

I am well aware, Sirs, that the quantity of clover-seed *generally* sown by farmers in this country varies from two to five pounds per acre. In England I never sowed less than 18, and here not less than 14 lbs., with from 3 to 5 lbs. of timothy, to the acre. Some people may think this too much, but I will prove that it is not so; for, in the first place, I am convinced that the farmer here, by *thin* sowing, has *one-third, at least*, of his clover-plant thrown out and killed, at the breaking up of the winter, by alternate thawing and freezing, which the plant is subject to in this climate; for I have witnessed with my own eyes the effect, wherever a paucity of seed has been the farmer's practice; but never have I found it so, except where draining was very badly needed, in the course of my observations, where the plant, at the commencement of the winter, was as thick upon the ground as it ought to be. Besides, where can the man be found who has not observed, in walking over his clover-fields, when we have to contend with one of our dry, scorching summers, or, indeed, during the ordinary hot months of every summer, *that* the latter end of last summer that I had the pleasure of spending a day with one of our most respected and zealous farmers—an extensive Durham and South Down breeder, who was lamenting the condition of his flock and herd, through the failure of their pasturage, in consequence of the dry summer; but when I pointed out to him the thinness of the clover plant (second year's growth), and I found, on inquiry, the small quantity of seed, 5 lbs. to the acre, he had sown, and upon making him acquainted with the quantity that I, with many others, usually sow, it was no longer a mystery to him that there was a thin plant, or that the sun and frost, together with his cattle, had made the pasture so bare. And on reflecting upon what I had said, he at once saw the advantage derivable from thick sowing, and allowed that it would be best to practice it in future. But it is not only the bare loss of pasturage and hay that accrues from this miserable system of thin sowing of clover and other grass seeds. Look, for instance, at the incalculable loss in beef, mutton, tallow, butter, cheese, and wool that the farmer individually, and the country collectively sustains, from the mistaken economy of this single operation of husbandry. If a farmer gets but half a *wheat* crop, he is not long considering the extent of his loss without setting about repairing that loss as quickly as he can. And if, then, he gets but half a crop of hay, or half the quantity of

fat mutton, beef, wool, cheese, and butter, for market, from a cause that is almost immediately under his own control, is he not bound to make the exertion; nay, is it not equally his interest in the one case as in the other, to redeem the error as speedily as possible that creates the loss?

There is another evil I would also wish to point out, arising from the sowing of grass seeds, and which every one will, I think, allow to be of equal magnitude with those already named—it is the filth and weeds of one kind or another which takes possession of the soil, that not only chokes, but deteriorates your grain crops to a very considerable extent, and also creates an enormous expense in securing a good, clean tilth for the root and grain crop that has to follow. There is nothing, in my opinion, that will keep a farm so free from weeds, and in good heart, *at so small a cost*, as a thick plant of clover! I speak advisedly on this point, from many years' experience and conviction.

Besides all the advantages and disadvantages *of the most important one* to speak upon. It is the rich and highly-prepared state in which the soil is left, by the great mass of fertilising matter deposited by the clover-root, on which the wheat plant delights to luxuriate, previously to and during the filling of the ear; and the consequent increase will be from seven to ten bushels per acre! Let any farmer give the practice a fair trial, and I dare hazard my right hand he will find it as I have stated. Again, from experience, I can affirm, that upon my clover ley I have grown both heavier, finer, and a larger quantity of wheat per acre than I could ever produce in any other way. This is where I sowed not less than 18 lbs. of clover-seed to the acre, with no other grass seeds. But here I would recommend not less than 12 to 15 lbs., with 3 or 4 lbs. of timothy. But if required for market hay, of course considerably less clover, and more timothy-seed must be used. Are not, therefore, Messrs. Editors, the facts I have here stated worthy of a consideration with the farming community of this country? Let me ask, if a ton to a ton and a half of hay to the acre *extra*; one third more, if not double the amount of stock kept, and wool clipped, upon the farm, with at least from 5 to 10 bushels more wheat, as well as other grain in proportion, grown per acre, and a clean, creditable farm, in good condition, *will not almost double the farmer's gains*? Surely it is a system that will recommend itself, when it can be effected at so trifling an outlay, compared with the advantages in every way gained. I am well