

improved, and the grass much superior in quality; from the frequent repetition of grass, by the present system of farming, the land has become clover sick. This is the only season for many years back, that farmers here have had a second crop fit for cutting—no doubt on account of the close system of cropping. The farms are generally small holdings, from 30 to 100 acres in extent, and owned, for the most part, by the farmers themselves; the fields are small in proportion to the size of the farms. As for the fences (if such they can be called), they are made of divots, or what we term "fall dykes,"—they have been built ages ago, and are quite rotten; they are repaired now and again; the money expended on them during a nineteen years lease would more than build two good stone dykes, they are from four to ten feet wide at the bottom and from two to six feet wide at the top, in some instances they are sown on the top with whins, and where the land is good it makes a tolerably good fence, but this is the exception, not the rule. While at pasture the sheep are tied with a rope about one foot or less in length, with a running noose at both ends; in this noose they put a fore and hind leg, so that the sheep cannot walk; this they call a "lancket;" during wet weather the rope swells, and often cuts the poor animal into the bone; the rope is changed occasionally from one side to the other. We saw numbers of sheep whose legs were cut to the bone, in fact the skin almost growing over the rope, and the matter running down the legs. All this is done on account of the "fall dyke" erections; there is no want of stones for the erection of proper fences—these are easily got, and of excellent quality; they can be raised, in most instances, with a crow bar, two feet broad, six inches thick, and three to four feet long. About two years ago Government sent over Mr. Moodie, late of Dunbog, Fife. This gentleman has erected many miles of substantial stone walls around those portions of the mountains which belong to Her Majesty. If the Manx farmers follow his example in this, they will not only benefit themselves, but confer a boon on Mona. Mr. Mackie is also improving large tracts of land by way of drainage. If three or four fields were put into one and proper stone walls erected, the sheep could be grazed loose, as by nature they were no doubt intended to be, and would fatten—thus paying double what they do now; the present system is to all intents the most barbarous and cruel. The boundary fences are the most crooked imaginable; old farmers say this was for the purpose of giving shelter to the stock, as from whatever quarter the rain came, the animals got sheltered in some corner. In conversation with an old proprietor as to the reason why he did not improve by draining the most boggy portions of his estate, and thus get the fields into proper shape, so as to enable him to cultivate them with profit and economy; his answer was, it grew enough for him and his father, and would do the same for his son. No amount of argument on our part could convince him of the fallacy of his argument, and I was obliged to give it up.—*Cor. Bell's Messenger.*

War on the Canada Thistles.

"I TELL you, John, we must declare war and pitch into them."

"Pitch into what, father?"

"Into these thistles. See how thick they are in that crop of oats, and along that wall, there is a perfect hedge of them. They seem to have grown very vigorous all over the country this year. I think they are increasing in that old pasture. Oats are so late that they go to seed in them before they can be cut, and it makes me nervous to see the white blossoms flying all over the country, though there is this consolation that not one in ten thousand ever grows. Still you will find in the new clearing there will be Canada thistles, and they, of course, come from the seed. It will take a good deal more time to secure these oats than it would if the prickles were out of them. It costs money to harbour these pests, and we might as well spend the money getting rid of them, besides it would save much fretting. We must declare war against them."

"Well, father, you shall be Major-General Commanding in this Department, so issue your orders, and we are ready to obey. Will you have them cut when the stem is hollow so that the water will kill them? Or will you summer fallow and plough six times, or salt them, or cut 'em off four times in a season with a sharp spade? I've seen men that contend that any of these ways is a sure thing, but I notice that the thistles stick by them yet, and I guess they'll stick by us unless a proclamation kills 'em."

The trouble with JOHN, who carried on the farm, was, that he planned only for the ordinary farm work—the getting in of crops, and securing them, &c. So his work was usually kept well up, but he had no time or help for extra jobs. If anything unlooked-

for came up it threw him behind with his regular work. His calculation was for the present, and did not comprehend in what condition, under such management, the farm would be in years hence, contrasted with the state it ought to be in. But the old gentleman, who took his exercise in rambling about the premises, and his resting spell cogitating on a fence under a shade tree, saw the mistake, and its ultimate consequences, and from his long experience in farming evolved a plan of getting rid of the weed that had insidiously and rapidly gained a foothold on his land.

"Ah, John, we won't trust to any one of these methods, for though all of them have killed thistles in separate instances, yet no one of them will exterminate them from a farm. I have taken time (as such time is always well spent,) and planned, and our campaign shall be this:

"We will cut the thistles down to the ground on the whole farm right away. The field that we plant with corn next year must be kept perfectly clean. If the thistles grow in it after we get through cultivating we will go over the field and pull them up with longs, such as Pat says they have in Ireland. I will have several pairs made. We will go through the grain before it heads out and pull out every thistle. The meadows we will cut early, and on the pastures we will try the frequent cutting below the sod, and the salting. I estimate our expenses for this additional labour at one hundred dollars per year while the war lasts."

John promised to raise the black flag and commence the campaign. As he is great on execution, I expect to hear of the enemy being exterminated in three years—except, it may be, a few skulking guerrillas.—*CHIEF, in Rural New Yorker.*

Culture of the Parsnip as a Fodder Plant.

(TRANSLATED EXPRESSLY FOR THE "MARK LANE EXPRESS," FROM THE "JOURNAL D'AGRICULTURE PRACTIQUE.")

Few persons in our country have as yet tried the experiment of planting many of their fields with parsnips, for the purpose of feeding cattle. Those who have tried it, invariably failed on account of their obstinacy in cultivating the parsnip by the same means used for the carrot and beetroot.

