

# The Farmer's Journal,

AND

TRANSACTIONS

OF

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## The Farmer's Journal.

We would direct the attention of our readers to an article extracted from the *New England Farmer*, on the *Rural Economy of New England*. It is long, but will well repay careful study. It is evidently the production of a man who has seen what he describes, both in Old and New England, and knows well the weak points of our American agriculture. Objections may, we know, be taken to some of his opinions, on the ground of difference of circumstances and climate, but still the grand truth remains, that farming, if carried on in Great Britain in the same manner as in the United States and British Provinces, would not pay there any better than here; probably much worse. The truth is that farming is a business of some complexity, requiring many close calculations and adjustments; and that in a new country where the new settler must bend to circumstances, and finds a degree of natural fertility which makes up for want of skill and for necessary omissions, it is difficult to introduce that careful adjustment of all the parts of the farm, that adaptation of all to each other, which prevails in the old world. Yet, the time has come when this must be attempted; and we trust that the intelligent and reading farmers of America, will yet show that agriculture on this side of the Atlantic may be pursued by farmer proprietors, with as much skill as by the tenant farmers of England, and with more profitable results.

We would also ask attention to an arti-

cle on *growing Fruit for Market*. The large cities of Canada require better supplies of fruit, more especially of the finer varieties of the small fruits, and the present facilities for railway communication would allow this culture to be profitably carried on at a much greater distance from towns than formerly, and in more varied conditions of soil and climate. Excellent fruit and vegetables are brought to market in our Canadian cities, and often in ample quantity; but there is still a deficiency in the regular supply of the finer small fruits. We may instance the gem of them all, the strawberry; and fine sorts of raspberries, blackberries, cherries and plums, are also rare. With much lower prices than those ordinarily obtained for some of these fruits, any one acquainted with the business, and managing it on a large scale, would realize handsome profits.

### Uses of Snow.

Snow is in Canada one of those over abundant gifts of Providence that, like the air we breathe and the water we drink, are too common often to excite our interest or our gratitude. Yet snow is a thing wonderful in its origin and structure, and having great and important uses in nature.

Snow differs from ice in its origin. Snow is frozen vapour, whereas mere ice is frozen water. Vapour in freezing, as we may see by looking at the frosted window panes, and the little tufts of icy needles that form in frosty weather on the heads of nails, forms delicate crystals, and these when produced in the air as snow flakes, are exceedingly thin,

six-sided films of ice, often extended into stars by the projection of pointed or feathered expansions of their angles. In mild weather these stars become very large and being entangled together, form large loose flakes. The thinness and smoothness of the snow crystals, gives the slippery anti-friction surface of the polished sleigh track, and the lightness and porosity of the snow make it one of the best non-conductors of heat, and consequently enables it to protect the ground from excessive frost.

The snow is in truth a huge fleecy blanket spread over the surface, to protect tender plants and prevent the frost from penetrating too deeply into the soil. So true is this, that however cold the air above, the temperature under the snow will rarely be found much below the freezing point. Hence, under a deep covering of snow, the ground is frozen only very slightly; and when the snow is gone, vegetation is not retarded by the coldness of a frozen subsoil. Under snow the temperature is also equable, and the great injuries which result from the alternate freezing and thawing of plants are prevented. Many plants can be imbedded in frozen soil without injury, but if alternately frozen and thawed they soon perish.

But snow is not only a covering, it is a manure, or rather a collector of manure. The old popular impression to this effect, is confirmed by chemical investigation. It has been ascertained by Liebig and Johnston that, while the composition of newly fallen snow is nearly identical with that of rain water, snow which has remained for some time on the ground, affords, when