

Inquiries and Answers.

MR. EDITOR:—Our prairie land, fresh broke, is sure for a fair crop of spring wheat of fair quality. After a few years' cropping it is uncertain; sometimes doing as well as fresh sod, sometimes nearly failing, but rapidly deteriorating—i. e., growing more uncertain. What element of wheat is probably first exhausted, and what would supply it as a special manure? Soil a deep, loose loam, much of it rather sandy. Is it better to plow in dry stubble than to burn it off? Suggestions on the above points would perhaps be valuable to other Iowa farmers. P.—Iowa.

If clover can be successfully grown on your prairie land, it has no superior as a preparative for wheat. G. O. TIFANY, in the *Transactions of the Wisconsin State Agricultural Society* for 1852, recommends corn sown broadcast and plowed under as a substitute for clover. We do not know as the experiment has been tried. Lime is an indispensable element in a wheat soil. Suppose you apply a few bushels to an equal number of perches of land, and note the result, as compared with an equal quantity of seed sown on unlimed land. On sandy soils in some of our Eastern States, farmers are in the habit of applying leached ashes; but in your locality they would, perhaps, be too expensive. We believe the tendency of cereal crops on the prairie lands is to straw rather than to seed. The straw of wheat contains a large portion of silica—the seed but a very little. The straw has but little phosphoric acid in its texture, while it is an important portion of the seed. On theoretical grounds, we would suggest that you make a trial of bone-dust, at the rate of ten bushels to the acre, or superphosphate of lime at the rate of 300 lbs. to the acre, and compare results as directed before. Light, sandy land requires a free use of the roller to consolidate the soil. From what we can learn of prairie land and soil, stock-husbandry promises a much surer return than raising cereal or grain crops.

I wish to make an inquiry through your valuable paper, how clover seed is best gathered and cleaned. What is the best machine for such uses? and which is the best for seed, the first or second crop?

In Western New York, the second growth of clover is universally allowed to go to seed, and is gathered by machines constructed for that purpose, when the dew is off. We have recently examined a model of a machine for heading and gathering clover, timothy, and other grass or grain seeds, invented by T. S. STEADMAN, of Holley, N. Y. It is very simple in construction, easy to operate, and from the peculiar action of the cutting knives, will not become clogged under any ordinary circumstances. It is drawn by one horse, and with it a man can gather the seed of from eight to twelve acres per day. By removing a small gearing wheel, it becomes a three-wheeled wagon box, and can then be driven to the barn or wherever wished. It is also a self-raker, and with ordinary care we do not see how an ounce of seed need be lost. More information may be obtained by addressing the patentee, T. S. STEADMAN, of Holley, N. Y. We can not speak from experience as to the merits of clover hullers, and should be glad to hear from our correspondents as to the merits and demerits of the various machines now in use for that purpose.

HAVING been a subscriber for the *GENESEE FARMER* for the past seven years, I do not recollect of seeing any remedy for the blindness of sheep, or the cause of their becoming blind. My neighbor has a fine flock of sheep, and some of them have become perfectly blind, that are young and healthy to all appearance. If you, or some of your correspondents will give some information and a remedy, you will oblige a subscriber. JAS. NORTHUP—Cameron.

There are so many causes which may produce blindness, that the above question is somewhat difficult to answer. For instance, blindness may be caused by hard driving, being chased by dogs, the intense glare of sunlight on fields of snow, and some have thought the pollen of flowers will occasionally produce it—and sometimes it may be caused by infection or some epidemic influence. Blindness shows itself in different ways: in some the whole surface of the eye-ball has a light-blue color, while more commonly a white film gradually spreads over it till it has assumed a pearly whiteness. A writer on the subject states "that all kinds appear to be preceded or accompanied by inflammation, and the principal remedy in all bad cases is bleeding from the vein under the inner angle of the eye on the side of the nose. After properly securing the animal, place the left hand on the vein, about two inches from the angle of the jaw and opposite the third grinder, and immediately upon the vein becoming full, puncture it in a spot about an inch from the eye." Respecting washes, he says almost the only wash which can be of service is either a drop or two of *vinous tincture of opium introduced into the eye*. Blindness is frequently hereditary; and it would be advisable to ascertain the condition and soundness of the parent stock.

What is the reason the southern part of Western New York is not well adapted for raising wheat? Are there any well authenticated experiments with lime or plaster, or any other mineral which produced beneficial effects? If there are, I should like to know the particulars. I should be pleased to know the best plan for making charcoal. I should also like to know the best way of using muck for manure. Would it not be a good plan to haul it out, say in August, into piles of five or six loads, and mix about a bushel of lime to a load, with a sprinkling of plaster near the top to prevent the waste of ammonia by the action of the lime? Answers to the above, from you or any of your correspondents, will be thankfully received. THOMAS PLATO—Marilla, Erie Co., N. Y.

Our correspondent will see in the April number of the *FARMER* an extract from an essay on geology as connected with agriculture, which will answer his inquiries in part. His plan for making muck compost is first rate; but too many are unwilling to be at the trouble of increasing their means of fertilization by similar plans, though it is an indispensable requisite for productive farming.

Will you oblige an old subscriber and the farmers generally, by stating in your valuable paper what cider mill is considered the best among the fruit-growers of New York State? We have in this section of Pennsylvania Krouse's *Portable Cider Mill*, and Chapin's—the last named is, however, but little known. Will you inform us what its reputation is at home, and whether there is something of the kind still better. D. D. MACREY—Reading.

W. E. HICKOK's patent mill is preferred by purchasers as being the best, or among the best now in use.