

AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL,

AND

TRANSACTIONS

OF THE

Lower Canada Agricultural Society.

VOL. 1.

MONTREAL, MAY, 1843.

NO. 5.

CULTIVATION OF BARLEY, OATS, AND PEAS.

Barley requires a light, rich, loamy soil, which retains moisture, without, however, suffering from damp—a soil which contains from fifty to sixty-five parts in a hundred of sand, and the rest chiefly clay. If having the former of these proportions, it is situated in a dry position, and having the latter in a moist one, it will be rendered still more adapted for the production of barley. This grain will thrive very well on strong clay lands where there is a sufficient quantity of manure to prevent the soil from being too tenacious; in short, it will thrive on any soil that may be classed as good wheat land.

Land in which barley is to be sown should be thoroughly loosened and pulverised. When sown after another grain, the land should, if possible, receive two or three ploughings for its reception; but when the soil has been thoroughly loosened, during the previous year, by well cultivated root or hoed crops, one ploughing will be sufficient. In cases where the land is not considered sufficiently fertile for barley, without applying manure to the crop, the tender nature of the grain renders it necessary that the nutrition intended for it should be easy of digestion, and properly prepared for and adapted to its organs.

Barley is not liable to any particular disease, except smut, and that seldom injures it much. The ears attacked by it are chiefly the early ones, and when the healthy ears attain maturity, scarcely any trace of the others remain. Pickling and liming are said to have no effect

whatever in preventing smut in barley. All kinds of barley sown in spring require a tolerably thick covering of earth; the seed may be covered by the plough three or four inches deep, and in fact, when sown in a very light soil, it should be placed at this depth below the surface. The land, however, should always first be allowed to be thoroughly dry. In general, nothing is more conducive to the success of this grain, than a period of dry weather, succeeding to the sowing; and on the contrary, nothing is more injurious than heavy rains, immediately succeeding the sowing, and we had proof of this in Canada last year.

Perfectly ripe seeds which have not become heated in the sheaf or granary, will always produce the most healthy plants. The seed should be free from all other seeds, of weeds, &c., and would be better for being washed. The root of a plant of barley, grown in soil properly prepared, and where the seed is covered sufficiently deep in the soil, is much stronger and larger every way, than the roots of the same plant grown in stiff and badly prepared soil, where the seed has been sown upon the surface.

Barley succeeds well in Canada, where justice is done in its cultivation. The wheat-fly damages it in a greater or less degree, according to the situation of the field and other circumstances, but the extent of injury is not material.

Oats are generally grown in Canada only in places where it is not deemed advisable to sow any other grain, and this, together with late