

UNFAIR SHEARING FOR EXHIBITION.—We have received a letter from a correspondent signing himself "a Lover of Justice," animadverting in very strong terms against the communication from an "Exhibitor" published recently on the subject of the rejected sheep at the Provincial Exhibition. We think that "a Lover of Justice" has quite mistaken the tenor of "Exhibitor's" remarks; we believe that each of the writers is equally opposed to unfair shearing, and that the latter would no more than the former advocate any facilities for the reprehensible practice. The first writer expressed his opinion respecting the extreme difficulty of deciding, in September, whether or not a sheep had been fairly clipped in April, and complained of the wholesale exclusion that was made at the exhibition even of sheep that had been in every respect fairly clipped. The subject is one of great importance and no small difficulty. Our readers will see by advertisement published in our columns, as well as by the report of the last meeting of the Board of Agriculture in Toronto, that the new regulation fixes the time of shearing after the 25th of April. The Board have no doubt given the subject their best consideration, and will strive to make such provisions as will secure a fair competition for all parties, and give encouragement to this most important branch of stock-raising.

SHELL MARL.—A correspondent at Bristol (Ontario) sends us the following communication, accompanied by a specimen of shell marl:—"I send you a specimen of what I consider to be shell marl. It effervesces readily with vinegar, is full of the comminuted remains of shells, some of them perfect, of the species *Limnaea* and *Physa*. I am informed there is a considerable deposit of it in the adjoining Township of Clarendon, where it is at times overflowed by the Ottawa river, at this point 233 feet above the sea level. There is no use made of the substance. To what good purpose, if any, can it be applied?"

Ans.—The specimen that accompanied your note is undoubtedly shell marl, which is a recent geological formation found as a carbonaceous deposit at the bottom of many of our lakes, and also around the shores where the waters have formerly stood. This substance consists principally of carbonate of lime, with occasional traces of phosphate. It is readily pulverised, and when incorporated with some soils, especially stiff clays, forms a useful fertilizer, though by no means of equal value with quick lime. It is also sometimes used for whitewashing and similar purposes. We understand that considerable quantities were at one time exported into the United States.

EXTRA ENTRY FEES FOR EXHIBITION.—James Findlay, of Pilkington, thinks it unfair that the wealthy members of agricultural societies should be able to make so many more entries for exhibition than their poorer neighbours for the same amount of subscription; and suggests that each member should be allowed the privilege of a limited number of entries, and should pay a small fee, say twenty-five cents, for all above that number. He thinks also that extra fees should be required for carriage horses and hackneys, which in his opinion belong more to the turf and the road than to agriculture.

NOTE BY ED. C. F.—Our correspondent should remember that the privilege of competing for prizes at exhibitions is but a small part of the advantage he derives from his subscription to the Agricultural Society, and that every encouragement should be given to parties having stock or other articles worth showing to send them for exhibition. A very considerable expense is often incurred by exhibitors in sending and providing for the care of their property, and we cannot think it would answer any good purpose to put an additional tax on these parties. With regard to the class of horses alluded to, though they may not be so much required as other sorts for agricultural purposes, yet it is the business of the farmer to breed such horses, and no one else has equal facilities for doing so profitably.

DRILL OR HAND SOWING.—A correspondent asks:—"Do you recommend the grain seed drill for spring grains, such as wheat, barley, oats, &c.?" We are sorry that the above enquiry did not reach us till our number for the 1st May was stereotyped. We fear that any reply now may be too late to be of service. We do certainly prefer the drill for sowing nearly every kind of grain. We knew a manufacturing firm in the west, who were willing to take as the payment for an excellent and costly seed drill (we forget the exact price) which they made, the difference in one season on forty acres of wheat put in with their drill over forty acres hand-sown on the same, or any adjoining farm, and this at a time when wheat was not worth in that locality more than sixty cents a bushel.

ROTATION OF CROPS.—"John Smith," of York county, referring to the order of rotation submitted to us recently by "M.O. Cole," points out that both barley and oats are omitted from the series, and suggests that a better course, especially fitted for the lands in York Township, would be the following:—First year, roots and hoed crops, followed in succession by barley, hay, hay or pasture, peas, fall wheat, rye or spring wheat, and lastly oats. The ground to be manured for the root crop thoroughly; gypsum and liquid manure to be applied to the third crop. Bone dust, guano, &c., be applied for the roots, part of the barn yard manure may be applied for the seventh crop. With regard to the exact course to be pursued, so much depends on local circumstances, such as nature of the soil, needs of the farm, markets, &c., that if sound general principles are followed, the details of the course must be determined by each individual farmer.

INFORMATION WANTED ABOUT CHEESE FACTORIES.—"A constant reader" writes to us from Darlington as follows:—"I find that considerable interest is beginning to be felt about cheese-making throughout the country. I myself feel inclined to commence this spring. If I could obtain the necessary information respecting the best kind of vats, curd cutters, &c., and directions as to the required degree of heat at the time of putting in the rennet. Can you, or any of your readers, inform me where a good treatise on cheese-making can be procured? I think a short article on the subject would be of great interest to your readers."

