

Fences.

(To the Editor.)

Sir —In the weekly Globe of the 1st inst. I notice a letter from "Farmer" on the subject of strait railfences. The plan he suggests of punching holes for the pickets with a crow bar would take more time than driving the pickets with a beetle. The pickets must be of equal strength and not too light. If I were near a cedar swamp I would prefer round pickets about four or five inches in diameter at the small end, to save the labour of splitting. The use of wire instead of pins and withes is a great improvement. The same idea occurred to me, but I concluded that when the expense is no object the idea would readily occur to any one. The short piece of rope is used to hold the pickets together while the holes are being bored, and it would also hold them whilst the wire is being fastened. Every bush farmer has not a screw, but every one has or ought to have a small piece of rope about his place; if wire is used the fourth panel will be commenced before the first is finished, and the pickets should be wired as fast as finished, lest a gale of wind should come on and loosen them. In that part of the Province of Quebec where I formerly resided as well as in this Township, we always have snow before we have severe frost, and if that is not the case in Dorchester "Farmer" will have to drive his pickets a little every spring: it is obvious that if the pickets are lifted a little by the frost they will settle down again by their own weight. Amongst the advantages of worm fences "Farmer" forgot to mention the facilities the corners afford for raising a crop of weeds and piling away stones that may be picked up for the surface of the land for the special accommodation of mice and ground squirrels. A simple gate much in use here is little more than an oblong frame, with the top and bottom rail slightly projecting, and upright bars a few inches apart, set in between them. Besides the end upright rail of the gate, a broader board or rail is sometimes used in the middle to strengthen it. To the projecting ends of the bottom rail, rollers are also sometimes attached, to facilitate the sliding of the gate back and forth. This gate is generally made wholly of cedar, and consequently is very light but I should prefer to make the small bars of straight grained white ash, and if near a saw mill, the top and bottom pieces of 4 x 4 hemlock studs, as being stronger than pine. But a tree may be cut in the bush and sawn down the middle; or two small trees may be cut and flattened on three sides with an axe. The flat bars are not generally used by the habitants, but they stiffen the gate very much; they should be of inch board about 4 or 5 inches wide morticed into the top and bottom pieces and secured with hard wood pins, whilst the other bars are wedged at each end. The small rollers are an invention of my own, and were

suggested by seeing some gates made by a friend of mine some years ago. He adopted my suggestion, and afterwards told me he found them a great improvement; the rollers may be an inch thick, and of sufficient diameter to project one inch above and below the bottom piece. If I were near a turner's shop I should have them turned out of hard wood and bound with hoop iron, but turning lathes and hoop iron are not always at hand in our backwoods settlements, in which case they may be sawn out of a round stick of a sufficient size, but unless they are bound with hoop iron they will soon split. They are not absolutely essential but they facilitate the opening and shutting of the gate. This gate is intended to slide endways along the fence, and a slab with the cut side upwards should be laid on the ground along side the fence for it to slide on. The top and bottom pieces may be eleven or twelve feet long, and the bars one inch in diameter, with a clear space of two inches between each. If used in a straight fence a third picket must be driven into the ground at each end to keep the gate in its place when closed, and a hole bored through the pickets to receive a hard wood pin, which must fit easy and be passed between two of the bars to prevent a particularly "cute" cow from pushing the gate back. I have known such a cow to lift back fence bars in that way, so that one end should drop and she could walk through.

Now here is a plain farm gate which may be made without a single nail by any one who can handle an axe and draw knife, and if the ends of the top and bottom pieces were bound with hoop iron it would tend to prevent them from splitting. Such a gate also presents the advantage of not being affected by any inequalities of the ground on either side, as it must slide back along the fence. I would also recommend that if possible no fencing should be cut till after midsummer, as any timber cut after that time, and brought out of the bush and split and barked immediately will last much longer than if cut in the winter. The only objection is the difficulty of sparing the time at the busy season, except in recent settlements, where the settlers after their crops are in, must work out somewhere to enable them to get along till harvest, and I would always rather pay a little more than have my fencing cut in the winter. Bass-wood rails cut in the winter soon become sap-rotten, but if cut after midsummer and split immediately they will dry rapidly and last longer than they otherwise would. All kinds of timber will last longer if cut in summer, and August is the best month. Even poplars, if cut in the summer, and allowed to lie till the leaves fall off, will be much harder than they would otherwise be, as the leaves draw out all the sap. This hint may be useful to our settlers in Manitoba if the Canada Farmer has found it any where.

SARAWACK.

Salt as Manure.

T. R. of South Dumfries asks for some information as to the value of salt as a manure, &c. Our correspondent says, "now that salt is to be had in bulk at a low rate there is little doubt of its coming into general use, if the farming community could only be made aware of its value as a fertilizer." We heartily endorse these words, and believe with T. R. that salt especially on account of its comparative cheapness, is destined in a country like Canada, far removed from the influences of sea breezes, to take a prominent position amongst our fertilizers.

We have ourselves used salt, and are perfectly convinced of its great value, and that it is worth more on account of its comparative cheapness, than any other fertilizer upon light lands. We have at present a series of experiments under way, and shall be happy to give their results when the crops, upon which salt mixed with various other substances, and salt alone, have been applied, shall have come to maturity.

While nearly all experiments agree as to a great value in the use of salt as a fertilizer, the exact method of application, or the most economical and beneficial substances with which to use it, have not yet been fairly determined.

We trust that many of our readers will experiment and give us their results. It is only by such widely diffused experiments upon various soils and crops, and under different climatic influence that we can arrive at a true light and knowledge of the comparative effects of salt.

Its chief effect upon cereals, and especially on wheat, is to dissolve in the soil the silica which is needed to strengthen the straw, and to form a large part of the hull of the kernel.

John Johnson, than whom no sounder agricultural authority is to be found in America, found that under his high manuring, his wheat lodged quite badly, but that a dressing of salt remedied this evil, doubtless by making more of the silica contained in his soil available to the growing plant and thus stiffening the straw.

It has constantly been proved that root crops, especially mangold wurtzel, are very greatly benefitted by salt, and indeed require a great quantity.

The benefit of salt upon cereals is not so apparent as that of the nitrates or guano.

Upon these crops salt should be used (pure salt) at the rate of about 200 lbs. per acre in the spring, as a top dressing; for at this season the salt is more rapidly brought in contact with, and assimilated by, the roots of the growing crop.

We would sum up by quoting from Mr. Gardiner's prize essay on "Special Manures" laid before the Royal Agricultural Society of England, in 1869:—

"That all dressings and manures con-