

we can safely state, that the library, even now, contains the *very best* Agricultural publications that are in print in both languages. "Book Farming" may be ridiculed, we are convinced, nevertheless, that it has been the chief means of promoting Agricultural improvement, and if we required any proof of this, we can point out the backward and unprofitable state of Agriculture amongst those who never read an Agricultural book or periodical. Every ignorant man knows no more of the art of Agriculture than what he sees practiced before him. What is "Book Farming" but the most perfect and successful practice recorded in print, for the instruction of those who have not an opportunity of seeing this practice? The Lower Canada Agricultural Society, with sufficient means, and judicious employment of those means, may produce a most important change, for the better, in the condition of the people of Canada. A commencement has been made, auspiciously, and if it does not advance successfully, it must be owing to the want of the necessary support, and indifference to the interests of Agricultural improvement in Canada.

We copy the following from Thær's Agriculture, and every intelligent farmer will perceive how practically correct are Mr. Thær's ideas:—

There is not a single vegetable substance, even down to the stubble which most crops leave behind them, which does not restore some portion of mould or manure to the soil. The longer that stubble is, the greater effect does it produce; therefore where a similar quantity of manure is bestowed on the land, the soil becomes less exhausted in those districts where it is customary to have the stubble long when the crop is reaped. It is necessary, however, that this stubble should be buried without loss of time, as it appears that it only becomes decomposed when buried in the soil, but that when exposed to the air it dries up and turns to powder. In general the stubble of plants which possess long thick roots and stems deposits a larger portion of vegetable matter in the soil than the stubble of corn-fields; but that which is productive of the most beneficial effects when buried with roots and stems in the stubble of vegetables which have not borne their seeds, or become dry, and straw, and which contains a

considerable quantity of mucilaginous particles. Hence arise those ameliorating effects attributed to vetches and clover cut while green; these plants shed a portion of their leaves and stems on the soil, and thus enrich it before they are gathered, and generally put forth fresh leaves and shoots previously to being ploughed into the soil. Nothing tends to improve land more than the turf or accumulation of herbage which is successively formed during a number of years. The thick tissue of the plants and their clusters of roots, the animal matter of the dead worms and insects, the excrements of cattle which have been pastured—these all combine to render the soil particularly fertile and capable of yielding several successive crops without the addition of fresh manure. It is quite an erroneous supposition to attribute this amendment solely to rest, since rest alone could only have been productive of a negative good. The better the condition of the soil when laid down to grass the more herbage will it be able to produce, and the more will it profit by the term of repose allowed to it; not only an account of its inactivity, but because its productive powers are much greater. The erroneous opinions which are in general entertained with regard to the effect produced on land by repose, have perhaps given rise to the prejudice in favour of, and in some degree contributed to the maintenance of the custom of only laying down these portions of land to grass which are completely exhausted, in the hope that by so doing they might be restored to their pristine fertility and activity. And it cannot be denied that repose does produce this effect, because no soil is ever so thoroughly impoverished as to be incapable of putting forth some fresh shoots and sprouts of herbage; but the improvement which results is much more backward, and its effect much weaker, than if the land had been in better condition when abandoned to Nature. The more fertile a soil is when laid down to grass, the more leaves and roots and patches of herbage does it put forth, the more worms and insects are engendered, the greater number of cattle are pastured on it, and, consequently, the greater quantity of excrements voided upon it; thus therefore, the more it abounds in nutritive juices when first laid to grass, in the greater degree will it be benefited by the period of repose.

We bestow a more active and abundant vegetable amendment on a soil when we sow it with plants best adapted to its nature, which will furnish and attain the highest state of development; and then when they have begun to flower, either bury them by the action of the plough, or have them eaten off the ground or trodden in by cattle. This practice is of great antiquity; it was held in high estimation by the Romans, and exists at the present day in Italy. There it is said that the amelioration produced by a crop, which has been buried while green, is the very best that can be bestowed on a soil, and is capable of bestowing