

newly slaked it is very efficacious, as has been proved from experiment. It was found that a steep of lime water alone, in which wheat was immersed for four and twenty hours, proved a powerful preventive of disease, while the good effects of unmixed brine were very inconsiderable.

Of the two kinds of steeps mentioned, urine is thought the most efficient, and it should be used neither too fresh nor too stale, as in the first state it is inefficacious, and in the second injurious.—The seed should be sown as soon as dry; for if allowed to lie in sacks or heaps beyond a day or two, the lime may be very hurtful. Another steep, which is recommended by Sir John Sinclair, and is much used in Flanders, France, and Switzerland, is a weak solution of the sulphate of copper, or blue vitrol. The modes of using it are as follows:—

Into eight quarts of boiling water put one pound of blue vitrol, and while quite hot, three bushels of wheat are wetted with five quarts of the liquid; in three hours the remaining three quarts are added, and the wheat is suffered to remain three hours longer in the solution. The whole should be stirred three or four times during the six hours, and the light grains scimmed off. After the wheat is drained, slaked lime is thrown on it to facilitate the drying. Another way of using it is to dissolve five pounds of the sulphate of copper in hot water, and add as much cold water to this as will cover three bushels of wheat. The wheat is allowed to remain five or six hours, or even longer, in the liquid. After two or three bags, of three bushels each, have passed through the liquid, one pound more of the sulphate for each bag should be added; and after twelve bags or so have passed through, new liquid will be required.—From a Treatise on Agriculture, by James Jackson.

### Communications.

To the Editor of the British American Cultivator.

Sir;

Having always taken a deep interest in the Agricultural prosperity of this country, and having ever been of the opinion, that a well conducted periodical, purely devoted to that subject, would be one of the most efficient means that could be made use of to advance those interests, it gives me great pleasure in witnessing the exertions you have already made to establish one of that character; and I hail it as one of the most promising indications of the future prosperity of the country, and most sincerely hope, that those whose interests you are advocating, will from one end of the Province to the other, come forward and sustain it with their subscriptions. I am well aware that in order to enable you to do justice to your undertaking, you must have a large list of paying subscribers, and I hope a sufficient number will be found amongst the Farmers and Mechanics of Canada, to give your paper such a circulation, as will amply reward your patriotic undertaking. To make the columns of the Cultivator interesting, you must have a number of Contributors; although I am very incompetent, and cannot clothe my language in a style as edifying as many, yet I feel it an incumbent duty to do what I can, to set an example for others, and encourage you in your praiseworthy undertaking, particularly so, as I have had the honor to be placed at the head of the Agricultural Society of this District for some time.

I fell in hopes that many of those practical farmers interspersed through our country who are more competent than myself, will be induced to exercise their pens for the purpose of promoting the great and leading interests of the country. If these interests are in a healthy and prosperous condition, all others in their train will advance proportionately, but a depression of that art in which nine-tenths of the whole population are engaged, must inevitably have a deadening influence upon every other branch of business in the country.

I trust your Journal will have an extensive circulation among the mechanical class of the community, and knowing that there are many among that class who, from their intelligence and habits of application to useful reading, are well qualified to contribute to your columns, I hope they will not allow diffidence or a dread of criticism to deter them from coming before

the public, for there is no doubt they could communicate much useful information, that would not only amuse but instruct.

No doubt, that class who have been qualified by a superior education (I mean the gentlemen of the learned professions,) will, occasionally enrich your columns with an article couched in a more elegant style, and with a highly polished literary finish; which will serve as models for those, who like myself, are more practical than scientific, but nevertheless, are anxious to see the country prospering in its agricultural, commercial, mechanical, and literary interests.

E. W. THOMSON.

Bronzio, Toronto, Jan. 15, 1841.

To the Editor of the British American Cultivator.

Toronto, 10th January, 1842.

Sir;

Permit me as one of the many who will, I am sure, be benefited by reading the Cultivator, to return my thanks to you for that service which I anticipate the publication of an Agricultural paper will render to the country.

That the farmers of Canada are as anxious to advance their interests as in the world there can be no doubt; and as agricultural instruction by means of the press, has been found so highly beneficial in England and elsewhere, I am satisfied you will meet with that public encouragement which is justly due to you as the first Editor in this Province, of a paper devoted exclusively to the extension of its agricultural interests.

If the farmers will freely make known to each other through the medium of your paper, the results of their experience and opinions on the preparing of the ground, the time of sowing, the quantity of seed requisite to each variety of soil, and the treatment of their stock, &c., &c. they will, by contributing such matter to the columns of the Cultivator, not only encourage your undertaking most effectually, but support the best interests of the Province.

