

participate; and no doubt this calamity will make us wiser, and more provident for the future, and induce us to cultivate a greater variety of farm crops, instead of depending simply on the wheat crop.

In regard to the improvement of stock, your Board is compelled to state that the improvement is not so universal as they would like to see, or as to compare favourably with the other Counties; although there are some excellent specimens of improved breeds of cattle, sheep, and hogs, owned by a few enterprising farmers, who are not only benefitted themselves by these fine animals, but their neighbours also are greatly benefitted thereby. The preference given to the most improved and best bred animals is quite diversified—some preferring the large and beautifully developed animals, while others fancy the smaller and more symmetrical Devons. The Ayrshires, as milkers, deserve much praise, while others contend that the natives are the cattle for the country for excellence, and surpass all other breeds in weight, if not in appearance. The more generally received opinion is that the crosses of the best blooded animals with the natives produce the most valuable animals for the mass of farmers and graziers. On the whole it is really desirable to see many more of those fine, beautiful and useful improved breeds introduced into this country. The Leicesters are the most approved, as well as the most numerous breed of sheep reared with us. The object of rearing the fine woolled sheep is gaining to engage the attention of some of the breeders; and there is no doubt that, from the nature of soils and pasturage, these animals may be made profitable. As to mutton sheep, the South Downs stand unrivalled, and Colswold, though but recently introduced, are many advocates.

The experiments which have been made in feeding and fattening animals, which have been within the knowledge of your Board, but few; these few, however, go to support the generally received opinion of the best feeders and feeders, that the most profitable way to rear farm stock is by judicious and constant feeding, to induce a constant growth and healthy development of the animal in all parts. The most economical system of feeding, is to cut all the hay, straw, and corn which are fed, and mix therewith a small quantity of some kind of chopped grain. Improved Indian corn mixed with hay, with an

occasional seed of roots when the weather is not too severe, is found to be the best food for fattening horned cattle. Barley, oats or buckwheat may supply the place of corn in the mixture.

For fattening sheep, the pea crop, where it can be raised in abundance, seems to be the most desirable; and the most profitable manner of feeding is without threshing, as the straw and peas fed together conduce more to the health of the animal than clean peas. Indian corn and oats ground, and fed to fattening sheep, are very nutritious, and prepare them for market in a very short time. Cooked food, whether it be grain, roots, or vegetables, is allowed to be the best and most economical for fattening hogs.

The subject of drainage has not engaged the attention of agriculturists here; as owing to the undulating surface of our land, and the porous nature of the subsoils, drainage would not be so beneficial as in other places: nevertheless, your Board are of opinion that many of our farms might be rendered much more productive by adopting a thorough system of drainage.

Your Board have much pleasure in referring to the great and useful improvements which have been made in agricultural implements. The manner of harvesting our grain and hay crops was altogether the most laborious part of farm labor. That severe labor is now mostly superseded by Reapers and Mowers; thereby greatly facilitating the labor, and securing the crop with less waste and liability to damage from bad weather. Great improvements have been made in that most useful implement, the plough. Different varieties of pattern, adapted to the different requirements of the ploughman, and the different nature of the soils, are now manufactured, of good material, and possessing all the advantages of mechanical skill. Cultivators, and the most approved harrows are also made here, and are in general use by our farmers. Seed drills of various sizes, and for various purposes are made by our mechanics, and are in very general use: in short, our farmers seem inclined to avail themselves of the advantages of all the useful labor-saving machines within their reach.

The cultivation of fruit trees is very general, and up to the winter of 1856 was prosperous and successful; but during that winter the more tender varieties, as the peach, plum, and finer sorts of cherries were all destroyed.