

Miscellaneous.

Jottings by the Way.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER :

SIR,—Having just completed a short agricultural tour, through parts of the counties of Durham, Northumberland, Victoria, and Peterborough, a few of my jottings may not be uninteresting to your readers.

At Port Hope I had the good fortune to fall in with Mr. Hume, who kindly drove me over to Mr. John Wade's, where we spent a few hours in very agreeable conversation on agricultural matters. Mr. Wade has recently been inspecting some of the cheese factories in the Mohawk valley, N. Y., and he is decidedly of opinion that the system can be profitably adopted in Canada, modified, of course, to meet local conditions and wants. He intends adopting it himself. There is no winter wheat along the front for many miles. Spring wheat is short, and in many places thin, affected more or less by the midge; the hay crop short, pastures dried up, and spring grain generally deficient in straw. Potatoes look healthy, but form tubers slowly. Mr. Hume, (who farms about half a dozen miles back,) cultivates rather extensively the choicer kinds of peas for seedmen, and says that these crops will be very short. Turnips, mangolds, &c., are much behind, in many places there is a want of plant, although re-sowing has been resorted to. The desolating effects of the severe and protracted drought are everywhere apparent. Upon dry, well formed land, where the crops could be got in early, the results are much more encouraging.

In Victoria and parts of Peterborough, the fall wheat was being harvested, and the crop, in many places, will not be much short of an average, and not being affected by the midge, it will be of good quality. Spring wheat, too, will not be so bad as was at one time expected. I observed many pieces of turnips; though late, they looked healthy and promising, and will produce fair crops, if favourable weather should now follow. Mr. Hopkins, of Lindsay, has tried *Gibbs' Improved Green-top Yellow Turnip*, with entire satisfaction. It bears late sowing, bulbs and keeps well, and gives little or no taste to milk and butter. This variety is but little, if at all known, in Canada. It is of Scottish origin, derived from the old Scotch yellow. It grows deeply in the ground, and therefore, perhaps, is not so well suited to clay soils; but its skin is remarkably smooth, and the internal part of the bulb very solid; it is exceedingly handsome in form, and is regarded by many as little, if at all, inferior to the Swede for feeding purposes. This variety is certainly deserving a more extensive trial in Canada.

I am indebted to Mr. John Thirkell, of Lindsay, for a very interesting drive through the townships of Ops and Mariposa. This is a fine section of country, the soil resting on limestone, is generally of first class, in many places well farmed, and considering the character of the present season, wheat, especially the winter, is good; the spring grain here, as elsewhere, has suffered the most. Mariposa, I should say, cannot be exceeded by any township in Canada. Mr. Thorndyke, of Oakwood, is erecting a suite of farm buildings of superior character; and the appearance of farms generally denotes thrift and progress. The town of Lindsay has astonishingly recovered from the disastrous fire with which it was visited three years since, and from its position and the surrounding fertile country, it is destined to become a place of considerable importance.

Having spent a most agreeable day in sailing round the lakes, in the steamer Ogemah, under its communicative and gentlemanly commander, Captain Wallace, I reached the pretty town of Peterborough in the evening. The route I took is one that must ultimately attract vast numbers of travellers, as it becomes better known. The crops in the township of Smith, must be considered comparatively good; varying of course with the character of the soil and the style of farming; the latter often affecting the result more than the former. I spent a few hours with Mr. Gilmour, who has a farm and nursery in the immediate vicinity of the town, in a delightfully picturesque position. I am indebted to Mr. Gilmour, sen., for a pleasant ride to Mr. John Walton's, where breeding and farming operations generally may be studied to advantage. Mr. Walton is an advocate for large fields, and has extensively practised under-draining, with stones procured from the farm. He raises turnips from the most weedy land, and by putting the drills wide apart, the ground becomes perfectly clean by repeated horse-hoings during the summer, and is in excellent condition for a spring crop. I afterwards spent a few days in East Northumberland, and attended a Convention of School

Teachers at Colborne, where I gave an address on the importance and practicability of teaching the elements of agricultural science in our public schools. After the subject had been discussed by several persons in a numerous meeting, it was carried in the affirmative by a unanimous vote. The interest which the teachers evinced in their work at this meeting, which lasted five days, favourably impressed me, and I may return to the matter hereafter.

GEO. BUCKLAND.

University College, Aug. 8, 1864.

Farming and Farm Life in Canada.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER :

SIR,—I observe in your valuable paper, a letter from a gentleman in Somersetshire, respecting Canadian farming. I myself came from the lower part of Gloucestershire; I think I know the information he requires, and I will give him some of the results of my observation and experience, that he may judge for himself. The man who has best succeeded in this country, is the labourer, who went into the bush and worked out his independence. During the processes of chopping and first cropping, all went well with him. But how to farm it, now that his land is cleared he is at a loss, and begins to lose instead of gain. The usual process of farming here, is this: Three white straw crops in succession, a summer fallow and then three more white crops. The hay is allowed to stand until it is fit for seed, and then when made put into the barn. The barn in fact, is expected to cover all his 100 acre crops. The stock kept will average from six to twenty sheep, from one to six cows, a few young animals, and perhaps two span of horses. The horses eat all the best feed, the cows are allowed to run over the fallow and roads among thistles, which is the best crop here, in the summer, and eat the refuse of the horses in the winter. The sheep share the same fate. Cow cribs, hurdles, and sheep racks are unknown in most parts of Canada. The pigs, too, are allowed to go without rings, and the best pigs not cut. If you talk to the farmer about these modes of operation, he will tell you farming does not pay; if you put in grain the midge eats all up, &c. If you tell him better cultivation would cure the midge, he replies he has farmed for twenty or thirty years, as the case may be, and he guesses he knows as much about farming as the next man. The Somersetshire gentleman will thus see if he could make any improvement upon existing practices. The spring is short in Canada I admit, but I think the long autumn will out-balance it. The English gentleman who comes here will have to mingle with society he has not been used to; the roads, too, are not what he is accustomed to see in the neighbourhood of Bath and Frome; when he travels fast here he will expect his gig to be broken every moment, to say nothing of the severe shaking he will get himself. These things, however, will improve in time, but if he intends coming to Canada, he must make up his mind to give up all pleasure, for there is none to be had here, and work hard. Get money he can I am sure, as a stock and dairy man; skill and capital is what is really required here. He must not forget the nature of the roads, and the state of society, or he will be deceived. By all means let him buy cleared land, for I can assure him the very best of it would look poor indeed, compared with the beautiful fields of Somersetshire.

