

roots, when destroyed by the winter, form a plentiful source of *underground manure* of the best quality, which requires no ploughing to bury it.

Here, then, we have all the requisites for a green crop for manure for ploughing under. It may be sown early, although it answers well when sown later. It will take care of itself with merely horse-hoeing, so that the saving of hand labour is very great; it affords an excellent green feed, if wanted, and the winter turns it into a manure of the first quality, ready in the ground for spring operations.

Comparing it with the turnip crop, in a manorial point of view, and leaving out of the question for the moment the profits to be made on feeding cattle with the roots, the following advantages may apparently be claimed on behalf of this beet:

We get rid of hand labour in hoeing—of hand labour in storing; it is a splendid grower all through the hot season, and continues growing until the frost cuts it off; winter storing is avoided; the manure has not to be carted to the field; moderate delay in spring operations is of no consequence, for the root is decaying in the ground—and, unless experience should show some evil which does not now appear on the surface, it seems just the thing we want in Canada to make up for the turnip crop, where want of capital will not admit of extensive turnip operations. How this variety of beet would succeed without manure the writer does not know, but from its mass of root fibre, it is evidently a diligent searcher of the soil, and will doubtless find all there is to be found, instead of growing straight down like a turnip, or ordinary beet or mangel.

The seed can be procured from the seedsmen, and I earnestly recommend all who value a good green crop for ploughing under to give it a trial.

#### VECTIS

POSTSCRIPT.—After the foregoing had been written, the project was in part submitted to a friend at Guelph, who was the first person who raised the plant in Canada. He misunderstood in a measure the writer's meaning, and lest others should do so too, the following explanation is given. The friend in question mentions that at Guelph the best farmers raise from twenty to thirty, and even forty acres of turnips annually, and that they find the feeding of cattle with that crop the most profitable. In reply, the writer says that this suggestion is not for those who can raise turnips to that extent, but for those who cannot. To enable a farmer to grow and store from twenty to forty acres of turnips, he must have capital to cultivate that amount of crop, and also capital to purchase as many head of cattle as there are acres of turnips, and he must have equally extensive buildings, and other farm belongings. Now, this is not the fate of the great majority of Canadian farmers. The utmost amount of turnips generally grown is six acres, the cat-

tle fed therewith six in number, or less, and even then, supposing that by feeding his turnips the farmer makes from each beast a profit of thirty dollars, it does not give a return equivalent to a first-rate crop of fall wheat, such as used to be grown.

The foregoing suggestion is intended for the ordinary Canadian farmer, who has not capital to raise and feed a large crop of turnips, and who, if he did not do this, would do nothing better than grow from three to four acres annually, and trust the rest of his land to bare fallow.

The course here suggested would very soon enable the grower of the silver beet to raise better crops, and thus acquire more capital, and when he was able, he might, if he found it more profitable, go heavily into the turnip crop, feeding the whole of it to horned cattle. Whether the great majority would prefer the one course or the other, experience only can decide. The writer's object is to amend *poor* farming and benefit *poor* farmers, not to do away with the growth of from twenty to forty acres of turnips annually on rich farms, or to assist rich farmers who have plenty of capital to help themselves by more expensive means.

#### Wild Oats

To the Editor.

SIR,—“A Constant Reader,” writing from Howick, makes some enquiries respecting this pest, and the best mode of exterminating it. You refer him to articles on the subject in former numbers of your paper, which he, as well as myself, has evidently overlooked, and not having the files at command, I am unable to refer to them.

It is very true that this additional pest to agriculture is rapidly spreading through this western country to an alarming extent, and it is not to be wondered at that enquiries should be made as to the best method of staying their further progress, or, better still, of exterminating them.

I have purposed for some time past giving you and your numerous readers my views on this matter, but might not have carried my purpose into execution for some time to come at least, had I not been prompted to do so by the enquiries of your correspondent.

I am well aware that when once they have fairly got possession of a farm that it is no trifling job to dispossess them, but I am not prepared to admit that it cannot be done, indeed, I am well satisfied that it can be done, and that, too, without any loss of crops or any serious expense.

I have had conversations with persons who have tried various remedies, such as fallowing, growing root crops, seeding down, &c., but all of which remedies failed in accomplishing their destruction, as the seed will remain in the ground for many years without growing or being destroyed, when covered too deep to sprout and grow.

My method of dispossessing these troublesome visitors is this:—

Plough the land the usual depth, immediately after harvest, the sooner the better, for more reasons than one. Let it lie in this state until the latter part of the month of May following, when it will generally be in good order; then plough again lightly, using the gang plough if the land will admit, and sow immediately with barley or an early variety of peas, sowing pretty thick and covering with the harrow. These grains sown at this time, with the land in good cultivation, will spring up quickly, and getting the start of the wild oats, will keep above them, and will ripen before the wild oats are headed out, and should be cut as soon as they are ready; and thus all the wild oats that have sprung up will be destroyed. But, as the ground may still be full of the seed, the process must be repeated from year to year, until all the seed in the ground has been brought to the surface and grown. If the land be out of order, or be infested with Canada thistles or other obnoxious weeds, a deviation from this course may be permitted with advantage. Let the land be well fallowed for a season, and manured if need be, and sown with fall wheat of an early variety, say amber Michigan, with which it may be desirable to seed down with clover and timothy. But when broken up again, the process first pointed out must be continued until every grain of seed in the ground is grown and destroyed.

But unless great care is exercised first in thoroughly heating all the manure now on the farm, secondly, in the purchase of clean seed and grain for feeding, if such is necessary, and thirdly, that the threshing machine does not come directly from a farm infested with wild oats to your farm, it will be a difficult matter to get rid of them.

This method of exterminating this pest recommends itself from the fact that it is attended with no expense not necessary to good farming, and the crops recommended will be found generally to pay as well as any others that can be grown, and if persevered in, I am confident will result in the entire eradication of this modern pest.

I trust that the suggestions thus roughly thrown together may be of service to those interested, and they are legion, and will meet the views of practical agriculturalists generally.

A. BOOMER.

Linwood, April 20, 1870.

MANURE TRADE.—The manure trade has now acquired an importance second to no other branch of British manufacture. Put the annual increase of all our cotton, linen, woollen, and hardware together, and it is questionable if the sum will balance the increase of produce arising from the application of artificial manures to the British soil; and when we add to this notorious fact that this increase of produce is not half what it should be, something like an approximate estimate may be found of its value to all classes of the public.—*Irish Farmer's Gazette*.