

WINTER FARMING.

Sir,—Viewed from an English standpoint there is much in Canadian agriculture justly entitled to high commendation. Foremost must be placed the indefatigable industry of the farmers themselves, which, I am bound to state, surpasses that of similar communities in every country I have visited. And there is much also connected with grain-growing, land, culture, and dairying, worthy of laudable mention, which I must pass in order to arrive at the subject of the following remarks.

As I understand, Winter Farming consists in the production of roots, the tending of stock, and the conversion of straw into manure; with the object of making money beyond what may be needed to pay the chorer. When roots are not grown, there is no Winter Farming, no money made, and what I regret to notice as being consolatory to numbers, no expenses incurred. Many pursue this course through the notion that to feed better would not pay, while others do the same their fathers did,—at any rate there is a conflict of opinion—the consequence of which is that poor young animals have to get a living at a meagre straw stack, and the rigor of winter contracts their growth, as it does that of the pocket. This, Mr. Editor, is the weak feature in Canadian farming. It resembles a man fighting with one arm tied, and however well grain may have told in, profits diminish during winter, through not receiving a proportionate return from live stock. The evil does not rest here. Your beef will not find a foreign market, nor command a remunerative price, where this wretched wintering is practised. There is no quality about it. Contrast the beef from a steer turned out to grass in nice thrifty condition, with one turned out a bag of bones. The one is fit to kill in the fall, the other requires a winter's feeding. And no roots being grown, it is sold, another feeding and gets all the profit. Turnip growing is comparatively inexpensive in this country, as it can be done without purchasing artificial manures. The soil is admirably suitable, the climate fair enough, and the quality for fattening excellent.—This is not all, straw goes further with than without roots. The manure is vastly improved, gives greater returns of grain, and lasts much longer. The farm yearly increases in richness, all crops present greater bulk, and instead of the produce becoming less year by year, it is steadily on the increase. So much for the land.

Let us consider the stock. It does not pay to keep cattle on straw, inasmuch as the slight growth made during winter is not equivalent to the loss of flesh. And farther than this, a beast is only paying well when, in addition to growth, the flesh increases too. Mere growth is not sufficient, weight must be added to at the same time. The farmer then has two sources of profit progressing. Turnips, or roots, are the sheet anchor of agriculture: the secret of Winter Farming.

To any man with 100 acres I would say, grow 3 or 4 acres of roots, and have a variety in this fashion: 1 acre of white or common turnips for early fall use; 2 acres Swedish turnip, main winter crop; and 1 acre of mangel for spring use; a few carrots, and sow all early. Common turnips are invaluable for early use—through October and November—and should be fed to stock so as to prevent their losing a pound of flesh—which is the case when pastures begin to fail. When they are consumed Swedes are ready; and these being gone, Mangels are fit. Hogs account well for the latter.

I see you have excellent varieties of Farm Seeds, Mr. Editor, which are worthy of trial.

Turnips properly fed return a profit of \$50 per acre. I have seen more done this season. Three acres cleared \$200. What pays as well? This proves that money can be made during winter. Far better do that than nothing. It shows that some at least are winter farmers.

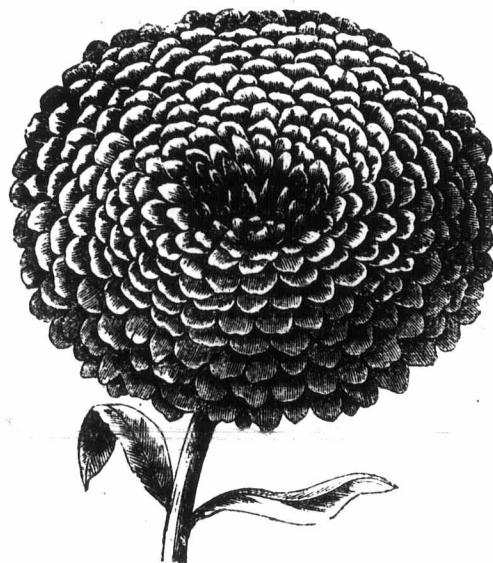
Yours, J. A. HOLLINGS.

Flowers.

Many of our agricultural friends have not as yet been able to devote attention to flowers, and some in distant parts seldom see one. We give this month a few illustrations kindly forwarded to us by Mr. J. Vick.



DAHLIA.



