

THE CANADA FARMER

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NEW SERIES.

The Field.

Early Spring Work.

Although March but lately held stormy sway, the busy time of the tiller of the soil is already upon him, and as work well begun is easiest finished, it will be well for him to make his preparations as early as possible. While the weather is still unsuitable for out of door operations, and the Frost King holds fast his grip, much can be done in the barn.

SELECTING AND CLEANING SEED should now be attended to. We have before spoken of the importance of having only the best seed to sow. Let everything intended to be used for this purpose be selected and cleaned with scrupulous care, every light seed and fowl weed being driven out. The fanning mill is not used half as much as it should be, and too often the work is delayed so long that when the time comes it is but half done. Let a calculation be made of the exact quantity of grain or grass seed required for every field to be sown, and the quantity made up only of what has been carefully run through the fanning mill, and if necessary hand sifted, and put up in bags and labelled to show what field it is to go to. Then when the time comes for seeding, there will be no confusion and loss of time about the matter. This done, attention must next be given to the

IMPLEMENTS.—The ploughs, harrows, cultivators, &c, should get a good overhauling to see that they are all in proper order, and if necessary any repairs made. Brighten up the mould-boards of the ploughs with sand and water, and give a coat of crude petroleum to the woodwork, to prevent the rain from soaking in. See that all the clevises, whiffletrees, trace-chains, and other small things so often

needed when work commences, are in good order, and put together in a place where they can be easily found when wanted. Have the harnesses all made sound and tight, and let them be well oiled.

MANURE.—Anything intended to be used as a portable manure, such as land plaster, bone dust, salt, etc., should be stowed away in the barn, or some out-building proof against wet, to be ready on hand when the time comes for its use.

As soon as the spring thaw sets in, and while the land is yet too wet to be worked, is the time to get the barn-yard in order. Have all the manure made during the winter forked over, and thrown or drawn into a covered shed, or if that is not to be had, into large heaps round the sides of the yard, so as to leave a clear space in the centre, and the stables, byres, etc., free from fowl obstructions. The heaps should be so made as to be high, and with perpendicular sides, to prevent the stock getting on them. As they are made, it will be well to throw six inch layers of muck, or even loam earth, about each two feet thickness of the manure heap. The whole can then be covered with the scrapings of the bottom of the yard. When that is done, cover the whole centre of the yard with a fresh layer of muck or earth, to absorb urine and the washings from the manure heaps, and that again with clean straw, so that the stock can enjoy cleanliness and comfort out of doors when the mild days come, and confinement gets irksome, just before grass is ready. This last layer will help to make manure for the fall, or the late sown turnips.

PEAS are usually the first crop sown. See that your seed is free from bugs. If not, it is much reduced in value, though many of the germs may still remain, but they will produce little, weak, spindling plants. Get the best and most produc-

tive kinds, such as the "Crown" or "Daniel O'Rourke." Even if it should cost more for seed, an extra fifteen or twenty bushels per acre will much more than pay for an increase of double in the price of the seed. This crop is always a paying one.

SPRING WHEAT comes next in order. A good deal will be grown, notwithstanding the low price at which it sells. Indications point to a serious loss from winter-killing in the autumn sown wheat this year, and it would not be well to leave the country with a short supply of the "staff of life." Be sure to brine or lime the seed to prevent smut. Let the land be made deep and mellow.

BARLEY.—The failure to realize good prices on last year's crop, resulting from lack of quality, will, no doubt, discourage many, and those who do grow the crop this year will reap the benefit of higher prices next Fall. This crop requires a rich warm soil rather than a deep one, and the more its roots can spread near the surface, and yet find plenty of food, the better will it succeed. Still, barn-yard manure is seldom good for it, unless old and very finely composted. It is better applied to the soil through the previous crop, in roots, potatoes, or corn, or, as is done by some first class growers, thoroughly incorporated into the soil early in the autumn. Barley should not be sown too early, in fact, not till the weather has become settled and warm, and the soil acquired a temperature sufficient to ensure rapid germination of the seed, and a quick, steady growth of the plant after germination takes place. The shorter the time it occupies the ground the better will the crop be likely to prove. Superphosphate or very fine bone dust is a most excellent and profitable manure to apply to barley, say at the rate of 100 lbs. per acre if drilled in with the seed, or 200 lbs. per acre if sown broadcast.