

licable, drilled at the same time. On wet or very damp land I found that the winter frost killed far more of them when exposed than did the summer's sun, and at the same time left the land in a good state for spring seeding. Very much depends however on the sort of plough used. I ploughed a field one spring and sowed the one half of it in peas, summer-fallowing the other half. I cross-ploughed the portion on which the peas had been as soon as the latter were off, the following spring. The field was literally covered with the pests, so I purchased one of the improved No. 4 ploughs, and ploughed it again. The land being too wet for harrowing, I one day set my odd team to plough with one of Gray's iron ploughs. The result was that where the iron plough worked there were afterwards plenty of thistles, while after the No. 4 there remained only a few sickly plants.—W. W.

Coal Ashes.

(To the Editor of the CANADA FARMER.)

SIR.—Would you kindly answer the following, through the FARMER?

1st. Are coal ashes a benefit to land, and if so in what proportion to wood ashes?

2nd. If not a benefit, are they a detriment to land? I burn two coal stoves and one wood stove. The ashes are all put together in the ash-pail and emptied around in the garden, and I have been told that I am injuring the land by so doing.—Yours truly,

A SUBSCRIBER.

[Coal ashes consist largely of siliceous and silicates, and are very deficient in lime. With wood ashes it is quite the reverse. The following statement shows the proportionate quantities in each—

Coal Ashes (Common).	Oak Ashes (Liebig).
Lime	50.58
Phosphates	5.65
Silica	3.37

It will thus be seen that wood ashes contain about six times as much lime as coal ashes, whereas, in the latter the silica predominates in even greater proportion. Now certain plants, as the oak, the apple, the pear, etc., contain little or no silica, while the bark of the cherry, grape, etc., and the stiff glazed stem of the cereals abound in that article; hence we conclude that, whilst to plants of the former class, coal ashes may be of little or no value, to the latter they are invaluable as furnishing the very constituents that enter so largely into their composition. As we hinted before, coal ashes can at any rate do but little, if any, harm, and when, as in the case before us, they are mixed to so large an extent with wood ashes, their fertilizing properties are we think placed beyond doubt. Ed. C. F.]

The Mocking Bird.

To the Editor of the CANADA FARMER.

SIR.—It is, in truth, a treat of no small magnitude to "listen to the mocking-bird," but I fear your correspondent, Charles Arnold, is in error when he asserts, in your last impression, that the enjoyment of that treat is accessible to the inhabitants of the neighborhood of Paris. He says that "the mocking-bird and the thrush (by the way the mocking-bird is a thrush) never fail to build their nests in the branches of an Austrian pine," in that locality.

Now I never heard of the occurrence of the *Turdus polyglottus*, even as a casual visitant, in Canada. Wilson informs us that it is "much more numerous in those States south, than in those north of the Delaware," and I do not think it approaches our Dominion nearer than the New England States, although I need scarcely add that we should hail with delight a migratory visit from so unrivalled a songster.

I cordially sympathize with Mr. Arnold in his remarks respecting the desirability of planting evergreens, and read his article on that subject with much pleasure.

VINCENT CLEMENTI, B. A.

Peterboro', Feb. 24th, 1874.

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The Canada Farmer.

TORONTO, CANADA, MARCH 2, 1874.

Meeting of the Fruit Growers' Association of Ontario.

The Fruit Growers held their winter meeting in the City Hall, Hamilton, on Thursday, the 19th. Feb., 1874. There was present a large number of members, representing nearly all parts of the Province. We noticed members from Prince Edward and Ontario Counties taking an active interest in the discussions. A most gratifying proof that fruit growing is attracting attention in the eastern parts of the Province.

