

## AN AGRICULTURAL EXCURSION TO THE FARMS OF MR. DAVIS AND MR. MECHI.

### REPORT OF THE FARM OF MR. DAVIS.

The deputation joined Mr. Davis in Spring Park Farm, on the morning of the 17th July, who evinced the most courteous attention—inviting and answering every inquiry.

For the use of those members who may not recollect the particulars of Mr. Davis's rotation and general system, it is here repeated from the report of the deputation who visited his farms last year:—

1st year...Rye and tares, for green meat and feeding off with sheep, in April, May, June, and July; and followed by

" Mangel-wurzel...

" Swedes.....

" Cabbages.....

" Turnips.....

With a liberal dressing of

farm-yard dung.

2nd year...Oats or barley, sown with clover.

3rd year...Clover twice mown for hay.

4th year...Beans or peas... The beans have turnips drilled between the rows, and which came into feed in September and October.

5th year...Wheat.

The quantities and periods at which he sows, are the following:—

Rye ..... $\frac{1}{2}$  bushels ...In August and September.

Tares ..... $\frac{1}{4}$  " ..... In three sowings, in August

Mangel-wurzel 6lb..... In April.

Swedes.....1 quart ....In May,

Turnips .....1 " .....In July,

Cabbages.....1 every 3 feet in June.

Oats.....7 pecks.... { In January, February, and March.

Barley.....6 " ..... { In January, February,

Wheat.....3 " ..... { March and April.

Peas.....8 " ..... { In September, and October.

Beans .....8 " ..... { In December, January, and February.

In September and October.

Mr. Davis's rye and tares for green-feeding are sown in rows at nine inches apart, all his white crops at twelve inches, his pulse at twenty-seven inches, as are also his root-crops and cabbages on the ridge.

The principles on which Mr. Davis professes to farm, are the following:—

1. Never to be contented until all your land has been well trenched and turned over by the plough a foot in depth, nor until,

1. The wet land be made dry by deep draining; and consider no land effectually drained unless the drains be four feet in depth; that is to say unless the water level be so far below the surface that corn shall have at least a foot of dry earth to root in, unaffected by capillary attraction of moisture from below, and the chill that water nearer to the surface causes; this can be done only by having the drains four feet from the surface, and within forty feet of each other.

3. For sowing of spring corn consider the season commences with the new year, and having no other fear than that of being too late. When the ground is dry enough, and fine enough, the sooner it is in the better; it will yield more, and the liability to blight, or to be beaten down, will be less.

4. In sowing drill or dibble all, and have the rows not higher than a foot between them; so as to admit of hoeing either by horse or hand, and handweeding at late periods.

5. Hoe and weed well all corn; let not a weed in flower be seen amongst it; ever recollecting that weeds

occupy space, and consume nutriment, displacing corn and robbing the land.

6. Never sow two crops of one genus in succession; legumes or pulse may follow cereal grain, and cereal grain may follow legumes or pulse; but never cereal after cereal, nor pulse after pulse. Recollect rye-grass is a cereal plant, and unsuits the land for white straw corn.

7. In apportioning the amount of seed per acre, do not lose sight of the bad consequences that must ensue if too much be sown. Bear in mind, if so much be sown as to produce more plants at first than the space will afterwards allow to attain maturity, the latter growth of the whole will be impeded, and a diseased stage will commence as soon as the plants cover the ground, and remain till harvest.

8. Manure should be applied only to green or cattle crops, and never to corn; by giving it to the former, the earth derives the advantage of the extra dressing that the extra growth returns; but when applied to corn, the earth is so much more exhausted by the extra growth of straw, and frequently, too, the grain is thereby positively injured by being beat down and blighted in the straw, that it always is made more hazardous by dressing.

9. Were farmers to buy all their manures, they would find that the cost of maintaining their land, in fair heart would be about £1 per acre, per annum. This quantity of dressing, every farm, in fair productive cultivation, would supply of itself, if a proper use and economy be made of its material to form manure, and a due care taken of it afterwards; but from misapplication and waste of the straw and from negligence in the preservation of the dung and urine, at least half is lost, and the arable land of England may thus be said to be prejudiced to at least 10s per acre.

10. Were no other injury done to the crops by trees and edges in small inclosures than that which arises from their mischievous shade and shelter, it would be equivalent to the ordinary rent of such fields; but the farmer sustains a further loss in the additional time occupied in its tillage by the more frequent stoppages and turns they cause, and by the encouragement to idleness in the men their cover affords. I believe arable fields with large hedges and hedgerow timber round them, whose dimensions are under eight acres, are seldom or ever worth a farmer's cultivations, and large districts of enclosed land of far better quality, ruinous to the occupiers; and I have not a doubt that to the difference in the size of the fields this may be principally, if not entirely traced.

The deputation visited every field on the farm, and give the following description of what they saw, in a different order from the course over which they passed so that other persons visiting the farm may more easily find, and indemnify the respective field visited.

The following is the history of Spring Park Farm as derived from Mr. Davis by the deputation:—

Spring Park Farm, when first tenanted by Mr. Davis, had been seven months out of cultivation, and from 1808 to 1833 had always been in the hands of wealthy overseers; the late Mr. John Smith was fond of telling that, when he bought Spring Park, then comprising about 600 acres, he found a tenant on it whose rent was £66 per annum; that after two years the tenant failed, and he lost his rent. From that time to 1833 it was never let. Since Mr. Davis has rented it, he has drained nearly the whole four feet deep; he has also trenched it fifteen inches deep, taking out many hundred loads of conglomerate gravel that were broken up by a plough made on purpose. The result of this is that he grows at least three times as