JOHN MATHERS.

Pine Grove, C. W.

NOTE BY ED. C. F.—That poor farming has done much to bring the profession of agriculture into disrepute, and to lower the estimate of Canada as an agricultural country, cannot be doubted for a moment. Our correspondent does not draw an exaggerated picture at all. We have observed such methods of farming as he describes, and have heard farmers talk in the style of which he gives us a sample. The almost entire disregard of the principles of rotation, neglect of stock keeping, manure making and the like, have made farming a poorly-paying business indeed. All slipshod, thriftless modes of working must be abandoned, and an intelligent system of doing things must be carried out, if our agriculture is to do us credit, and make us rich.

Our correspondent says in reference to the emigrating gentleman farmer, that he must "make up his mind to give up all pleasure, for there is none to be had here." By this we suppose he means such pleasure as fox hunting, &c. Surely he does not intend to say that life in Canada is wholly devoid of pleasure. That would be a queer argument in favour of emigration to this country.

Weather and Crop Items.

THE following communication ought to have appeared in our last issue. It is from a "A Canada Farmer," Derby, July 23, 1864:—"The haying is now nearly over in this vicinity, although there will be some to cut next week, some are waiting till as near harvest as it is safe for them to do, not to have them interfere with each other, alleging that the clover is still growing, and that timothy will not suffer, having been retarded in its growth by frost and drouth in June. I am afraid that those advocates of late hay-making, will lose in quality quite as much as they gain in quantity.

The weather is again exceedingly dry, with at present, no appearance of rain; the last two days have been rather cool for the season, and yesterday morning there was quite a severe frost, but owing to the drouth, I think the damage done is but slight.

We had a couple of fine showers about a fortnight ago, which have done an incalculable amount of good to the crops, this is the only rain that we have had since the latter end of seeding time. The haying season has been all that could be desired, and although the yield is certainly not more than one-third of last year's crop, the quality must be excellent, as the most careless could scarcely but have it in prime condition.

Harvest will be on in a few days here; fall wheat and barley are coming on rapidly, and by the time they are disposed off, peas, spring wheat, &c., will require to be attended too. With regard to the appearance of the crops, there is no real cause of complaint, for although the straw of all kinds of grain is much lighter than last year, I think from present appearances, that the yield of grain will be much better. There is as yet no appearance of the aphid, which I think has been the principal cause of our light yields of grain for the last two years."

MIDGE PROOF WHEAT.—"J. E. Courte," of Yarmouth, County of Elgin, writes:—"I see in your last number (July 15) an account of the midge proof wheat raised by one Mr. Stewart. I have got it and the Mediterranean wheat, the Soules wheat, and the white chaff Genesee wheat. It was all sown on a sandy gravel soil the 3rd of September. The midge proof is the worst wheat we have to stand the winter. There is a great deal sown in Yarmouth, but the most part of it was ploughed up this spring, and what is left will not yield, on an average, one-sixth of a crop. What we call the midge proof is a bald wheat, with red chaff and red berry. The straw does not rust, and grows short. The berry is plump, and it gets ripe about ten days earlier than the rest of the wheat raised free from midge. I send you herewith a sample of the midge proof, and should like to know if it is the same as Mr. Stewart's."

NOTE BY ED. C. F.—Not having a sample of Mr. Stewart's wheat at hand, we are unable to compare the two specimens. Our impression is, however, that they are not the same variety.

"B. M.," of Selkirk, writes in reference to the "midge proof wheat":—"We have thoroughly tested the matter in this section this year, and find it entirely satisfactory. I sowed one field to midge proof and Kentucky wheat, side by side, and at the same time. The midge proof is entirely free from midge, and the Kentucky is full of it. This is the experience of every person who has tried it. There is plenty of it in this neighborhood. One farmer has as much as 500 bushels."

CROPS IN MISSISSQUOI.—A correspondent of the Montreal Gazette writes:—"A couple of days in the county of Missisquoi have convinced me, as well from what I have seen as heard, that the crops in this part of the country will, on the whole, be excellent. Hay is now being cut, but there is a good deal yet standing. The quality is very good, and the quantity will be much greater than we of the city were led to expect from the doleful stories which reached us from all parts about the late drought, which has, undoubtedly, done immense damage to a large portion of this northern continent. I hear, too, there is a great deal of last season's hay over. Corn, peas, the coarse grains, and potatoes, are all looking well. Wheat in the west of this county, I hear, is unusually good."