

Lucerne.—From Australia we hear that although the crop stands well through a single season of drought, after two or three such seasons even the subsoil fails to supply sufficient moisture. But, in spite of this, investigations made this year have shown that owners of lucerne pastures in that country have been able to keep thousands of live stock that must have perished had grass been their sole dependence. A single inch of rainfall start a lucerne plant growing. Here in Canada, our heavy snowfall ensures us against a desiccated subsoil.

Agricultural Imports.—During the three months ended March 31st, the imports of living animals for food amounted in value to £2,634,215, as compared with £2,319,300 in the corresponding period of 1897. The number of oxen imported was 139,526, against 122,249. Of these 110,789 against 100,958 last year, came from the United States; 23,358, against 16,756, from the Argentine Republic; 288, against 369, from Canada; and 5,091, against 4,166 from other countries. There were 182,069 sheep imported, against 137,826, of which 59,901, against 53,051, came from the United States; 116,338 against 82,189 from the Argentine Republic; 3,511, against 2,586, from Canada; and 2,319 from other countries. The number of pigs imported during the quarter was 188, none having arrived last year. The value of corn imported was £15,431,568 against £14,136,373 last year. Dead meat was imported of the value of £6,918,445, against £6,056,046 last year. The quantity of fresh beef imported was 673,323 cwt., against 639,342 cwt. last year, and of fresh mutton, 721,424 cwt., against 696,142 cwt. last year. The value of butter imported was £4,328,542, against £4,367,018; margarine, £616,324, against £668,316; cheese, £830,887, against £923,946; eggs, £887,503, against £943,273. The quantity of potatoes imported was 1,908,670 cwt., against 1,109,458 cwt. last year. Of condensed milk the value was £376,785, against £345,874.

Mangels.—As a rule, the few farmers that grow mangels in this province consume the crop too early in the feeding season. Mangels have properties that which give them a money value beyond that of ordinary roots. Their keeping properties render them highly suitable to late spring and early summer feeding. Our dear old farm-tutor, the late William Rigden, the Sussex ram-breeder, used to give almost any price for mangels in July, for his exhibition sheep. Wrightson, of Downton Agricultural College, Eng., says:

“It is during May, June, and July that a stock of mangel becomes most valuable upon a farm, and during summer it is almost as good as cake or corn for stock-feeding. If a fair crop of 30 to 40 tons per acre of mangel can be grown after roots fed, it is not unreasonable to assess its feeding or consuming value at 7s. 6d. to 10s. per ton. This, if a fair estimate, places it in a much higher position than even a good crop of wheat. The matter is well worth considering. I have in view the case of a good piece of kale now being fed off by sheep receiving cake and corn, and in a few weeks the same land will be carrying a promising crop of mangel. The value of this crop will, it is hoped, amount to a sum arrived at by multiplying the weight per acre in tons by a certain number representing the supposed feeding value of a ton of mangel in May or June. It is unnecessary to name either figure, for they lie in the dim future, controlled both by the weight of the crop and the then abundance or scarcity of keep.”

Why should not we here sometimes follow a potato crop with mangels. It would take less labour to work than after a grain-crop, and although the rotation would be broken, the extra dressing the land would receive for the mangels would well make up for the slight damage, and two grain-crops might be taken to square matters. A couple of hundred pounds of nitrate of soda, or its equivalent in sulphate of ammonia, say 140 lbs. an acre, should always be used for mangels, as it is clear, from hundreds of practical experiments, that mangels are, as the Scotch say, “avid” of nitrogen.

Beet-sugar in England.—A good deal of excitement in England about beet-sugar. The total failure of the great sugar-beet farm of Campbell of Buscot, on which 1,700 acres of beets were grown in one year (1865?) will probably deter the prudent men of England from entering into the speculation, particularly since wheat is likely to be high in