

# The Agriculturist.

A WEEKLY JOURNAL DEVOTED TO LITERATURE, AGRICULTURE, AND NEWS.

AGRICULTURE THE TRUE BASIS OF A NATION'S WEALTH.

ANDREW ARCHER, Editor

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## Agriculture.

### Thick and Thin Sowing.

The famous Mr. J. J. Mechi of Tip-top Hall, England, writes to the *North British Agriculturist* lately, on the "Thick and Thin Sowing," and his observations may interest some of our readers:—

I have always said that this is a question depending on soil and climate, and that at each farmer should, by comparative experiments, arrive at the most satisfactory conclusion. When I first farmed here, some 23 years ago, I tried 1 bushel of wheat per imperial acre against the 2 bushels usually sown hereabout, and found that the 1 bushel gave me an advantage of 30s per acre; so I adopted it. I did not find much difference between 4 and 5 pecks. I have grown just as much from 2 pecks, and even from 1 peck per imperial acre, but to make sure, I drill a bushel at nine inches from row to row, because I am enabled to horse-hoe on the 9 inch spaces; and a man and pair of horses can do 12 acres per day. Where I do not horse-hoe, I sow the same quantity of seed with 6 inch intervals. My usual drilling of barley is at 6 inches from row to row, and 6 pecks per imperial acre. I have grown just as much from 1 bushel. Of oats (Tartarian), I drill 8 pecks per imperial acre, at 6 inch intervals, and have frequently grown 88 bushels per imperial acre—in one instance 104 bushels. In fact, I have found even 2 bushels to be too thick, and have suffered injury by premature laying in a summer storm. I attach much importance to a standing crop, which only gets bent or partially laid when ripe. Thickly sown crops, on well-farmed land and suitable climate, get prematurely laid, and in consequence get inferior as grinding barley, and thin oats, and small-headed wheat.

In 1868 (a fine season), my wheat crop averaged 56 bushels per imperial acre—one field yielding 64 bushels. Of barley (after wheat) I frequently got 7 quarters, of maling quality. Early laid crops shut in the damp from the earth, and thus encourage the under-growths of clover or weeds. In a low undulating crop air circulates freely, green vegetation is checked, and we get large ears and kernels, and stiff, glossy straw. The only excuse for thick sowing is a late district. No doubt thick sowing hastens the harvest, because premature is earlier than maturity. Wheat, oats, and barley should give a return of 40 for 1. The person who sows 12 bushels of oats per Scotch acre should therefore get 480 bushels per Scotch acre. Does he do this? If so I should be very much astonished.

### A Field Roller.

A good roller is an implement which the western farmer prizes highly and of which he makes very free and frequent use, but the eastern farmer, although claiming to give a great deal better culture to all his field crops, than the farmers of the West, uses the roller but very little. I have travelled extensively in this part of the country and have seen but very few rollers although other implements have been very plenty. In my own neighborhood, a strictly farming community too, not one man in twenty-five has anything in the shape of a field roller, and of the very few which are owned the majority are quite poor.

Probably two reasons have prevented the extensive employment of rollers. Of these the principal has been that farmers have not appreciated the value of these implements, and the other may be found in the expense involved in their purchase.

There are some soils upon which a roller is not needed but on most fields it would do the farmer good service. If used at the right time it will break up the clods and enable the harrow to make the surface soil very fine. Some times the seed is so soft that it is very desirable to roll it before the sowing is done. Some of the grass seed can be covered as well with a roller as with anything, and the land will be left in much better order if it is used than it will be if a brush harrow is employed. On stony fields a roller saves a great deal of time and labor by crowding the small stones in the earth where they will be out of the way of the sower. Grass land is often benefited in the spring by the use of the roller which packs the dirt around the roots of the plants. Winter grain is frequently saved from the destructive influence of the frost by rolling in the spring. The roots which had been partially thrown out are pressed back into the land. There are so many purposes to which it can be profitably applied that a farmer who never had one would be surprised to find how often it proves useful.

