

horns, medium. Taken all in all, there is no fowl to be compared for all purposes with the Brown Leghorn. They are steady and persistent in egg-production. They are quiet and easily controlled; hardy both as chicks and adult birds, submitting to confinement and thriving therein. There may be objections raised on account of their smallness of body, but the flesh is fine and the bone and offal small. Even these early layers are better the second, and oftentimes the third year. It is the food which tells on the eggs, both in number and size.

C. B. Dutchess County N. Y.

FRAMLINGHAM; ENGLAND.

FIELD CABBAGE.

[At a late meeting of the Framlingham Farmer's Club, Mr. Meers, representative of the firm of Messrs. James Carter & Co., the Queen's Seedmen, High Holborn, introduced the subject of "The Cultivation of Cabbages as a Field Crop." The following are extracts from his paper:—]

THERE are few plants which exhibit so great a tendency to vary in form through cultivation as the *genus brassica*. The following vegetables—Scotch kale or curled greens, colewort, savoy, kohlrabi, cauliflower, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, &c., drumhead, tree cabbage of Jersey, are all varieties of brassica. The varieties used in agriculture may be classed under two heads, namely, the compact and the open headed, of the former, the Drumhead, and of the latter the thousand headed, may be taken as typical specimens. They are especially useful in autumn before turnips come in, and again in spring when turnips are all consumed. Stock of all kinds thrive well upon them and they will fatten sheep without artificial food probably better than any other green food. The cabbage will do well on almost any soil, and much better than turnips upon soils containing a large proportion of clay, the heaviest returns being obtained from the stronger loams and alluvial deposits. Where a good market is within reasonable distance, and suitable varieties are grown, very profitable results are sometimes obtained; for instance, such figures as 40 tons per acre at £6 per ton have been recorded. The thousand-headed kale is particularly well suited for feeding off with sheep. Mr. Russell thus speaks of it:—"It is the least known and most desirable of any green crop I have ever seen. It is a plant that produces more feed per acre than any other, does not disagree with any stock, nor does it impoverish the land. With me it has never caused a sheep or a lamb to blow or scour. Eighteen perches per day, with a little oat straw, have kept 270 sheep for three months without the loss of one." But, besides this, there are other varieties which are admirably adapted for sheep feeding, notably the drumhead, which sometimes produces upwards of 50 ton per acre.

Where cabbages are grown on a large scale, they should be drilled and thinned out as with turnips. On a small scale where the work can be properly superintended, or on very stiff land, where it has not been possible to get a sufficiently good tilth, transplanting may be adopted. There are several objections to transplanting, which has made drilling more popular of late years. In the first place, the plants are often carelessly pulled from the seed-bed, and thus receive a check, which is aggravated at planting time by thrusting them into a hole without any regard to the disposition of their delicate rootlets. Besides which, moist weather is essential to successful planting, and while waiting for this, the season often becomes too far advanced for a full crop. The additional labour, too, which transplanting incurs must not be over-

looked. There is no doubt that drilling would be more universally adopted were it known that the method is applicable to the cabbage crop. (1)

But, besides the main crop, it is a good plan to have a seed bed in readiness from which plants may be taken to fill up blanks in any crop, to replace "runners" which may occur in the main crop, or to plant out where turnips have failed. The first seed bed may be made in February, and for this purpose the soil needs not be very deep, but should be in good condition and fine tilth. About a pound of seed will be required for every 5 or 6 perches, which should be well raked in and rolled. A good dressing of soot will be found useful to keep off slugs. Another seed bed may be made in March, and the main crop drilled in March and April at the rate of 4 to 6 lbs. per acre. Cabbage seed should also be sown in July and August, by which means a good succession will be secured. Thousand-headed kale should be sown in March, July, and August, at the rate of 4 or 5 lbs. per acre, and will succeed well under the same conditions of soil as the drumhead. The land for cabbages should be well and deeply prepared by autumn cultivation and manuring, the latter consisting of as much farmyard dung as the plough will turn under, which may be supplemented at seed time with about 4 cwt. of special cabbage manure or guano. (2) A good plan is to ridge the land in the autumn, spread the dung in the furrows, split back the ridges, and let it lie thus for the winter. In the spring horsehoe and harrow the ridges and drill them up afresh, the distance between the ridges being from 2 to 3 feet, according to the fertility of the soil and the variety of cabbage, the greater distance being suitable for the larger varieties, and where the land is in high condition.

On poor peaty or light soils it is better to drill on the flat, and, when singling, the plants should be left in as good a line as possible, in order that the horse-hoe may be used both ways, which will save much hand-labour in hoeing the crop. When planting on the flat, a marking frame or drill with the coulter set the desired distance should be used for marking out the ground. The implement should be taken across the field both ways, thus marking the exact position for the plants. The land for autumn-sown cabbages should not be very highly manured, or the plants will not stand frost so well. There is no doubt that the cabbage should be more extensively grown than has hitherto been the case. The reason for its comparatively limited cultivation probably lies in the fact that it has been described as expensive to grow and exhausting to the land. But it is a pity that farmers should be dissuaded from growing a valuable crop by such unfounded statements as these. For, where the matter has been intelligently investigated, it has been found that, value for value, the cabbage is no more exhausting than the turnip, which is so widely grown. Certainly they assimilate a larger quantity of plant food, but not relatively to their greater value. Surely then, it is just the kind of plan the farmer should desire. For our definition of the most profitable plant would be as follows:—

—One which can assimilate the largest amount of inorganic matter, and convert it into a relatively large amount of nutritious organic matter. And we consider the cabbage answers to this description better than any other plant of the same class with which we are at present acquainted. With regard to its being expensive, we fail to see why this should be the case, considering they may be cultivated exactly as turnips or mangels, even to drilling the seed. Among the most interesting communications we have lately read, which bears directly upon these two points, is the following:—

(1) In England the seed is cheap, in Canada dear. Six pounds per acre, at \$2.50 per lb., is expensive seedling! A. R. J. F.

(2) Sulph. am.; 2 cwt.; 20 bushels hardwood ashes; and 2 cwt. of superphosphate, with 30 tons of dung. A. R. J. F.