

on the land he considers an indication of acid soils. Sorrel grows abundantly on all land which he terms acid. Oxalic acid is the acid of sorrel. Now, sowing on plaster in the usual quantity, that being a sulphate of lime, the oxalic acid has a strong chemical affinity for the lime; the lime leaves its combination with the sulphur, and combines with the oxalic acid, and forms an oxalate of lime, and sets the sulphur free to combine with iron or any other ingredient that it can find. Apply a good dressing of marl or lime, and it combines with the acid and neutralizes or destroys it, and as a proof of this, sorrel is no longer found. Plaster applied then is left free to act, and produces the most satisfactory results, frequently doubling the crop.

Long Island and New-Jersey have soils somewhat similar to Virginia. I can speak more confidently of Long Island, as that is my place of residence; its soils produce sorrel plentifully. Lime has been used but little, and in many cases with no perceptible effect, and plaster, with a few isolated exceptions, has totally failed. I hope that some of your Long Island and other readers who are similarly situated, will make the experiment, and see if like causes will produce like effects. The experiment need not cost them but little money or labor.

While on a recent visit to Dutchess Co., a friend informed me that the prevailing opinion in that county was, that plaster applied to one field, injured an unplastered field adjoining, as much as it benefitted the one that it was applied to, and that some went so far as to say that if a piece of woodland was left amidst cleared land, and that cleared land plastered, the timber commenced decaying and dying. He told me of an instance that went strongly to prove the truth of that opinion. An old farmer had a very fine meadow, in a creek bottom. He commenced plastering his upland lying around and adjoining it. His meadow, which had never before failed to produce luxurious crops of grass, began to fail, and continued to do so until it was hardly worth mowing. He then commenced plastering it, and its ancient fertility was at once restored. Now what can be the cause of that? Perhaps our chemists are the most proper persons to judge; but I can give my own opinions, as they do not cost much. The idea at once occurred to me that it might be caused by the absorption of ammonia from the surrounding atmosphere, by the plaster, (as ammonia and sulphuric acid have a strong affinity for each other,) that the unplastered land was deprived of its due share from that source, as plants are said to derive a large share of their ammonia from the atmosphere. Perhaps some of your able correspondents can enlighten us as to the cause of it.

G. P. LEWIS.

Huntingdon, L. I. Oct. 14th, 1846.

The pain from the sting of a bee may be alleviated by rubbing the part with parsley.

DESTROYING THE GRUB AND WIRE-WORM.

In a recent conversation with an intelligent farmer of Cayuga Co., N. Y., he described the method by which he saved his corn crop from the destruction of the wire-worm and grub. The former of these depredators had appeared in prodigious numbers—something less than a bushel per square rod of land, and their ravages were great. He ascertained by observation that they did not descend deep into the soil at the usual time of ploughing sward land for corn, but continued mostly among the roots of the grass. His object, therefore, was to bury them alive. This he accomplished by turning over the sod with a powerful team, to a depth of at least 8 inches, the soil being rather heavy. The surface was then pressed down evenly and firmly with a heavy roller. By this process several inches of compact soil lay above the region of the wire-worms, and as a consequence, whenever they attempted to pass upwards to the surface, they met with too formidable a resistance to penetrate. Hence, they continued with the grass below, and perished with its decay. Whether this be the true explanation or not, one thing was certain,—that where the corn was formerly almost wholly destroyed, it is now full and even in the rows, without the usual numerous vacant spaces over the field, always existing under the old practice.

By a similar process of observation, he was enabled to destroy the grubs. He discovered that these depredators, instead of remaining at the surface, like the wire-worm, descend deeply, and hence that deep ploughing brings nearly all of them to the surface. Hence by the use of a heavy roller, many of them were crushed, and the remainder immovably compressed in the solid earth, till a fine toothed harrow passing over the surface, tore out and destroyed them. The utility of this practice, like that of the former, has been amply proved by successful experiment.

—Albany Cultivator.

THICK AND THIN SOWING.

To the Editor of the English Farmers' Journal.

SIR—Your correspondent, Mr Hainworth, in his article last week on seed wheat, says he dibbled two pints of Mr. Merton's white wheats, and the produce of these pints (about 55 pints each) "which I again dibbled, and their produce was 42 bushels per acre."

Let me ask Mr. Hainworth why he only got 42 bushels per acre? Had he taken as much care in dibbling the wheat the second year, as when he only grew the first pint, he should have had a 55 fold increase: that is, if he sowed one bushel the acre he ought to have had 55 bushels; if two bushels, there should have been 110 bushels the acre. I think this is a question bearing on the disputed point of thick or thin sowing. H. W.

THICK AND THIN SOWING.

To the Editor of the Farmers' Journal.

SIR—If the difference between thick and thin sowing were in accordance with the theory of "H. W.," as stated in your *Journal*, this week, "that is, if he sowed one bushel of wheat per acre and it produced 55 bushels, if he sowed two bushels per acre there should have been 110 bushels per acre," there would no longer remain a doubt as to which would be the best system to practise.

In comparing the 55 pints of wheat, the produce of one pint, with the 42 bushels per acre from the 55 pints of seed, your correspondent infers that the produce per acre from the one pint, exceeded the produce per acre from the 55 pints. As I did not state the quantity of ground on which either of them was planted, I am at a loss to know from what data such an inference could be drawn; and "this question does not at all bear on the disputed point of thick or thin sowing."—When I planted the two pints, I planted them thinly, covering five poles with each in order to obtain as large a produce as I could, independent of the yield per acre. "H. W." will find the return only 27½ bushels per acre; from a pint of wheat at the same time, on nearly 7 poles of ground, I obtained 76 pints; the produce per acre differing very little from the 55 pints. As the time of planting was January, and considerable destruction was committed by birds, no argument in favor of either system can be founded on such a trial. I have tried thin dibbling with various results. In 1839 I dibbled 14 acres, three pecks to the acre, the produce 25 bushels per acre; the same season I drilled 40 acres, 2 bushels to the acre, the produce 40 bushels per acre; this difference was not the result of the different quantity of seed sown, so much as it proceeded from the state of the land when dibbled. The holes would not stand so as to get the seed in deep enough; when this is the case there is no method of planting wheat so bad as that of dibbling, and although I now dibble some every year it is only when the land is in a proper state. It appears to me that the advocates of thin sowing do not make allowance for the state and condition of the land, and the time of year when sown, I generally dibble five pecks per acre, and drill six pecks. If an equal distribution of seed could be insured, perhaps three pecks would do as well, but never having observed any injurious effects from six pecks, or even from eight pecks that might be attributed to thick sowing, I think about this quantity of seed will be found safer than less. In one instance when the drill-man had been using three bushels per acre, and the drill was altered to two bushels, the crop from the two bushels was very superior to that from the three bushels, the straw equal to that of the three in quantity, being much stouter, standing more upright, and having finer heads. I should not have troubled you with this letter had not my former one appear-