

Experience with the White Willow.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER :

Sir,—Your paper of Sep. 15, page 275, contains a communication from Levi Smith to the *American Agriculturist* respecting the white willow for live fences, which appears to agree with what I have growing on my place, which I planted the beginning of June 1864, and some of which now measure over eight inches in circumference. Mark, this is what has grown from the cuttings, which were planted even with the surface of the land. I procured and planted the white willow in the first place in order to test it, to see if it was what it was cracked up to be. From the growth made by the cuttings planted by me I am fully satisfied that with proper management they will answer the purpose for a fence. I am so well convinced of this, that I have set out a fence this summer. But I work on a different plan from what the Yankees recommend. They are for selling as many cuttings as possible—I am for the real use and improvement of the country in appearance. There is a marked contrast between Canada and many parts of the States of New York and Vermont. We in Canada have no shade trees on our road sides or next to none. In many parts of the States of New York and Vermont they have beautiful shade trees on the sides of the roads and in their cities and villages, which serve a twofold purpose, both beautifying the country and making a very agreeable shade for man and beast on hot and sultry days. There is no tree that I am acquainted with that will answer the two purposes of shade and fencing and will grow up so quickly as the white willow. Many of our farmers appear to think that anything they may use in the tree or shrub line, after they have once set it out, ought to grow just as they should wish it to do, so as not to give them any trouble in attending to it. In my view there would be just as much reason in going into the woods and after selecting a tree for a rail fence to expect it to fall into logs and split into rails ready for a fence, as to expect the other. I know of one man who pulled up and threw into the road some white willows because they did not grow as he wished them to do. If farmers would only bestow a part of as much time in attending the white willow as it takes them to stick rails in their old rail fences, they would soon have a fence that would every year be growing better instead of growing worse.

J. CALCOTT.

Delaware, Oct. 17, 1866.

Ploughing Now and Sixty Years Ago.

We have been much interested and somewhat astonished by reading an article in the *Agricultural Gazette*, of Sept. 29th, in which the wind is taken out of the sails of modern manufacturers and exhibitors, by an account of what was accomplished in the way of ploughing more than half a century ago. The *Gazette* takes the matter up seemingly by way of revenge upon the pushing business firms who are pestering hard wrought editors by making large use of printer's ink and Her Majesty's mails. It complains of receiving almost daily broadsheets announcing the success of Mr Ransome's ploughs and ploughmen at the local matches all over the country. The Messrs Howard, of Bedford, have ceased to compete at these local gatherings, which are valuable to manufacturers only as an advertising agency, but interesting to agriculturists from their influence on rural improvement. Referring to a recent ploughing match at Kingscote, in Gloucestershire, the *Gazette* asks :

"Will Messrs. Ransome, whose man and plough carried every thing before them there, tell us what was actually accomplished? How many cubic feet of earth was turned over, in how short a time, at what a cost of labour? It adds, we think it probable that the annals of that same parish can give instances very many years ago when more was done at smaller cost within as short a time. In the 12th volume of the "Transactions of the Bath and West of England Society," there is an account of a ploughing match at Kingscote, which took place close on 60 years ago. Three ploughs started for the prize. They were all of that description called Beverstone. One was drawn by two small oxen of a mixed breed, with

a driver; another by two horses without a driver; and the third by one horse without a driver. They started together, and their respective half acres were ploughed in the following spaces of time, viz. :—

The plough with two horses, in 2 hours and 28 minutes.

That with two oxen, in three hours and 14 minutes.

And that with one horse, in 3 hours and 17 minutes.

Immediately after the work was performed, the umpires delivered in their adjudication, which was as follows :—

"Hunter's Hall, Kingscote, Gloucestershire, May 10, 1803.

"We the undersigned, having been this day appointed umpires, by a Committee of the Bath and West of England Agricultural Society, for managing a trial of ploughs, to determine on the respective merits of the following candidates to wit :

"Mr. DREW WATER HATWARD of Frocester, a Beverstone plough drawn by two oxen, with a driver; THOMAS COX, ploughman.

"Mr. JOHN HATWARD, of Beverstone, a Beverstone plough, with one horse, no driver; THOMAS PEARCE, ploughman.

"Mr. WILLIAM KIRBY, of Hunter's Hall, a Beverstone plough with two horses, no driver; WILLIAM WREN, ploughman.

"Having carefully examined the work done by each, and judging by the rules laid down by the said society for our direction, are unanimously of opinion, that the plough drawn by the two oxen is entitled to the first premium offered by the said Society, and the plough drawn by two horses to the second.

Signed,

"ANTHONY ALLEN.
"WM. CHANDLER.
"WM. WHITE."

The *Gazette* then proceeds to give a wood cut description of the Beverstone plough. It is a short, stubbed looking implement, very like the plough used by American farmers in the newer parts of the country. It is furnished with a coulter, and wheel of rather large size, so arranged that it can be raised or lowered at pleasure. It is a very plain, unattractive looking affair, and it must be mortifying that it should be considered to have equalled or eclipsed modern and beautifully got up ploughs, in the amount and excellence of its work. The *Gazette* says that a Committee of the Society appointed to investigate the circumstances of this trial reported that the same ploughman who here drove the one-horse plough did, in 4 hours and 35 minutes, plough $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep, in a workmanlike manner, one acre of two-year old Clover-ley; and that "Mr. Tugwell, 22 years before, had with a similar instrument performed the same feat with a horse, which on the preceding day had been purchased for 50s., and which, in conjunction with another horse (in the possession of the same family), had continued to complete their acre with a Beverstone plough almost every day for 10 years afterwards."

