

EXPERIMENTS WITH OATS.

The oat is one of the most widely cultivated of cereals. It has been grown by man as food for himself and his domesticated animals for more than a thousand years. There are many species of wild oats found in different parts of the world, but from which of these the cultivated oat has been derived is still a matter of conjecture. De



FIG. 2.—Branching Oat, American Beauty—half natural size.

Candolle advances the opinion that our cultivated forms of this useful grain have probably been derived from some prehistoric form, a native of eastern temperate Europe and of Tartary.

Whatever may have been its source the great usefulness of the oat to man has led to its cultivation on a most extensive scale in almost every country. In Canada it covers a very wide acreage. In the province of Ontario alone 2,425,107 acres was devoted to this crop in 1896, and the total yield of grain was nearly 83 million bushels.