

AGRICULTURAL SHOWS.

For the Agriculturist:

DEAR SIR,—In looking over the accounts of the annual fairs and exhibitions which usually take place at this season of the year, I was struck with the fact that some of our breeders adopt the plan of attending at several of them and thereby secure a large amount of prizes; nor is this the only objection, the entrance of some of them at the local fairs deters others from competing, and thus one of the objects of the Association is defeated. Is not the following plan worth considering?

Let all the local exhibitions come off before the Provincial Show, and let them be confined to stock owned *within* the agricultural district or county, this would prepare them for the grand affair, at which the same cattle should not be allowed to take a money prize *two years* consecutively. A very small sum would procure a medal to be annually contended for by those exhibitors who had, in previous years won money prizes, and whose cattle should enter "priced" for sale, the judges having the power to determine whether such price was marked so as to prevent sale.

The same objection does not exist in the matter of grains and roots, but it most certainly does in arts and manufactures, as year after year are seen the same pictures, stoves, wax flowers, ladies' work, &c., &c.

W. C. CROFTON,

Toronto, October, 1863.

PLOWING—FALL OR SPRING.

This question is discussed every year, yet remains more or less unsettled. We do not now expect to dispose of it effectually, but simply to suggest a few hints worthy of consideration.

No one can deny that fall plowing saves time for doing other work in the busy season of spring. Moreover, the soil is drier in fall than in spring, and so in a better condition for working. He who has waited week after week for the spring rains to pass over and the ground to settle, will feel the force of this consideration. Again, if a piece of land is infested with grubs or other vermin, or with the roots of weeds, there is hardly a better way to subdue these pests than by throwing them up to the surface just before the winter frosts set in. Grasshoppers, the midge, and weevil, cannot thrive much after turning their houses topsy turvey, in October or November. They cannot rebuild in winter, and many of them will be killed outright. For light, sandy soil, apt to blow about in open winters, or those which are quite gravelly and porous, we question the expediency of fall plowing. But for the stiff clays, which need the action of frost to pulverise them, this is the best treatment they can receive.

A friend in Wisconsin writes to us that in all his region the farmers do as much fall plowing as they can, finishing up the balance in spring; that then they sow and harrow all together at the same time, and that in summer no one can see any difference between the growth and yield of the several fields; at harvest time, perhaps the spring-plowed land is more mellow than the fall-plowed, but the grain is worse lodged. A correspondent of a western journal claims that for spring wheat and barley, fall plowing is much preferable.—He thinks that spring wheat grown on fall plowed land, yields a better and surer crop than wheat sown in October. The exposure to atmospheric influences during the winter, mellows and enriches the seed bed to such a degree, that whenever the grain is sown it has the elements which it needs at hand ready for assimilation. The soil newly turned up has first to be prepared or mellowed, oxidized, as the chemists would call it, before it becomes fit to yield nourishment; and while this process is going on (in spring) much precious time is lost, and the growth of the plant is abbreviated in proportion, its time for tillering is cut short, and the yield cannot be as large as when it has the whole length of the season which nature seems to have set apart as that in which the plant shall make stems and leaves, previous to the formation of the seed-vessels. This certainly can be said in favour of the fall plowing of sward land intended for corn. If it is done early in the Autumn, the sod becomes partially rotted before the time comes for planting, and so sooner prepared to act as a fertilizer for the crop, than it would have been if plowed in the spring. If ever the plant wants the food of the decayed sod, it is early in the season, to give it a quick and vigorous start.

Late planting is a frequent cause of the failure of crops. After they are got into the ground, a drouth often sets in which retards the germination of the seed. We plant late, because the cold rains put us back, and because of the pressure of other work. Now, if we should do much of our plowing in the fall, we could take advantage of the first favourable weather to get our seeds in, and so gain considerable time in their growth. If we postpone all our plowing until spring, we often do the work when the land is too wet; the consequence is that it becomes lumpy and stiff-baked—a condition unfavourable for the growth of any crop, and from which the land does not fully recover in a season or two.—*American Agriculturist.*

GREAT LAND SALE.—About 90,000 acres of land in the County of Grey, C.W., are to be offered for sale at auction at the office of the resident agent in Durham, on the 20th January next.