The cost of a good roller is considerably less than it was a few years ago though an iron one, and in five or six sections, is still quite expensive but a pretty fair one can be made of plank for a very moderate sum. It should be made in two sections. The round log which is sometimes called a roller is a miserable, and very inefficient substitute, yet it is better than nothing. But as this implement is in only occasional use it seems to be the best possible plan for several neighboring farmers who are in moderate circumstances, to unite in purchasing a first-class iron one. One implement of this sort would answer for eight or ten of the small farms in New England, and their different owners could easily arrange the times when each should have its use. By this means the cost for each farmer would be quite small and yet each one could have the benefit resulting from the ownership of an excellent roller.

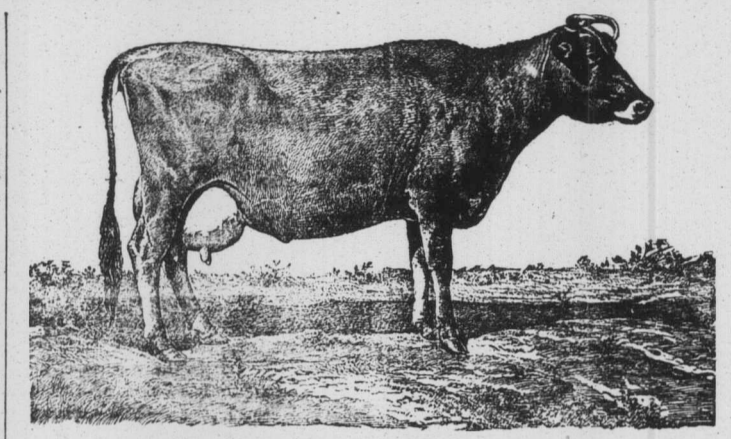
erably less than it was a few years ago though an iron one, and in five or six sections, is still quite expensive but a pretty fair one can be made of plank for a very moderate sum. It should be made in two sections. The round log which is sometimes called a roller is a miserable, and very inefficient substitute, yet it is better than nothing. But as this implement is in only occasional use it seems to be the best possible plan for several neighboring farmers who are in moderate circumstances, to unite in purchasing a first-class iron one. One implement of this sort would answer for eight or ten of the small farms in New England, and their different owners could easily arrange the times when each should have its use. By this means the cost for each farmer would be quite small and yet each one could have the benefit resulting from the ownership of an excellent roller.

CONTROLLING VICIOUS HORSES.—A new and very simple method of training vicious horses was exhibited in West Philadelphia recently, and the manner in which some of the wildest horses were subdued was astonishing. The first trial was that of a kicking or "bucking" mare, which her owner said had allowed no rider on her back for a period of at least five years. She became tame and gentle in about as many minutes, and allowed herself to be ridden about without a sign of her former wildness. The means by which the result was accomplished consisted of a piece of light rope, which was passed around the front jaw of the mare, just above the upper teeth, crossed in her mouth and thence secured back of her neck. It was claimed that no horse will kick or jump when thus secured, and that a "bucking" horse, after receiving the treatment a few times, will abandon his vicious way forever. A very simple method was also shown by which a kicking horse could be shod. It consisted in connecting the animals head and tail by means of a rope fastened to the tail and then to the bit, and draw tightly enough to incline the horse's head to one side. This, it is claimed, makes it absolutely impossible for the horse to kick or jump on the side of the rope. At the same exhibition, a horse, which for many years had to be bound on the ground to be shod, suffered the blacksmith to operate on him without attempting to kick while secured in the manner described.—*Lebanon Courier.*

The garden is of scarcely less importance to the farmer than the farm itself. It is really in advance of the farm when we consider the comforts of home. The farm supplies the substantial, such as meat and bread, and replenishes the purse, which of course is the main item, but it is the garden that the good housewife is indebted to for the many side dishes served so regularly three times a day, which play such an important part in making the life of a farmer desirable above that of other men. If the garden is neglected, its influence must be felt three times a day throughout the entire year. And how uncomfortable it must be to the good housewife to hear his faithful wife remark a thousand times during this period, "well, I have nothing to cook." To provide the larder well is the farmer's first duty. This he owes to himself and his family. Then let him plant a good garden; not merely a patch of potatoes and a few rows of peas, but let him select a choice spot of ground of ample size, manure it well, put it in good order, and from his seed catalogue select every variety of vegetable seed that will do well in our climate.

