

THE CAPE BRETON ADVOCATE.

Wheat.

Wheat. Owing to the great importance of wheat culture to the farmers of Cape Breton, also to the necessity of the time of year when Winter Wheat should be sown, it is our duty to devote some of our editorial space intended for their monitor, to a letter on Winter Wheat, written about instances by practical men whose practical knowledge of the question is worthy of the consideration of those who cannot have too much wheat of any variety of grain, constituting the staff of life, which hitherto has proved inflexible to the attacks of the world, which have resulted on a temporary spring wheat, making its successful cultivation in some sections almost an impossibility.

We have often before called the attention of our farmers to the advisability of cultivating this very successful cereal, and now that we are enabled to place the matter in such practical shape before them, by giving them, through the columns of this paper, the experience of a gentleman who has successfully grown it for two seasons, and as we are in a position to take orders for supplying seed—without regard to any benefit ourselves, other than a legitimate advertising fee—we hope to see a goodly number of our energetic farmers seize the opportunity at once and send in orders for Winter Wheat.

PAUL WHEAT FOSTER. There is no reason why wheat sown in the Autumn should not succeed in this Province. The greatest care must, of course, be taken to select the situation of the ground. We need hardly say that it should be dry; not on a hill, but in a place where it has two feet from shade or other cause in the spring. The previous crop should be taken in consideration when sowing another grain crop is not good farming.

The preparation for the crop is simple enough. Let us suppose a new or nearly new ground removed from the ground. The land should be pretty clean, if the horse has been employed as it ought to be up to the last possible moment when the land is ready to strike lands across the rows. The furrows should be six or eight feet apart, and the drills will level them and the seed should be sown in a line, with a furrow of 31 in. deep by 9 inches wide. No harrowing afterwards, if you please, as the rougher the land has all the winter the better.

The crests of the furrows will protect the young plant from the cutting blasts which might lay the rows late. Now that is the rationale of it? Wheat, like barley and rye, has two sets of roots, one set springing from the seed, the other from the stem, about an inch below the surface. At whatever depth the soil may be sown, it stands to reason that, as the depth of the coronal or uppermost roots is constant, one inch from the surface or seed—if the seed is only one inch deep, the coronal and germinal roots will be close to each other as they have no separate influence; but at three or four inches deep, they will stand well apart, and the coronal roots will be able to exert their intended office of acting as supports, or stays, and the plant will be less likely to be drawn out of the ground by the alternate rains and thaws of early spring.

It is in every case, from these coronal roots that the tillering takes place. Now, when the seed is sown at random near the top of the pipe of connection between the two sets of roots is very short, the plant reaps no benefit from its double provision, and it must be plain to the most careless observer, runs a great risk of being left bare of earth, when after the alternate expansion and contraction caused by frost and thaw, the rough gusts of wind pass over it, in March and April.

This plan of ploughing in wheat is very much to be preferred to drilling it with the machine, or less horse being intended, because in the first place, the ground need not be made so fine—the drill will not keep its depth, unless the land is a good one, and requires a firm texture of soil, and the crests of the furrows, if the land is laid up as it should be at an angle of 45°, will certainly prove a great defence to the young plant in autumn, and, in spring, will moulder down and earth up the roots.

When the winter is passed and the land is dry, a pair of light harrows should be passed across the rows, do not fear pulling up the plants—there is no danger—the heavy roller now follows and completes the job. Immediately after this the tillering begins and will establish most people if they have never seen wheat cultivated after this fashion.

In this Province the wheat should be in the ground by the 15th of September; if the grain is laid even four inches deep it will be up in front of the 15th days—no good arises, but rather the contrary, from too fast a growth in autumn. A. R. J. FAY in the Montreal Journal of Agriculture.

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