

USE OF SALT IN AGRICULTURE.

We have frequently recommended the use of salt in Agriculture; the high price of the article, however, has prevented its employment to any extent in Canada, and we believe it is a great loss to the farmer that he cannot obtain it on such moderate terms as would justify his making use of it in Agriculture. At a meeting of the Council of the Royal English Agricultural Society in March last, there was an interesting discussion on the use of salt in Agriculture. One of the Council, Sir Thomas Acland, remarked:—"That it was an acknowledged fact in the West of England, that corn grown on the North Coast of Cornwall, and several miles inland from it, not only fetched the best prices, but made better and lighter bread than the corn grown in other parts of that district. He attributed that effect to the briny matter brought on that coast and its neighbouring county by the heavy gales from the Atlantic Ocean, to which that portion of the West of England was most exposed. In proof of the extent to which the briny exhalations from the sea could be carried by the wind under such circumstances, he adduced the instance of Lord Clinton's residence, which, though situated 20 miles from that element, had often its windows covered with saline incrustations, after a storm from the West." Our own experience, by a residence in a county exposed to the briny exhalations of the Atlantic Ocean, fully confirms the statement of Sir Thomas Acland. The wheat grown in that part of the country was most superior, never rusted, and the bread made of it was light and excellent. The usual course of tillage with small farmers was to manure the land with seaweed, which they spread upon the soil in winter, and where they could obtain it; they put a small quantity of farm yard manure over the sea weed, and planted potatoes on this in ridges, covered with the spade. On this land they sowed wheat immediately after the potatoes were taken

out, and the crop was generally very fine. We admired it particularly for its clear, bright colour, always free from any appearance of disease, and requiring no drying to prepare it for the mill, as most wheats do in moist climates. Several gentlemen at the meeting we referred to, gave their opinion of the great benefit of using salt in Agriculture, particularly in the cultivation of the soil for green crops. It not only acts very beneficially upon the green crops, but upon the succeeding crop of grain. It stiffens the straw of wheat and barley, and prevents its lodging: it is also said to prevent rust. Mr. Hobbs, an eminent Agriculturist, said he generally applied two cwt. of salt to the acre for wheat; but at different times, namely, one cwt. before ploughing, and one cwt. after ploughing, but before depositing the seed. He found this a better plan than applying all the salt at once, as the salt became thus more intimately mixed with the soil. Beets, mangel-wurtzel, carrots, turnips and potatoes, would all be the better for having three or four bushels of salt applied to the acre of land in the previous cultivation of it for these crops, and the succeeding crops of grain would also be better for it. We are so far from the sea in Canada, that we have no chance of the advantage of briny exhalations from it, and we should therefore supply this want by artificial means. Lime and salt, mixed together in a heap for three or four months, under cover, would be an excellent application to the soil. Three parts lime is generally put to one part salt. Even ten or twelve bushels of this mixture to the acre, would be an excellent application to the soil for wheat, barley, or any description of green crop. Any of these substances may be usefully employed in this country, particularly where they have not been already made use of in Agriculture. They would have a much more beneficial effect here, than in countries where they have been long in use, or those that have been sup-