Plant your seed in the proper time, and tend them well, so that throughout the coming year, instead of having nothing to cook, your wife will find it difficult to select from among the good things in her larder, those necessary for a meal. The usual mode of gardening is little better than having no garden at all. Do not be content with the usual slipshod way of doing things, but do them right. The time spent in the garden is not lost. It pays better comparatively than the labor in the field; and above all things else, do not let it be put off until other work is done, but prepare your garden spot and sow the seed as early as the season will admit, and continue to sow as the time arrives for the planting of different seeds for vegetables for late use.

SELF-SUCKING COWS.—An unfeeling correspondent recommends the cruel method of splitting the tongue of a cow that sucks herself. Rather than adopt this barbarous treatment we would dry the cow and fatten and sell her for beef. We have published better remedies than this, and here with give another. Make a bridle with a medium sized wire for a bit and fasten it up in the head of your self-sucking cow and she will quit the habit.—*Indiana Farmer.*



"Milk Maid," one of the Herd of Jerseys which took First Prize at the Centennial. Property of Chas. L. Sharpless, Esq., of Philadelphia.

### How the Farm was Bought.

A young man was very anxious to secure a piece of property which was just then for sale on very advantageous terms. He went to confer with a friend of his, who was a banker, about the matter, and to inquire whether it would be prudent to borrow the requisite sum, and pay it in regular installments. He thought he should be able to manage all but the first installment.

He was advised to borrow from the bank enough larger than he wished to raise to cover the first payment, lay it strictly aside, and then go ahead. "But," said his friend, "You must spend literally nothing. You must live off of your place. You must make a box, and drop into it all the money you receive."

The young man and his wife went bravely to work to follow this advice. If it was necessary to dine off a head of boiled cabbage and salt they did so, and never grumbled. Every payment was promptly met. The egg money and the butter money, and the corn and wheat money—all went to the payment box, and at the specified time the place was theirs. There was an invisible wealth about such hard earned possessions that common observers knew nothing of.

On the day for the last payment the young man presented himself before his friend with a smiling face, and with the money in hand. There were no rags to be seen, but his clothing was well covered with darns from head to foot.

"You see I have followed your advice," he said, casting a look over himself, "and my wife looks worse than I do. But we have earned the farm, and now I know how to earn another."

It is to be hoped he did not set out to earn another until he had bought himself and his wife each a new suit, and laid in a good supply of provisions for another such campaign. But his example points in the right direction. A young couple who want to buy a home must agree to be extremely saving. The savings-box must become a regular institution in the house, and must absorb all the dimes that commonly slip away on trifles. Where the two are agreed on the matter it is not nearly so hard as it looks. The little droppings count up faster than you would suppose, and the end in view is a very worthy one. Try the experiment of these young people, in a modified form for one year, and see if the result is not most encouraging and satisfactory.—*Cincinnati Times.*

BEET SUGAR.—We are pleased to learn that the prospects for a large yield of beet sugar in Maine, this year, are very flattering. We are informed that the Maine Beet Sugar Company has been receiving contracts so fast, during the past few weeks, that they will soon have as many beets engaged as their machinery is capable of converting into sugar. Farmers who intend to raise Sugar Beets for the Company this spring should apply immediately or they may be too late. The success of the Company, this year, will be the guarantee of a large increase of this industry. We have always been unable to understand why beet sugar could not be made to a profit in this country, as well as in Europe.—*Ex.*

Many a piece of ground which would otherwise be in fine condition for such root crops as beets, turnips and carrots, is unsuited to either, on account of the weeds which are sure to spring up in such abundance as to require constant attention to prevent them from shading and destroying the young plants. It is useless to undertake to raise roots on such land until the weeds are killed out, and this can be done effectively by frequent ploughing and harrowing. As fast as a crop of weeds appear, the land should be ploughed and harrowed; this treatment vigorously followed up, will in time destroy them. Clean cultivation will prevent land from getting into such condition, but clean cultivation is unknown to some farmers.

