

of the erudite few. Abstruse theories and chemical analyses are so far from generally benefiting the agricultural population of this Province, as at present constituted, that they frequently excite, in the unscientific reader, repugnance and distaste; indeed a farmer, of much more than average intelligence, whom I lately recommended to take the *Newcastle Farmer*, objected that it contained so much matter which he could not understand, that he did not feel inclined to do so, and added that his neighbours, who were subscribers and had lent him all the published numbers, were of the same opinion.

I would by no means eschew science or scientific investigation, but all theories should be practically and intelligibly illustrated. Such letters as those of Mr. Vernon and "A Cavan Farmer," (altho' I cannot entirely agree with the latter,) are calculated to impart or produce, by eliciting discussion, more useful information, "in these diggings," than all Sir Humphrey Davy's analyses of soils and vegetables. I fear that many practical men are too modest, or, like myself, too idle, to impart their experience to their brother farmers through the medium of the *Newcastle Farmer*. This letter will, however, shew that I am not incorrigible, and I hope others will be induced to make a similar manifestation. There are several important subjects upon which it is my intention to address you; among others, on the erroneous principles upon which Agricultural Societies are conducted in this and most other countries,—the course of crops and management of moderate sized farms,—the best modes of preparing land for certain crops,—Fall ploughing,—the culture of valuable roots and plants almost or quite unknown in this Province, and other matters of equal importance. Of one thing you and your readers may rest assured, namely, that all my communications will consist of facts.

Having intimated that I do not entirely agree with "A Cavan Farmer," it is proper to state in what respect we differ, and I shall feel great pleasure in discussing any subject with so intelligent a Correspondent. I will in the first place remark, that his observations relative to the preparation of old meadow and pasture for the production of a crop of wheat, are so expressed that some may suppose he considered a single ploughing thereof a species of fallow. I have two or three times tried the method which he recommends, but never with success, and much prefer a crop of early peas, in the first instance, thickly sown and supplied with plaster at the rate of a bushel per acre; for although they might run too much to haum to be very productive of grain, they would not only yield an abundance of valuable fodder, but by completely occupying and shading the ground, render it clean and in good order for a crop of wheat, which would be much more benefited by the plaster than if it were applied fresh, in which way it has little effect upon wheat, oats, or barley.

I will now relate the result of an experiment upon a clover lay, which is one of the best preparations for a crop of wheat if it has been properly laid down, and is not more than one season old; some years ago, in the month of April, I purchased and entered upon a farm which had been for some time well cultivated. I found thereon a twelve acre field of clover, one year old; the soil was a sound loam, sufficiently heavy to produce good wheat; the crop of clover proved muddling, about a ton and a half per acre. In the beginning of September I broke it up, preparatory for wheat. One half was ploughed with two ploughs, the first of which turned a furrow nine inches wide and about five deep; the second followed immediately in the same track, at the depth of five inches, throwing the earth upon the furrow just turned, and thus making the moved soil about eight inches deep; the remaining six acres were well turned over by a single plough. The whole crop ripened nearly at the same time, but there was an immense difference in the produce; the part which had been prepared with two ploughs yielding an average of twenty-six bushels per acre, the other less than sixteen; three barrels of plaster had been spread upon the clover, and certainly improved the wheat. If "A Cavan Farmer" would try the experiment of two ploughs upon the next old meadow or pasture which he may break up for wheat, it would perhaps be found successful.

Wishing you a large increase of practical correspondents and every possible success, I remain,

Your friend,

AN EX-FARMER.

Hamilton, March 23, 1847.

To the Editor of the Newcastle Farmer.

SIR,—Having a few leisure moments to write, and being desirous to communicate to my brother farmers, at this season of the year, some hints that may prove beneficial to those who have sown winter wheat—and particularly to some of your correspondents who desire information on the subject of the suffocation of wheat.—I now take up my pen and say that in all places where snow accumulates to a great depth, the success of winter wheat is rendered uncertain, owing to the liability of its being winter killed.

When the ground is unfrozen, there is always, owing probably to the slow thawing going on, a space between the earth and the overlaying snow; and as in this space the air cannot circulate, it speedily becomes deteriorated. The more dense and solid the snow becomes, as it always does towards the spring of the year, the more urgent the danger. At this time of the year the wheat plants, if dug down to, will be found a fine healthy colour; but as soon as the snow goes off and it becomes exposed to the same light, it speedily turns yellow, and then white and dry. If the snow continues to accumulate or we have no thaw to bare the ground before the snow is carried off in the Spring, it can

hardly fail of suffering more or less. For this danger there appears to be no available remedy. I never knew but a single instance in which it was attempted.

A farmer had some five or six acres of wheat, on which the snow lay equally till late in the spring; by digging through the snow he found there was no frost, and thus his wheat was in danger of suffocation.

The snow was there about a foot in depth and very compact, but by taking advantage of its softness in the middle of the day and driving his stock of cattle repeatedly over it in every direction, he filled the snow with hobs, partially expelled the vitiated air, and gave an opportunity for its replacement by atmospheric air, and in that way saved his wheat, while others similarly situated, yet who neglected such precaution, suffered a total loss. Perhaps this preventive might be resorted to of ener than it has been, and it might be successful. At any rate, when practicable, no injury could result from attempting it where the wheat is similarly situated.

Yours truly,

A SUBSCRIBER.

Cavan, 18th March, 1847.

To the Editor of the Newcastle Farmer.

SIR,—In answer to the enquiries of "A Cavan Farmer," I would state that the Wheat to which he alludes, was sown the first week in September, on a sandy loam, a summer fallow.

"A Cavan Farmer" seems rather doubtful of Plaster doing good, so on land in the autumn; he alludes to his having sown Plaster in the Spring and it doing no good, and therefore concludes that the Plaster was worthless. This might be the case, as it has too often happened that we have been greatly deceived in the article of Plaster. But it does not follow because its effects were not visible on the crop the same season that it was sown, that the plaster was bad; in proof of this, I will mention a circumstance that came under my notice. I sowed a pasture field, its soil sandy, with Plaster in the Spring, and could perceive no good effect arising from it whatever that season. I pronounced the Plaster to be worthless. The next year I did not notice it at all, as I did not expect any good from it; but the next Spring I broke up the field and sowed peas on it, and to my surprise the effects of the Plaster that I had previously condemned, were strikingly visible on the Peas; it showed where the Plaster had been badly spread, for between each cast the peas were of a yellow colour, and the rest were dark green. This striking difference caused me to notice it, for at that time I never dreamt of receiving any benefit from plaster after the lapse of two years.

Your's &c.

CHAS. H. VERNON.

Haldimand, March 1, 1847.