

The grain of the potato oat is white, short, and plump, when well grown, and the straw is of a pale yellow colour, and moderately bulky. The young plants tiller freely when the seed is not too thickly sown, and the stems usually stand close and carry a large bushy ear, which gives the crop a remarkably rich and luxuriant appearance when fully shot out. The grain varies in weight from 36 lbs. to 47 lbs. a bushel. At the latter weight, 134 pickles weigh one drachm. The grain yields more meal per bushel, weight for weight, than any other variety. I heard, many years ago, when in Scotland, of a very fine sample of potato oats yielding 245 lbs. of meal from a quarter—8 bushels, weighing 368 lbs.—but, in general, what the Scotch millers call “even meal,” is considered pretty fair, that is, one hundred pounds of oats should give 50 lbs. of meal. The soils suited to the growth of the potato oat will rarely be found in the province of Quebec. Perhaps, some of the soils at the base of the Laurentide hills, and some of the lower slopes of the Conticook and St. Francis valleys might do; but I cannot recommend it as a rule, fine as it is when successfully grown. On our ordinary clay lands it is hopeless to attempt it. This oat sheds easily when ripe, and should therefore be cut early. See engraving, fig. 1.—A degenerated



Fig. 1.



Fig. 2.

descendant of the potato oat is the sort most commonly met with here; but the sooner it is got rid of the better, for it yields badly, and sheds worse than any oats I ever saw.

Hopetown oat.—The Hopetown oat was greatly admired on its first introduction. On good land in high condition it answers better than the potato oat, as it is stronger in the straw and, therefore, not so liable to lodge.

Till I went to Scotland, I always fancied that the *Sandy* oat was so called from its colour! Not at all: Lawson says that it was discovered in 1824, on the farm of Miltoun of Noth, Alberdeenshire by a herd-boy, Alexander Thomson, who found it growing in a bank of recently thrown up earth.—*Sandy*, as all my Scotch friends know, is short for Alexander. The grain of this oat is neat and compact, but small,

and should therefore be crushed if given to horses, as otherwise they will be likely to swallow some of the pickles whole. The *Sandy* oat does well on soft, mossy land, as it will stand up when other oats, from over-luxuriance, are lodged.

Sherriff oat.—I strongly recommend the Department of Agriculture of the province of Quebec to import a few hundred bushels of this oat for seed. It is the earliest of all the white oats—new lots appear in the Edinburgh market a fortnight before any other kinds are ready; and earliness is a tremendously important point here. Individually, I do not care for any white oat, but if the prejudice in favour of them is ineradicable, the Sherriff is the sort best fitted for our climate and soil.

The above are the chief varieties of early white oats; the late sorts are numerous, but it is quite unnecessary to speak of them here, as, in nine seasons out of ten they would not ripen their seed, unless sown very early in the season.

Dun oats.—Somewhere about the year 1849, I bought some seed oats of the late Mr. Hewitt Davis. He called them “Sovereign” oats, but I believe them to have been the common *Dun* oats, and nothing but a hybrid between the old black variety (not the Tartar, by any means) and one of the ordinary sorts. They yielded fairly, but nothing like as well as our ordinary black Tartars, so I did not try them again. They seemed suited to inferior cold clay land, though Mr. Davis grew the Sovereign oats on a poor gravel, in the neighbourhood of Croydon, Surrey, where, he protested, his average crop was 96 bushels an acre! Mr. Davis was a thin sower; 3 pecks of wheat, 6 pecks of barley, 8 pecks of oats, and 4 pecks of winter beans, were his usual quantities. As to his yield per acre, I can say nothing positively, as I did not see the crops threshed; but, looking over the fields just before harvest, I must say that the appearance was magnificent. All the grain was sown in rows 12 inches apart, and the winter beans 27 inches; the land, all crops having been horse-hoed, was as clean as a garden. And the farm was not on a small scale either, there having been 850 acres under the plough. I should like to see it in a dry year, for when I went over it we had had a dripping summer, which just suited it.

Tartar, or Tartarian oats. v. f. 2.—Ten years ago, when I tried to introduce the Black Tartars into the Eastern Townships, I was gravely told that the horses would not touch them. They had been tried, said the farmers, and they could not give them away! The same absurd sort of prejudice I observe to exist in the *Sorel* market, clover-hay is unsalable; nothing but timothy stands a chance of bringing a price. Mr. Cochrane, of Hillhurst, however, had seen too much of the world to indulge in such fantasies, and, on my recommendation, imported seed for 20 acres, the yield of which amounted to 1500 bushels; upwards of 72 bushels an acre! His horses, like their master, were devoid of prejudice, and devoured their rations with equal zest, whether they were composed of the white or of the black sorts. The great trainers of Newmarket and Yorkshire, the Days, the Scotts, and others, refuse the finest samples of Scotch potato oats in favour of the Tartars. Like the Scotch *late* oats, the meal of the Tartars is *fluffy*, and of superior quality, making a *sharp* porridge. From experiments I carried on this summer on the Lincoln College farm with three different kinds of oats, I deduce the following conclusions.

The ordinary white oats of the country—as descendant, probably, of the Scotch potato oat—sown after potatoes, require very thick seeding; are short in the straw; do not tiller much; and, though they stand up well, do not head out regularly, nor do they yield as they ought to do.

The *White Tartars*, imported last spring—sown on a one-year “*pacage*,” i. e. an oat stubble grazed without seeding down—were satisfied with a moderate amount of seed per