NOTE BY ED. C. F. We would refer our correspondent, as we have done others, to articles in former numbers of this journal, and to parties who have already been practically engaged in the business, for the required information. We recommend a visit to some factory in actual operation. Messrs. Noxon, of Ingersoll, and Mr. L. F. Bungay, of Norwichville, can supply vats, curd mills and other factory requisites. See their advertisements in this and former numbers of the CANADA FARMER.

The Canada Farmer.

TORONTO, UPPER CANADA, MAY 15, 1867.

The Season.

DURING the past fortnight the weather has continued unusually chilly, and in consequence of the previous prevalence of rain there is no doubt that spring farm operations are somewhat behind the average in former years. Still, there have been intervals of favorable weather, and in looking round the country and conversing with farmers, we are pleased to find considerable seed has been sown, and the work is not, after all, so backward as might have been expected. It is wonderful what a good will and a little management will effect in making amends for untoward circumstances, and it is gratifying to observe that a cheerful spirit of hope in regard to the coming season seems to prevail among the farmers generally.

There are, however, some important lessons which our present and past experience should teach us, the most important of which is the desirableness of so arranging the business of the farm as to leave as little unavoidable work for the spring as practicable. With this end in view, as well as to secure some other important advantages in rearing and enriching the land by making provision for a larger quantity of stock than has commonly been raised, it seems that much might be gained by having a greater proportion of the land in pasture and meadow. These do not entail any labour during the spring of the year, and in fact demand less labour throughout the entire season than grain crops, while their profits will compare favourably with any other portion of the farm.

In connection with the appropriation of a considerable extent of the land to such purposes, arises the necessity of raising a corresponding amount of root

crops for the winter support of the increased amount of stock. This kind of crop is highly advantageous to the farmer, and the sowing and harvesting both come on during comparatively leisure periods of the season.

Another important matter pressed on our attention by the circumstances of the present season, is the great advantage of under-draining, whereby the land becomes so much sooner ready for working, and suffers much less than undrained fields from cold and wet. This has been so often pointed out, and has been made so manifest during the past few weeks, especially, that it is unnecessary to dwell on the matter more particularly, yet it is well to take note of every additional argument and inducement in favour of this important preparation of the soil, and to press the subject again and again on the attention of all engaged in agricultural pursuits.

There is yet another point to which our liability to late springs and short seasons should lead us to give careful heed; the advantage, namely, of raising winter crops as much as possible. The repeated failures in winter wheat have induced a large number of farmers to abandon this crop altogether. Yet this grain is a staple of too great importance to relinquish except under absolute compulsion, and there is much in the history of older countries, and in the teachings of modern agricultural science, to lead us to hope that greater success may in future reward the endeavour of the farmer to raise at least a fair proportion of this pre-eminently valuable cereal. Under-draining, suitable shelter, and thorough culture may yet remove some of the causes that have hitherto rendered this crop so often unproductive. It must also be remembered that wheat is not the only winter crop. There are others that might with advantage be added to the resources of Canadian farmers.

Henry's Double-Walled Bee Hive.

SINCE our last issue we have had an opportunity of examining this hive. It is constructed with a view of guarding against cold, damp, and atmospheric changes. A two-fold expedient is resorted to for this purpose. There is a hollow space of dead air between two walls, and the inner wall is of flag or straw, fastened down with strips of wood. The only novelty about this hive is the inside lining of flag or straw, the hollow-wall principle being already in use in Thomas's Double Boarded Hive. We consider straw an excellent protection against cold and damp, but should prefer to have it outside, for more reasons than one. Bees, during their long winter imprisonment, will discharge their feces on the inner walls of a hive. A wooden wall can easily be cleaned, while a straw or flag wall must get foul, and unless it be frequently renewed, will become offensive. In outward appearance this hive is exactly like that of which we gave two illustrations in our issue of April 15, 1866.

"THE CANADIAN FARMER'S SONGS."—We would call attention to this choice piece of poetry, which appears in another column. It was written for THE CANADA FARMER by Rev. E. H. Dewart, of this city, and will appear in a volume of original poems, entitled "Songs of Life," about to be published by that gentleman. Mr. Dewart is a true poet, not unknown to fame already, and we have no doubt his forthcoming volume will add to his well-won laurels.

UNITED STATES DUTY ON PEAS.—A telegram was received on Saturday from Oswego, by one of our leading produce dealers, which stated that the United States Government had sent an order making the duty on peas thirty per cent. The duty on this grain since the repeal of the Reciprocity Treaty has been thirty per cent. if intended for seed, and ten per cent. if for consumption. It is now apparently to be thirty per cent. on all—a specimen of legislative wisdom eminently Japanese.