DOUBLE.



ASTERS.



PETUNIAS.



BLOTCHED AND STRIPED.

The Dahlia is a beautiful flower, but requires more care than the majority of farmers can afford, as the bulbs have to be taken up and stored away in the fall.—Those that can take care of them will highly prize them.

The Asters are now attaining such perfection as to almost rival the Dahlias.—They can be raised by any one in the open air. We illustrate a choice flower and the whole plant. For early flowers, plant in a box in the house, if you have not a hot-bed, and very few farmers have. They should be planted out about 6 inches apart in the flower bed.

The Petunia is one of the most durable flowers. It will fill a garden with flowers when others are gone—at least it has filled ours. It makes a very nice box plant to train on a small trellis, and place in a window. Some of the new varieties are very beautiful.

These engravings will call your attention to the class of Seeds we believe will please you most.

HOT BEDS.

Hot beds facilitate germination, protect the plants, and prevent failures; as cold damp weather may destroy the vitality of good seed, and a slight frost often does enough to receive the seed. Care, how-

sunk in the ground a foot or eighteen inches, or made on the surface. On this place about five inches of good mellow soil. Then set the frame and keep it closed until fermentation takes place and the soil is quite warm. It is better to wait a day or two after this, and then sow the seeds. The principal advantages of a hot-bed can be secured by what is called a cold-frame. This is simply a hot-bed frame, with sash, placed upon a bed of fine, mellow earth, in some sheltered place in the garden. By the exclusion of air and the admission of sun the earth becomes warm, and the moisture is confined, as in the hot-bed. After the frame is secured in its place, a couple of inches of fine earth should be placed inside, and the frame closed up for a day or two before the seeds are planted. As the cold-frame depends upon the sun for its warmth, it must not be started as soon as the hot-bed, and in this latitude the latter part of April is soon enough. Plants will then be large enough for transplanting to the open ground as soon as danger from frost is over, and, as a general thing, they will be harder and better able to endure the shock of transplanting, than if grown in a hot-bed. A frame of this kind any one can manage. Watering occasionally will be necessary; and air must be given on bright, warm days. Shade also is necessary. These frames, when so small as to be conveniently moved by the hand, are called hand-glasses. A simple frame or box, with a couple of lights of glass on the top, will answer a very good purpose, though when small it would be better to have the front of glass. A very good hand-glass is made of a square frame, with a light of glass at each side and on the top. These contrivances, though so simple as to be made by any one handy with tools, are exceedingly useful, as they prevent the drying of the surface of the ground, and afford the plants shelter from sudden changes of the temperature, cold storms and frosty nights.

THE SOIL AND ITS PREPARATION.

The best soil for most flowers, and especially for young plants, and for seed-beds, is a mellow loam, containing so much sand that it will not bake after hard showers. If we have not such a soil, we must, of course, use the best we have. A stiff clay soil can be much improved by a little sand, or ashes and manure, and by pretty constant working. It must not, however, be handled when too wet. Always drain the flower garden so that no water will be on or near the surface.—Don't try to grow good flowers in a poor soil. Always have a little pile of manure in some outer corner. It is as convenient as money in the purse. Those who keep a cow or horse, will, of course, have manure enough; but those who have no such opportunity can get a load of sods from some meadow or the sides of the road, lay them in a pile to rot, and give them a soaking with soap-suds on washing days. When the leaves fall, get all you can handy and throw them upon the pile, and no one will be able to boast of better flower-food; in fact, this is the very poetry of manure.

Suggested Items—No. 3.

FRIEND ADVOCATE,—I have just finished reading "What I Know of Farming," by the "Hon. Horace Greeley," and I must say, let him be wild on politics or Canadian annexation, he is sound on farming, especially on farmers making their duller and slowest sons farmers, thinking that anything in the shape of a man is good enough for the farm. I do believe that the time is not far distant when farmers and farmers' sons will rise to the position that their honorable calling bids them fill—when the Farmer will stand at the head of the class instead of the foot, when we shall have an agriculture worthy the name; and as the Farmer is the bone and muscle of Canada, as much and I think more than most other nations, they should be the smartest and the best men of thy family. And to the parents I would say, do not think that money or time are

misspent in farm. It is (though possible that I have held that even the nature of supplying to would not a ed man will say he works

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March now like March bett Rockton

CONVE

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