Of course the true test of the goodness of a plough is the quantity of tillage accomplished by it in a given time and within a given cost, and the *Gazette* demonstrates that an implement now deemed old-fashioned and comparatively worthless, did nearly 60 years before the time of Mr. Ransome's victory, on the very same land, perform an amount and quality of work which "was economically an even greater achievement and success."

Alsike Clover.

Mr. Channcy Miller, of the Shaker Family, near Albany, furnishes the following statement of his experience with this plant for the *Country Gentleman* :—

"We find the Alsike Clover a very superior grass in the following points: 1. For its value as a hay crop, on a great variety of soils, being of a growth, in height, varying according to quality of soil, from 10 inches to 2½ feet, and yielding from 1½ to 3 tons per acre, according to soil; thus comparing with our best red clovers, though, of course, not so high as the great western pea vine clover, but, with us, one-third higher than the small, southern, red clover. 2. For fineness of stalk, or haulm. 3. For its multitude of sweet flowers, blooming, perhaps, three or four times as much as red clover, making, when in bloom, literally "a sea of flowers." 4. Its adaptation to heavy soils, clays, or heavy clay loams (as well as sandy soils), not being so liable to heave out by frosts in winter and spring as red clover (trifolium repens), being the product of a cross between the red and white clovers, originated in Germany. 5. To all farmers who keep bees largely, the crop would be of great value, as bees can work upon the flowers equally as well as upon white clover, as they are about the same size, and precisely the same habit as

the latter, but are much more abundant in honey; bees appear as fond of the flowers as of mignonette, and, in its season of flowering, which lasts about six weeks, are continually upon it, from dewy morn until dusky eve. 6. To those farmers raising clover seed for market, the Alsike clover, in our opinion, would be of great value, as it seeds enormously, and the seed threshes easily, by flail or machine, leaving a beautiful quality of hay, the stalks retaining their greenness, when most of the seed is quite ripe. 7. It holds many weeks in bloom, thus giving the farmer lee-way of time and weather, in regard to securing the hay crop."

The Manure Pit.

The Agricultural Editor of the *New York Times* gives a description of a barn, recently erected by Dr. Hexamer in Westchester county. In alluding to the stables he says :

"The floors of the stables are watertight, and the surface descends a trifle, so that all the liquid flows in gutters into the manure pit directly in the rear of the stalls. Small flap doors are prepared close to the floor, which provide a convenient opening for throwing out all the solid litter into the manure pit, which is about 100 feet long, 6 feet wide, 4 feet deep substantially cemented on the inside and bottom, so that no surplus water can enter or escape. At one end of the pit stands the privy, which furnishes much excellent fertilizing material. The manure is spread around evenly and covered with muck, or rich mellow soil. The pit will contain about 100 loads; and on that small farm it is filled and emptied three or four times annually with the choicest compost. With such a pit no manure is wasted. As the liquid from the stables is not always sufficient to keep the manure, containing a large proportion of nitrogenous matter, from becoming "fire-fanged," the leader from the cave-troughs is so arranged that any desirable amount of water can be turned into the manure pit during the fall of rain. The pit is so arranged that a cart or wagon may be driven along close by its side, from end to end, thus facilitating the great labor of forking and shoveling the compost. The arrangements for making barnyard compost, on which farmers must rely chiefly for material to maintain the fertility of their grounds, are most complete, convenient and economical. Those farmers who waste half of their barnyard manure should learn by these suggestions to save all their manure, and thus raise bountiful crops of grain, roots, fruit or grass."

WORTH RAISING.—Mr. A. T. Gregory, nursery-man of this village, the other day showed us a "specimen brick" of a new variety of potatoes—the "Garnet Chili"—introduced by him which weighed two pounds six ounces. If any of our horticultural friends can beat this, let them bring along the documents.—*Mount Forest Examiner*.

LABOUR SAVING MACHINERY.—A practical, hard working farmer, who attended the late New England fair at Brattleboro', wrote at follows to a local paper :—

A careful examination of all the labor-saving agricultural machines, establishes the fact, that the days of hard, life-destroying labour on the farm, are about being numbered, and that in rural life, there are to be greater opportunities for leisure, for intellectual improvement and practical progress.

PERMANENT PASTURES AND MEADOWS.—When a meadow is designed more particularly for permanent pasture, a mixture of grasses is desirable. In either case the soil should be rich, or made so before seeding. If it needs help, the following compost, being the proportions required for an acre, will be found of great service. It is scarcely necessary to add that its uses are equally applicable to a meadow when set down to pure timothy. Ten bushels of bone-dust, 20 bushels of unleached ashes, 10 two-horse cart loads of well-rotted stable manure, 1 bushel of plaster and 1 bushel of refuse salt. Form the above into a compost for ten days, then mix, spread broad-cast and plough lightly under.

Quantity of Grass Seed for a Permanent Meadow.—One bushel of orchard grass seed, ½ bushel of Kentucky blue grass seed, ¼ peck of timothy seed, ¼ bushel of perennial rye grass seed, 1 bushel of tall meadow oat seed, and 3 lbs. of sweet scented vernal grass seed. The orchard and Kentucky blue grass seed should be moistened for ten or twelve hours before sowing. They should then be mixed with the other grass seeds, omitting the timothy—after adding twice their bulk of ashes, and should be thus sown. Seed the timothy afterwards by itself. Mow lightly and roll.—*Maryland Farmer*.