

request for immediate despatch. Accordingly, dependence being placed upon the honesty and reputation of the country merchant, the 50 or 60 quarters were forwarded on from London without the usual examination there. When the seed was inspected in Liverpool it was found to contain a large percentage of light Scotch rye grass so carelessly mixed that when shot out of the bags the seed showed a streaky appearance, giving plain evidence of the impostor's practices. Accordingly the seed was returned; but, as it was sold for delivery in London, its removal thence without examination prevented me, by the custom of the trade, from enforcing the claim to compensation; although it is very doubtful, I believe, whether the law would not have given me redress, and a sound legal decision on this point would be of great service to the trade."

It is, however, more, perhaps, from the carelessness than the dishonesty of dealers that the farmer suffers, and under this head the injury inflicted is in point of fact inflicted by himself. Seeds of crops are mixed with seeds of weeds, owing to the carelessness of the grower; and this is an injury to the buyer of greater magnitude than any which is suffered by the intentional admixture of dead or worthless seeds with a genuine sample.

Weeds are no necessary growth amidst our crops. The plant appears because the seed is in the soil; and it continues to appear, notwithstanding cultivation, because the cultivator sows its seed. In grass fields many weeds continue to arise because mown after the seeds are ripe; and in arable lands the hoe sows often a myriad in the act of destroying one. The scythe and the sickle scatter broadcast what ought never to be allowed to ripen; and the drill and hand in depositing our wheat and other grain, our turnip seed, sainfoin, clovers, grasses, &c., sow and carefully deposit, and harrow in as many seeds of weeds as seeds of cultivated crops. And not only does the hoe, and the scythe, and the wind, and the sowing machine, scatter weeds broadcast over our fields, but the dung cart also is full of them. So long ago as the meeting of the Agricultural Society at Southampton we remember seeing plots of grasses which had been manured with farm yard dung compared with other plots on which (broadcast) guano, nitrate of soda, &c., had been used. The artificial manures contained no seeds of weeds; but it was plain that the dung cart had been full of them. When pure seed shall be sown, and no opportunity given in any way for the return to the land of any other than the seed of our cultivated crops, then we may hope that the hoe will ultimately clear the land of weeds; but as long as the farmer sows their seeds he must expect to reap their produce.

We take the following illustration of our subject from a recent number of Morton's Farmers' Almanac:

The impurity of farm seeds, owing to the presence of weed seeds, has been fully investi-

gated by professor Buckman, of Cirencester College, who has published his results in the *Agricultural Gazette*. The following table describes the character of one series of samples of seeds, to which his attention had been drawn by a correspondent:—

Name.	Weed Seeds to the pint Imperial	Weight of 2 oz. by measure.	Remarks on Principal Weeds, &c.
1. White Clover	128,000		Caryophyllæ, Polygonaceæ Composite, Myosotis, Scrophulariæ, &c.
2. Red Clover	16,960		Plantain, Myosotis, Caryophyllæ. Of these 960 seeds were those of Plantain.
3. Cow-grass Clover	12,160		
4. Rib-grass Plantago lanceolata	1920		Polygonaceæ—Dirt and stones.
5. Italian Rye-grass	2200	172 grains.	Ranunculus repens, Holcus lanatus, Bromis mollis, Bromus, Holcus, Triticum repens, Arrhenatherum avenaceum, &c.
6. Cockfoot	3440	124 "	Holcus, Rye-grass, &c., very dirty.
7. Smooth-stalked Meadow Grass	12,000	160 "	Bromis mollis, &c.
8. Crested Dogtail Grass ..	6400	360 "	Nearly half Holcus lanatus.
9. Meadow Foxtail Grass ..	19,200	52 "	Holcus lanatus.
10. Meadow Fescue Grass ..	3200	200 "	
11. Sweet-scented Vernal Grass	1600	100 "	Caryophyllæ and small weeds.

The first example in this list may well astonish our readers. *One hundred and twenty thousand weeds* to a pint of clover seed! This, allowing 12 lbs. to an acre, should give to a square yard of ground a quantity more than sufficient to crop the soil; and if we consider that clovers are at best a slow and shy growing plant, and that the weeds detected in this particular sample come to perfection so rapidly as not unfrequently to produce two crops of seed in a year, we need scarcely wonder that the land should so often be pronounced as "clover sick;" for while there is no denying the condition to which this designation has been given, yet recent observations have led to the conclusion that in cases