The meeting was called to order at about eleven o'clock, by the president, Rev. R. Burnet, of Hamilton, and after the usual routine business, proceeded to consider the subject of *Pear Blight*. It appeared from the remarks that were made, that while some places, indeed very many, had wholly escaped last summer, or suffered only very slightly from this cause, in other places the blight had been unusually fatal, destroying, in one instance, as much as seventy-five per cent. of the bearing trees. This disease of our pear trees has been more or less prevalent for about forty years, and has been the subject of considerable inquiry or investigation; opinions have been advanced with regard to its cause and cure, too numerous and conflicting to admit of recapitulation here; experiments of great diversity and exhibiting no small amount of ingenuity have been tried upon it, and yet the disease seems to remain shrouded in impenetrable mystery. Those who have been most painstaking in their researches have confessedly been compelled to change their views with regard to it as often as once a year, and seem to feel more than ever, that they have no certain ground to stand upon. Applications and operations that seemed to promise success, and that for some years appeared to prevent or ward off the attacks of the blight, have suddenly failed, and the disease swept through the plantation with fearful fatality, as though the angel of death had been commissioned with a work of extermination. As might be expected, the discussion on this subject was long and earnest, the experiences and experiments of members most amusingly diversified, and the conclusions reached wholly inconclusive.

Yes, unsatisfactory as this may seem, and discouraging to those who have been contemplating the planting of a pear orchard, and who naturally hesitate to embark in an enterprise which promises to end so disastrously, there has been no reason to complain of the results of pear growing as a whole, to those who have undertaken to grow the fruit for market. Said a gentleman to the writer, when showing his fine pear orchard, once fine, but then just blackened by a most destructive visitation of the blight, "that orchard of pear trees looks like a very poor investment, and it is indeed discouraging to see the trees die in this way just after they have come nicely into bearing, and when they might be expected to continue to bear for many years to come, but that orchard has paid me the best of anything I ever grow, it has paid me well and I shall proceed at once to plant another." One thing is certain, so long as we have this pear tree blight to contend with, pears will not be very likely to be grown in excess of the demand.

The meeting next proceeded to discuss the affection known as the rot in plums, and to endeavor to ascertain what varieties were least liable to the rot, and what were the best methods of preventing its appearance. The opinion seemed to prevail that no variety was wholly exempt from rot, but that those which bore their fruit in dense clusters suffered most severely; and that generally the Dawson plums suffered less than the larger and lighter colored sorts. Nothing definite was reached as to the cause or cure of this affection of the fruit. Mr. Roy, of Berlin, stated that Glass' Seedling Plum did not grow in clusters and therefore was not subject to rot.

Considerable time was given to the consideration of the best varieties of plum for market, the soils best suited to their growth, and the best methods of protecting the plum trees from the borer, and much very valuable information was elicited from the experience of members on these points.

Another hour was spent in the consideration of the Grape, the best soil for its cultivation, the best preparation of the soil previous to the planting of the vines, and the best method of pruning and training. Mr. Bauer, of Hamilton, brought a vine to the meeting and demonstrated to the members his methods of pruning. The discussions on these subjects were very interesting, and made it very apparent that considerable attention is being given to the cultivation of the vine, and that with usually very satisfactory results.

The president exhibited to the meeting the medals awarded to the Association at the exhibition of the American Pomological Society, last autumn. Four of these were of silver, and one of bronze. Upon one side is embossed a likeness of the venerable president of the American Pomological Society, Marshall Pinckney Wilder, and on the reverse, a very artistic wreath, within which is engraved the presentation to the Ontario Association. It was very gratifying to see that in a competition with the States of the neighboring Republic, Ontario should carry off so many silver medals, and take the lead in both plums and hardy grapes.

There was present at the meeting as a delegate from the Horticultural Society of Western New York, Mr. E. Moody, of Lockport, N. Y., whose presence added much to the interest of the occasion. He gave a very interesting account of what was being done in the way of fruit growing in Western New York. The county in which he resided, the county of Niagara, had received for the fruit crop of 1873, upwards of a million and a quarter of dollars, and while those counties which were chiefly engaged in manufacturing, had suffered severely from scarcity of money during their financial panic, consequent on the failure of Jay Cooke & Co., in that county money had been abundant, so that they had been able to lend a helping hand to adjacent counties that had been less fortunate. That experience had shown that fruit growing was a profitable business, and that the demand for good fruit more than kept pace with the supply.

The secretary stated that the report for 1873 was now printed, and would be mailed to all old and new members as rapidly as possible. That an edition of four thousand had been printed, which it was hoped would prove to be sufficient. Also that the report of 1872 had now been mailed to all, the delay having been occasioned by the unexpected increase of membership, which exhausted the first edition, making it necessary to set up the whole report a second time, and print off a second edition. The report for 1873 is replete with very valuable information, and handsomely illustrated with a colored lithograph of the Salem Grape, and of