

Plum grafts, which are sometimes injured by intense cold, are generally better if cut before the approach of the severest weather, and securely packed away.

—:—

To Clean Chaff out of Seed Wheat.

On our late visit to the farm of Mr. John Johnston, near Geneva, N. Y., he informed us that some years ago he was a believer in, and an earnest advocate of the theory that wheat would turn to chaff. In some of the early volumes of the *Genesee Farmer* he cited several facts which had come under his observation, and which appeared to prove that, in spite of botanists and vegetable physiologists, wheat *would* turn to chaff. This idea was combatted by several correspondents of the *Farmer*; and, as Mr. J. confessed to us, he had to acknowledge to himself that he was worsted in this "paper war." Fully persuaded that he had the best side of the argument, and thinking that his opponents had the advantage simply because better skilled in the use of the pen, he resolved to prove beyond all controversy, by ocular and practical demonstration, that wheat would turn to chaff.

He took three bushels of wheat (we believe this was the quantity, but it is immaterial) and looked it all over, grain by grain, picking out all the chaff. When he had finished, he was satisfied that there was not a grain of chaff in the whole three bushels. Now, then, thought he, I shall have them; if I get chaff from this wheat, it won't do for them to tell me that I sowed chaff with the wheat; and he had no doubt that, as usual, he should have "lots of chaff." The wheat was sown; and the result was, that while there was an abundance of chaff in the wheat cleaned in the ordinary way, *there was not a single ear of chaff on the land sown with the clear wheat.* This experiment, which Mr. J. made in order to convince the theorists that wheat would turn to chaff, had the effect of convincing him that he was in error, and that the great cause of chaff in wheat must be ascribed to sowing chaff with the seed wheat.

Once satisfied that wheat would not turn to chaff, Mr. J. resolved to sow no more of it; and he hit upon a plan of cleaning seed wheat which took out every grain of chaff. The method is simply this: After the wheat has been cleaned in the ordinary way, by running it through a fanning mill, *take the riddles out of the fanning mill, leaving the screen in; take off the rod that shakes the riddles and screens; pour the wheat slowly into the hopper with a basket or a half bushel; turn the mill a little quicker than for ordinary cleaning, and every grain of chaff will be blown out, unless where three seeds stick together, which is sometimes the case with the top seeds.* Two men will clean from ten to fifteen bushels per hour. If the wheat is light, say weighing from fifty to fifty-five pounds per bushel, considerable wheat will be blown away with

the chaff; but where good Genesee wheat is raised, as in this section, weighing from sixty to sixty-four pounds per bushel, little or no wheat will be blown out. In some cases it is better to raise the hind end of the fanning mill about two inches from the floor; more wind can be given and not blow away the wheat.

Since Mr. Johnston adopted this method of cleaning his seed wheat, he has not raised a "wine-glass full of chaff in more than twenty years."

We may remark that the same practice is very generally adopted in England, not only in cleaning seed wheat, but in cleaning all their grain for market, more especially barley.

There is a high duty on the process of converting barley into malt (about seventy-five cents per bushel); and the maltsters naturally do not wish to pay duty on barley of an inferior quality, or on light grains that will not germinate, or, consequently, make malt. On this account, farmers are particularly careful to clean their barley before sending to market. It is first run through the fanning mill to separate the chaff from it; then through a machine to break off the "pales," or beards; and then again through a fanning mill with a finer set of riddles and screen. After this the riddles are taken out, and the barley is run through as in the process above described. Many farmers have a machine on purpose for this work, and consider it indispensable. It is called a "Heaving Machine." A good sample of English barley, when cleaned in this way, will weigh fifty-six pounds per bushel. On Mr. Lawes' farm, at Rothamstead, we have known his experimental barley to weigh fifty-eight pounds per bushel. This great weight per bushel, however, must not be attributed to the process of cleaning alone. It is more probably due to climate, inasmuch as the wheat, no matter how well it is cleaned, is not so heavy as Genesee wheat.

Mr. Johnston thinks every agricultural paper in the country should give this process of cleaning wheat, and urge their readers to adopt it. If any wheat-grower will once try it, he will never again sow wheat without running it through a fanning mill in the way described.—*Genesee Farmer.*

—:—

Fattening Sheep.

In answering "A Young Farmer's" inquiries upon this subject, made in the *Co. GENT.*, No. 13, Vol. 8, I will merely tell him how other people's sheep have been fattened, and let him use his own discretion in following it, or not.

Sheep must be *well* protected in cold and wet weather. Sheds for this purpose are to be made, closed on every side but the south. Some straw should be provided in very cold weather for bedding. To fatten them, or any other animal in winter, keep them dry and warm. The more rest they have, consistent with health, the better they fatten.

They need two and a half to three pounds of hay each per day, and from one to three gills of ground corn, or corn and cob-meal. A varied diet of roots and grain is best, as it is not so heating as all grain. Steam the roots and chop them fine. One feed of roots and one or two of grain per day will lessen the amount of hay required. They must have fresh water twice a day at least—and a trough with tar sprinkled with salt, of easy access. Some green pine tops thrown in to them occasionally to browse on, are said to do well in lieu of the tar; but do not neglect to give them salt frequently. Chopped oats may be fed to them in place of corn, if preferred. They may be put up as soon as cold weather comes on, allowing the use of a small lot in fine weather, with access to the shed. These are general directions, to be modified in their application to particular locations and circumstances.

In addition, allow me to advise "A Young Farmer," and old ones also, to provide themselves with a good agricultural library, in addition to their weekly or monthly agricultural journals. They will never regret the purchase, and I will guarantee an outlay of twenty-five dollars so expended, will be more than twice repaid by the information so procured. "A Young Farmer" will find "Randall's Sheep Husbandry" soon paid for, by its telling him how to put on an extra layer of fat on his twelve wethers, which will bring into his some extra dollars.

When you want an agricultural book or treatise, ask the editor of your agricultural paper which is the best work, suited to your wants, locality, &c., upon the particular branch or subject needed, and he will not fail to give you good advice, especially if he is a *Country Gentleman*, or Cultivator. H. H. Rose Cottage, La.

—:—

Small Farms.

Mr. Editor:—I find in an old Roman poet this precept to Roman farmers:

"Praise a large farm,—till a small one."

Although it was penned almost two thousand years ago, yet it applies with unabated force to American, and especially to New England farmers. There is among our tillers of the soil a passion to be large land-owners, which is prejudicial to the agricultural interest. Many begin life penniless and landless. Their first scanty earnings are spent in the purchase of land. They go on as their means increase, adding field to field until some of them may have half a township in their possession. For this object they rise early, sit up late, and eat the bread of carefulness. For this they sacrifice all improvement of themselves.

Now is there not a more excellent way? Would it not be better for land-holders to moderate their passion for land, to be content with a few acres, and spend surplus money in the more careful tillage of those few? There would then be land in New