Wishing you every success,

I am, yours,

W. A. BALDWIN.

### The Properties of Gypsum and Lime.

To the Editor of the British American Cultivator

Sir,

As there is a growing prejudice against the use of Plaster of Paris and Lime, through an injudicious application of those substances as a stimulating manure, I hope the following remarks will be the means of correcting it:—

The value of Plaster of Paris upon all sandy loams in dry situations is incontestable.—Plaster having perhaps the greater attraction for carbon and moisture than any other substance; attracting by its affinity moisture from the atmosphere, and as an agent giving it out to vegetable matter.

Lime also has a great attraction for carbon and moisture, so much so that in about four days it will absorb one-fourth part of its weight when taken from the kiln. It is very seldom found in its pure state being impregnated with carbon, whence lime in the quarry, is called Carbonate of Lime.—It contains 56 parts of lime and 44 parts of carbon and earthy matter—plaster contains 50 parts of phosphate of lime and 50 of storic acid and other matter. The breath exhaled by man or beast, although ever so pure, when taken into the chest, is highly impregnated with it. The impure air caused by corrupted vegetation, which arises from marshes and swamps, shows plainly the reason those places are unhealthy—as there is more carbonaceous gas formed than the vegetable substances can consume. Lime is essentially necessary to vegetation.—Every plant or shrub, if dried and burnt to ashes, contains nearly half its weight in lime. This speaks volumes to the farmer of good understanding. If he sells his hay and straw from his farm, he robs it of a great deal of the lime which was incorporated in the soil, a practice, which if followed,

would in a short time make it nearly dead matter. Earth in its primeval state, has a proportion of lime, some greater and some less, which is seldom found too great for the nourishment of plants.

Plaster has a powerful agency for attraction to carbon, which may be understood by noticing the effects of about one bushel sown upon an acre of meadow. On a dewy morning in the spring, throw it over your fruit trees; if they are forty feet high the influence will be the same. This fact will be sufficient to convince the ignorant, who imagine that plaster extracts all the virtue the soil contains. I will venture to assert, if fall be taken back on the land in the shape of manure, which plaster, lime, marl, or other stimulating mineral substances caused to bring forth, that no alarm need be given as to the result. But the great discrepancy rest upon this point, by giving a dressing of these substances, a great return will almost invariably be the result, consequently the land is impoverished in proportion to the produce. The common practice is to dispose of much of the hay and straw, and those who practice that system, forget that they have robbed their farm, and omit to purchase manure from those who purchased their hay or straw, and by that means fail to keep up the original qualities of the soil.—It is not uncommon, through the agency of plaster, on red clover meadow, to get a return in one summer of four tons per acre, (including first and second crop), that quantity judiciously fed to stock, might be converted into manure, sufficient to top dress an acre, and by following out the plan of plastering and top-dressing, and allowing nothing to be wasted which is produced from the land, the fertility of the soil will be increased yearly. This doctrine may appear strange to some, but it is no more strange than true. To conclude, I hope those who are under this false impression, will take the trouble to read these few lines, and if they digest them properly, I flatter myself that I may be the instrument of convincing them of their error.

WILLIAM WALLIS.

City of Toronto, Jan'y 20th, 1842.

### Rohan Potatoes.

To the Editor of the British American Cultivator.

MR. EDITOR,

In your first number of The British American Cultivator, I noticed an article, headed "To Correspondents," in which, amongst a variety of roots and plants, which you set down as "humbugs," the Rohan Potatoes is classed as one. I was very much astonished to see this potatoe termed a humbug, knowing to the contrary that it is an excellent potatoe, and well worth cultivating by every farmer in Canada.

I raised in 1840, a patch of the Rohans, which returned me a crop at the rate of six hundred bushels to the acre, which certainly cannot be termed a bad yield. A friend of mine in this neighbourhood, planted one acre of Rohans last year, on purpose to see the quantity they would produce by common cultivation. They were planted in drills thirty inches apart—the ground previously being in a very bad state of cultivation—but was subsequently manured at the rate of sixty single horse cart loads per acre, and treated in every other respect as his other potatoes. When ploughed up in the fall, they yielded a return of four hundred and thirty bushels of good sized potatoes.

I have been frequently told that those potatoes were good for nothing but feeding pigs; but I can assure you when they are properly treated and grown on a light sandy soil, you would find them to be a really and