But supposing, on the contrary, rejecting the culture of roots, we treat it as a fodder plant, we shall obtain the most satisfactory results, and it will become a valuable resource in giving green fodder at a time of the year when such food is excessively rare.

One great advantage in the parsnip is, it never suffers from the attacks of frost, and it may be left in the field a whole winter without sustaining the slightest injury. It can be cultivated in any situation where beetroot and carrots have given satisfactory products; but the result will be much more sure and complete if care be taken to choose a fresh earth, substantial and deep.

It may be sown from the commencement of April to the 15th of May, in land prepared as for the culture of carrots; the seed should be sown in ridges nearly 12 inches apart (that distance is sufficient to obtain good results in green food). Two dressings should be given to the crop during the dry season, for the purpose of destroying the weeds, and if the plants are carefully thinned till they are about three or four inches apart, by October the foliage will have attained the height of 12 or 16 inches. It may then be cut with a scythe to within two or two and a half inches of the ground, supplying the cattle with a dainty of which they are very fond.

Thus the fields will remain without culture until the end of February or the beginning of March, according to the season. By that time the heads will have again sprouted to the height of 10 or 12 inches, and may be cut as before, from the 15th of April following to the 15th of May. The vegetation is so active, that the parsnip rapidly reaches the height of 40 to 60 inches.

It therefore yields an abundant crop; in fact it is no exaggeration to say that one acre cultivated with parsnips gives at the first cut as much green fodder as four acres of lucerne.

At the last crop, the root should be drawn with the plant; and before giving parsnips in pasture to cattle, the roots should be cut up, and mixed with the leaves in bits,

Those of my milk cows which have been fed in this manner gave me from one to two pints of milk more than their ordinary produce. I ought to say, that unless green fodder is very much needed in October, it is always better to abstain from cutting it at that season; a much better crop will be obtained in February or March, which will more than compensate for the loss of the first cut.

BELOT-DEFOUGERE.

Farm of Joseph McGraw.

To give some idea of the productiveness of land in this vicinity, [Dryden, Tompkins Co.] we might instance the farm of Joseph McGraw, Esq., lying some mile and a half in a northerly direction from the village. The farm consists of 120 acres and is pleasantly located. Mr. McGraw deals extensively in stock and wool, and was among the first to introduce thoroughbred shorthorns in the county. We looked over a fine meadow of twenty-five acres near the dwelling, which cut, the past season, seventy-five tons of hay. It has been down in grass twelve years, and was seeded with twelve quarts timothy, eight quarts red top and four quarts of clover to the acre. It presented a closely matted sward, with no intervening spaces, the whole ground being filled with grasses. Plaster is used here at the rate of a bushel per acre for top dressing, and it is also top dressed with manure. Mr. McGraw believes in old pastures as producing a better quality of food than recently re-seeded grounds, and says as much meat can be made on cattle pastured in these old pastures as on newly seeded grounds, by the addition of a daily allowance of meal in connection with the grass grown on such fields. The matter has been very thoroughly tested by him, and after years of experience and close observation, he gives his testimony in favour of old pastures, either for the production of milk or beef.

Adjoining the meadow, there are some three acres of old turf that were ploughed up two years ago and planted in corn, the yield being four hundred and twenty bushels of shelled corn per acre. The land had been in sod for a number of years, with an annual top dressing of of barnyard manures at the rate of twenty loads per acre. This is one of the largest yields on record this side of the great corn lands of the West, and shows what the soil of Tompkins county is capable of doing under good cultivation and thorough management.

In our slight examination of this farm, we were greatly pleased with the neatness, order, system and intelligent manner in which everything about the premises seemed to be conducted, and only regretted that our time was so limited that we were unable to obtain all the notes desired. Mr. McGraw has a large farm in the town of Caroline, and among other crops gave us the yield of oats on twenty acres; the average was a fraction over 94 bushels per acre. We hope at some future period to make a thorough examination of farms and farming in this county, believing that a record of their operations will prove interesting to the farmers of this section.—X. A. WILLARD, in *Utica Herald.*

Large Crops of Mangel Wurzel.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER:

SIR,—I perceive in your edition of January the 1st, that Mr. Johnson, of Genesee, has obtained at the rate of 33 tons of mangels to the acre, and considers it a remarkable crop. In the hope that it may be interesting to your readers, I give you a sketch of the means often used in Europe to obtain much larger crops. Monsieur Kœchlin, a very celebrated Alsatian agriculturist, imagined that it would be of the utmost importance in the cultivation of mangel wurzel to advance its season of vegetation two months in the spring, when the moisture of the earth and atmosphere would very much favour its development. He therefore raised the plants under glass—500 plants occupying a square yard—and transplanted them out as early as the ground was prepared to receive them, taking care to cut off the end of the tap root, and the tops of the leaves, according to the usual practice with cabbage plants. He obtained in this manner, 340 tons to the "hectare," or 10,000 square yards, (about 2½ of our acres.) Monsieur Kœchlin employed forty square yards of glass, in order to obtain 20,000 plants, that occupied a hectare, being transplanted at one yard distance between the lines, and half a yard between each plant. The success of this system was so great (producing mangels of an average of 17 kilogrammes, (34 lbs.) that it soon came into general use, and has rendered the very greatest assistance to agriculture in France and Italy. Under less favourable circumstances, it was tried in the south of France, by Monsieur De Gasperies, and with the greatest success. I followed M. De Gasperies' example in Italy, and surpassed him, (no doubt from being in a more favourable position.) I think it properly tested, it would answer admirably in Upper Canada, and would be found more economical than sowing, and much more profitable, as an acre of land will fatten seventeen pairs of oxen, allowing seven tons of mangels for each pair.

I am, &c.,

J. M. DECOURTENAY.

Clair House, Jan. 5, 1866.