### Common-Sense Driving.

Most men over drive. They attempt too much, and in so doing distract or hamper the horse. Now and then you find a horse with such a vicious gait that his speed is got from him by artificial process, but such horses are rare, hence the style of management required cannot become general. The true way is to let the horse drive himself, the driver doing little but directing him, and giving him that confidence which a horse alone gets in himself when he feels that a guide and friend is back of him. The most vicious and inexcusable style of driving is that which so many drivers adopt, viz: wrapping the lines around the hands and pulling the horses backward, so that the horse, in point of fact, pulls the weight back of him with his mouth, not with his breast and shoulders. This they do under the impression that such a dead pull is needed in order to "steady" the horse. This method of driving is radically wrong. With rare exceptions, there should never be any pull upon the horse at all. A steady pressure is allowable, probably advisable, but anything beyond this has no justification in nature or reason; for nature suggests the utmost possible freedom or action of head, body and limbs in order that the animal may attain the highest rate of speed; and reason certainly forbids the supposition that by the bits, and not the breast collar, the horse is to draw the weight attached to him. In speeding our horses we very seldom grasp the lines with both hands when the road is straight and free from obstructions. The lines are rarely steadily taut, but held in an easy pliancy and used chiefly to shift the bit in the animal's mouth and by this motion communicate courage and confidence in him. We find that by this method our horses break less, and go much faster than when driven by men who put the old fashioned steady pull upon them.—*Wallace's Monthly.*

FARMING IN HOLLAND.—In the north of Holland the farms are not over a foot above the level of the sea, and some are lower. The land is loose, spongy muck, and is very rich. It is subdivided into small parcels by canals. There are thousands of wind-mills which are used to pump water all the time. The dwellings are as neat as they possibly can be. They are built in small villages, clustered close together. The roads are all paved, and not a particle of dust is ever seen. They measure distances by the hour, saying that from place to place is ten hours' walk, four hours' boat or two hours' by rail. The houses are built as nicely as any in our cities, about fifty feet square, with about eight feet between the joists on the first floor; all above is used for storing hay. On the one side are the stables for the cattle, and they are models of neatness. The floors are all paved with stone or brick. In these stables where the cattle are they make butter, cheese, do the washing, ironing and baking and the general household work. It is not uncommon thing to see hundreds of cheeses there; they weigh about four pounds each. The bedding is always clean and lasts a good while. When the cattle are put into the stable they are put there for the season, and tied with a rope to the corner of the stall. The air there is always chilly, and the cows are blanketed in summer, and of course are warm in their stalls in winter, for fires are quite generally kept burning in two stoves through the coldest of the season. The calves do not need to be covered in summer, because nature has provided a very thick coating of hair for them, and in winter they are sheared.

WHERE TOMATOES WERE FIRST EATEN.—A Newport correspondent of the *Boston Herald* says that it is a tradition in Newport that tomatoes were first eaten in this country about 1824, in a house still standing on the corner of Corne and Mill streets. About that time there came here an eccentric Italian painter, Michele Felice Corne. He bought a stable on the street now called for him, fashioned it into a dwelling, and there lived and died previous to his coming, and long after tomatoes, then called "love apples," were thought to be poisonous. A gentleman told me today that in 1819 he brought them from South Carolina and planted them in his yard, where they were looked upon as curiosities, and prized for their beauty. They became later, however, a very unpleasant missile in the hands of a small boy. A charming old lady also told me today that in 1825 she was sitting with a sick patient when some one brought the invalid, as a tempting delicacy, some tomatoes. "Would you poison her?" was the exclamation of the astonished attendants, and yet Corne, in his section of the town, had been serving them for a year previous. As late as 1835 they were regarded as poisonous through-out Connecticut.

