and enabled it to produce better crops. The *faughs*, on the other hand, got none of this beneficial treatment, and received no manure of any kind. When broken up, it was by the method known as *rib-plowing*, which was then called *faughing*, and hence the name applied to this ground."

In those days, "carts being scarcely known, the dung and peats were carried in creels, and the corn or meal in sacks laid across the horse's backs."

The rent was largely paid in kind, so many "wedders, lambs, poultry, &c." The results of the kind of cultivation described, are still perceptible in the condition of the land. The sterility of some fields is plainly to be ascribed, not to any lack of fertility, but to the exhaustion of the ancient outfields," or to the abstraction of the soil from the "baulks." The old "intoon" land, on the other hand, is still considered the most valuable of all; and it is interesting to observe," said the speaker, "that the continual cropping it underwent does not seem to have at all impoverished it, owing to the abundant supplies of manure with which it was so frequently replenished. In point of fact, the result of the farming system in those days was to enrich the infield at the expense of all the rest of the farm. These infield portions were of comparatively small extent, forming, as it were, crofts around the farm houses. When new crops were introduced, and these bits of intoon land were cleaned of weeds, stimulated with lime, and sown for the first time with turnips or grasses, they yielded most luxuriant and abundant crops; instances occurred of upwards of 470 stones of 22 lbs. each (say 5 tons) being got from an imperial acre of ryegrass in the finest places. A crop of this amount was actually measured and weighed on a quarter of an acre, on the farm of Monkshill, in Buchan, in the last century—the coles being taken when dry and ready to go into the stack, the weather having continued fine from the time of cutting. The ryegrass in these cases was uncommonly strong in the stalk, and bore up the crop without lodging badly. Most of it was about 3½ feet in length; but in some of the moister portions of the field, where it continued to grow longer, some stalks of it measured 6 feet 2 inches. This was the *Lolium perenne* or common ryegrass."

May we not learn from this bit of agricultural history, a new lesson of the efficacious results of the careful and liberal application of manures? The better farming of fourscore years has not yet sufficed to obliterate the traces of the once prevalent negligence of the farmer, where he did little or nothing to replace the crops he harvested; and where fertilizing materials were put on, continued cultivation during the lapse of the same eighty years, has only served to increase, rather than diminish, the productive effects of their regular employment.—*Country Gentleman.*

GYPSUM AS A FERTILIZER.

To the Editor of the Canadian Agriculturist.

Sir,—I would feel much gratified were you, through the medium of your valuable periodical, to set at rest a question that has been agitated here respecting the properties of Plaster of Paris. Some are of opinion that it is advantageous only in the production of *one* crop, whilst others contend that it is beneficially productive in a *succession* of crops. You, Mr. Editor, or some one of your numerous correspondents, who have tested the growing qualities of this fertilizer, might be able to give us information upon this subject; by so doing you will very much oblige.

Yours respectfully,

James Torrance.

Goderich, June 21, 1863.

Remarks.—We scarcely feel ourselves competent "to set at rest" the question which our correspondent has proposed. The action of plaster, both in this country and in Europe is often attended with peculiar difficulties, alike to the scientific chemist and the practical farmer. In some localities its application produces no sensible effects whatever, while in others the results are of a most striking character. Along the sea coast it produces generally little or no effect, while in situations remote from oceanic influences its fertilizing power is quite marvellous. As a sulphate of lime it supplies to plants two important ingredient,—sulphate and lime—which some soils do not possess in sufficient quantity. But it would also appear that gypsum acts beneficially in attracting moisture from the air, and in fixing ammonia and other gaseous bodies floating in the atmosphere, and in bringing them within the available requirements of growing plants. The small quantity usually applied as a top-dressing in spring, to clover, &c., although frequently attended by marked effects on the first crop, can produce, we should imagine, but little influence on the second. But when larger quantities are applied, as is sometimes done to the hills of Indian corn, the effects are frequently visible, within their limited areas, in the succeeding crop. We should be happy to receive a statement of the views and experience of practical farmers on this subject.—[Eds.