this, of course, increases labour just at the busiest season of the year. But it should always be borne in mind that it is very poor policy to sow barley on land not properly pulverized. Barley grows and ripens with astonishing rapidity; nevertheless, it should be got in as early as the state of the ground will admit, and should be harvested before it is quite ripe, as it quickly injures if allowed to stand

too long. When harvested early, the grain is of superior quality and less liable to shell out and be wasted. The grain of barley very much resembles that of wheat in its composition, but it contains less gluten and more starch and sugar, as the result of which it is less nutritious, though equally wholesome. Barley is quite as exhaustive a crop as wheat, if not, indeed, more so; it is, therefore, a mistake to suppose that soil need not be in as good a condition for it as for wheat. Barley will do well in a shallower soil than wheat, because it sends its root very much along the surface and not to a great depth.

Mr. Pratt said he thought he could add but little to what had been already said, as those who had spoken had pretty well exhausted the subject. He would prefer the two-rowed to the six-rowed barley, if it were not for our market: the Americans were our chief buyers, and they preferred the six-rowed barley, and we must grow what suited them, though in the front of our township we could grow five or six bushels an acre more of the two-rowed than of the six-rowed; but it was sometimes difficult to dispose of it. With him, if barley was sown after roots, it grew too strong and lodged badly, and was not a good sample. He always manured his root ground very highly, and had sometimes sown an acre or so of his ground thus with the hopes of having a good crop and a fine sample, but was disappointed; it always grew too strong. He generally sowed his root land with wheat then ploughed his wheat stubble in the fall and cultivated, and sowed with barley in the spring. In this way he had good crops of barley, and a good sample. If he was going to manure land for barley, he would do it in the fall before ploughing; it would then get well mixed with the soil when it had the necessary ploughings, harrowing, and cultivating. When sowing two-rowed barley he used from a bushel and a peck to 14 bushels of seed to the acre; of six-rowed he used about two bushels of seed to the acre. He had never tried salt on his barley, but thought he would this year, as he heard that salt helped to stiffen the straw of barley.

Mr. Young said in his experience with barley, he greatly preferred the two-rowed variety, as it did for the best with him, and he had found no difficulty in selling it and getting the highest price going for barley. On one occasion in the same field, he sowed both the kinds of barley, and he got from 8 to 10 bushels an acre more from the two-rowed than from the other kind. Though the two-rowed did best on clay soil. With him if sown after roots, it lay down and lodged badly. He thought that about the 24th of April was the best time to sow barley. If he manured land for barley he would either manure it in the fall before ploughing or else on the top altogether. He ploughed his land for barley in the fall, and then cultivated it in the spring.

Mr. Bellerby said so much had been already said that as far as he was concerned he would be brief in stating his experience in the cultivation of barley. His idea was to plough his land well in the fall, and give it a good coating of manure if he had it and the land required it. He then gave it a light ploughing say three inches deep or so, the spring ploughing into broad lands across the fall ploughing; he then cultivated it, especially if there had been rain after the cross ploughing, this making the land fine and level. No matter how fine the weather might be, he never calculated to sow barley before the 8th of May, and when the weather was not favorable he was sometimes as late as the 15th to the 20th of May. He had never been troubled with spring frosts; if barley gets any check it is very detrimental to the crop. It very seldom recovered a severe check, though sometimes it did.

A vote of thanks was given to Mr. Sibley, for the very able practical manner in which he had introduced the subject.

The next meeting of the Club was appointed to be held at Mr. Bevan's Hotel, Cobourg on Saturday, the 13th of April, at 2 o'clock p. m.,—the subject for discussion to be the cultivation of Turnips, Carrots, and Mangold Wurtzels.

Mr. John Pratt to introduce the subject.

ITALIAN BEES IN UTAH.—A Utah correspondent writes that there were a number of Italian bees imported into that Territory last spring, and that they have thus far proved a decided success in many instances, one hive producing four to six swarms, and 100 pounds of honey and upward. There is also a lively interest noted in relation to the importation of improved breeds of horses, cattle, sheep and swine.