STABLE BUCKETS.—While chatting with a neighbor yesterday who is deeply interested in matters pertaining to our national finances, I happened to see one of my stable buckets with the bottom knocked out; a thing of no uncommon occurrence. "Now," said he, "I will tell you what I do. I just fit a piece of board to the bottom on the outside, and screw it on with two or three screws, and the bucket will be all right." Acting on his suggestion, I at once obtained a thin piece of board and in a few minutes had it nicely fitted to the bottom. It is a trifling thing, but it will save me some hard thoughts when I see a bucket with a hole knocked through it.—*Ex.*

### When to Skim Milk.

An esteemed correspondent at Essex, Vt., inquires when is the proper time to skim milk, and whether it is always desirable to remove the cream while the milk is sweet. Now this is a difficult question to answer in a few words, partly because there are so many other conditions connected with butter making, all of which may have an important bearing on the question. Under certain conditions, we would prefer to have cream sour when taken from the milk, or certainly very soon afterwards. There is, probably, no month in the year when dairymen are so much annoyed by bad behavior in cream as in November, and at a time, too, when the milk may be kept an indefinite length of time without souring. We might answer that, when milk inclines to keep sweet for a long time, we would prefer to have the conditions changed so that it should sour, and when it sours too readily, we would endeavor to keep it sweet. In July and August, milk set in open pans without ice, and in a warm room, inclines to sour too soon, before the cream has time to rise completely. At this time we would change the conditions so that it shall keep sweet longer. In cold weather, the cream rises so slowly that it often becomes bitter on the pans. Here more heat is wanted, even though it tends to sour the milk. So, we would say, in cold weather keep milk where it will tend to grow sour in forty-eight hours, and in hot weather keep it from souring in less time than twenty-four hours.

We prefer to have milk that is set in open pans ready to skim in from twenty-four to thirty-six hours, the year round, and just ready to sour when the cream is removed, but not really sour, nor thick, like curdled milk. We prefer to have cream slightly acid when it goes into the churn, summer and winter, because it usually comes to butter more readily, while the quality is equally good as from perfectly sweet cream. Milk that has become so sour as to curdle and remain in insoluble flakes will be caught in the butter in the form of white specks, much to its injury both in flavor and keeping qualities. Simple souring, in its early stages, is not injurious to cream for making good butter.—*New England Farmer.*

You can make a good sprinkler for Paris green by punching the bottom of a fruit can or small tin pail full of holes, and tying or nailing it to a short shovel handle. Fill the pail part full of the preparation, put on the cover, and having covered the mouth and nostrils with a damp cloth, pass along the potato rows, giving the pail or "pepper box" a sudden jar or shake, over the centre of the hills, when the potatoes first break ground, or on the tips of the vines after they have attained some size. The young beetles go for the most tender leaves, and a little of the green, if eaten, is quite as effectual as more. You will, probably, find sprinklers and dusters advertised in their season, but this simple, homely affair will answer all purposes, if properly constructed and carefully used.

BUTTER.—In no branch of agriculture is there a wider variation in either quality of product or prices realized than in that of butter making. Manufacturers of milk setting apparatus, churn and butter workers, say this variation is owing to imperfect methods or machines. Others say it is the breed of cows, or the feed, or the salt used. Yet good butter, as we all know, is made from all breeds of cows, from many sorts of feed, in every kind of a churn, and salted with various differing brands of salt. Still there are laws underlying all the different processes through which the material passes from the green feed in the pasture to the exquisitely delicate printed pat, and these laws it is highly desirable that we should all understand. We no longer believe that witches control the cream in the churn, but that there is a philosophical principle involved at every stage, even though we do not fully comprehend or understand that principle.

