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DE OMNIBUS REBUS

Lincoln Coll., Sorel, July, 1884.

I have given a fair trial, during the past month, to two implements which the proprietors seem anxious to introduce into this district: Noxon's force feed broadcast sower, and Randall's harrow.

The theory of the *force-feed* is satisfactory enough; but in practice, I prefer seeing the delivery of the seed-grain more clearly, as in our English drills, in which cups, placed on the periphery of a disc in continual revolution, take up the grain from the seed-box and distribute it down the pipes in regular streams. You can see at a glance any imperfection in the delivery, and as every change of quantity of seed per acre demands a change of *barrel*, as the sets of discs and cups are called, a mistake can hardly be made. The cups are of all sizes, from those able to contain horse-beans, to the smallest size required for turnip-seed. All complications, I know, are bad in farm-implements; but when simplicity is gained at the

expense of accuracy, I own I prefer a little additional trouble.

For instance: I wished to sow 6 lbs. of rape per acre; now, as a pound of good rape-seed is, as nearly as possible, contained in an imperial pint, I set the drill to sow 7 pints—American, or wire, measure. From the position of the small-seed distributor, it was impossible to see how the seed was being delivered, but in going over a measured piece of land, I soon found that at least 10 lbs. per acre was being sown: 70 per cent. more than intended.

I wrote to the manufacturers of the sower for instructions as to the management of the different sowings—clover, Hungarian grass, rape, etc., but I presume my card miscarried, as I have received no answer.

The ordinary part of the Noxon sower answers very fairly. The land being previously well harrowed, the attached cultivator teeth bury the seed a good depth, and a cross-harrowing completes the job. A few acres of buckwheat treated thus show an admirably even plant.

The Randall harrow, as most of my readers know, consists of a number of sharp discs, about 15 inches in diameter, fixed on an axis, or rather on two axes, which admit of being set at different angles. The action is more or less centrifugal, causing a grinding as well as a cutting action. Hard work for two horses when doing its most effective work, but a most useful implement on land afflicted with couch-grass.

I use the Randall harrow in this way: throw back the open furrows, and then return them; plough shallow, narrow furrows, taking care, however, to go below the couch-roots, and cross the work, at once, with the Randall. The furrows will be found cut into small cubes and the grubber will easily smash the whole to pieces, when the sun will destroy the enemy if the harrows are kept going at intervals.

I have cleaned four acres of very foul land this month with the Randall,—it was so foul and bound together that the grubber could not touch it—the implement enabled me to sow rape—to my great delight, because I had been talking rape and sheep for three months, and I did not want the neighbouring farmers to be disappointed in their expectations.

I hear from all sides that the long drought has worked