HEALTHY STOCK.—Every farmer and stock-raiser ought to bear this fact in mind—that burnt corn, coal and wood ashes is one of the very best preventative of disease in pigs, and while such simple remedies are so good they should always be borne in mind and used occasionally, say once or twice a week—an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure. Likewise give your horses and cattle free access to salt and a few ashes; and while they are kept in and fed, you will find it advisable, also, to give them some in their oats or chop at least once a week. It gives animals a general healthy tone. And while such are good, we want it firmly impressed on your minds, and what's more, put in practice.—*Farmer's Advocate.*

### On Raising Horses.

At the present time there seems no prospect of heat ever again fetching a remunerative price, and if such is really the case, there seems no reason why they should not turn their attention more to breeding stock and feeding horses. Not unless "weeds," such as we frequently see incumbering the ground and eating the food which would be better bestowed on animals that may prove really remunerative. And why do we see so many of the same? Simply because we often take no pains to ensure good stock, our system in such cases being to put any mare we may have to any horse, not considering first whether or not they are suitable to each other, the desideratum being cheapness. It is frequently that an inferior mare is put to a stallion which is equally inferior, and the result naturally is a needy filly, which the farmer cannot sell, and in her turn she becomes a brood mare, with the same result, and then the owner with disgust declares that horse-breeding does not pay, whereas the whole blame is with his own stupid self. With proper attention it would be otherwise. In choosing the sire and dam, first be certain they have no hereditary disease. Let the mare be rooky; if she is slight in bone, then look out for a horse with substance; with these precautions taken, should the produce be a filly, she will not be a useless "weed." We are all apt, I consider, to undervalue mares; their powers of endurance are great, and even for harness purposes they need not be objected to as much as they are. Blind stallions should be shunned, and the same may be said of such as have curbs and curby hooks, as well as ring bones, bad feet, and roaring, all such defects are hereditary; not so spavins and splints; but of all defects most readily handed down is blindness, therefore to breed from a horse or mare with a defective vision is a most unwise proceeding.

The *Rural New Yorker* lays down the following rules which it suggests, should be copied upon the first page of every farmer's journal and rigidly adhered to. We fully endorse every one of them: "Owe no small debts." "It is better to borrow money on a note, or a mortgage and pay a moderate interest on it, than to have a number of small debts out." "Buy for cash." "Sell for cash out." "Do not buy a thing that you do not want." "Do not want a thing because it is cheap." "Avoid auction sales." "Never endorse a note." "If you wish to oblige a friend and have the money, loan it to him; but put your name on no man's paper." "An endorsed note comes due always at an inconvenient time." "Never count your money until it is in your pocket."

Corn is a very easy crop to raise and cheaply raised. Plow, harrow and chisel, using from four to six cords manure per acre, and a teaspoonful of some special manure (you can make it yourself very cheaply) in the hill; plant 34 x 34, three spears in each hill; when the corn is up, cultivate one each way, and in a few days weed it. One man can easily weed one acre per day. In about two weeks, cultivate again, as before, and usually no more is to be done till after haying then go through and pull out the weeds if there are any, and you will be pretty sure to harvest a good crop of corn; and the fodder will well pay for all the labor. The next year another application of compost manure thoroughly incorporated with the soil will insure a good crop of wheat and large crop of excellent hay for several years.

PLANTING POTATOES.—Potatoes out to single eyes and planted on land that is sufficiently fertile, will produce a greater crop, according to the amount of seed planted, than in any other mode of field practice. But unless the land is quite rich the sprouts will look very feeble when they first appear above ground, except those which start near the butt end of the potato. The eyes are so thick on the seed end that if only single ones are planted there is very little potato to give the sprout nourishment when it first starts. This is the only objection we know of to fine cutting of seed potatoes.

A PRODUCTIVE FARM.—There is a well-known farmer living on Yonge-street, within a hundred miles of Toronto, who is in a position to make the following proud boast:—Last year four cows on his farm had eight calves; eight sheep had seventeen lambs; one mare had two colts; one goose hatched two broods of goslings, one of nine and the other of eleven and lastly, his wife had twins, a boy and a girl. It would be interesting to know what geological formation underlies that farm.—*Toronto Globe.*

Two splendid thoroughbred English horses have arrived for H. R. H. the Princess Louise.