

quire short manure, distributed broadcast and ploughed in. Turnips require the land to be extra well prepared by culture, the manure to be put in drills and covered over into ridges. Turnips are the most expensive of the crops above named to raise, as they require a great amount of care and attention to ensure a successful crop, except perhaps when they can be grown on the burnt-over surface of newly cleared land. Potatoes will cost more for seed, especially if the new and expensive varieties are to be planted. Mangolds and carrots can be sown early enough to have the principal work of thinning out, weeding, and horse-hoeing, done before labour gets scarce and high-priced, while turnips require the most attention at a time when the hay and grain harvest is at its height, and the farmer is apt to be distracted with so much work on hand, and so neglect or put off attending to his turnips till it is too late to bring them round so as to ensure a good crop.

We believe that were potatoes grown with as much care and manuring as turnips usually get, they would produce five hundred bushels per acre, instead of one hundred, as is now generally the case. A farmer in Pontiac county, Quebec, writes that he has never failed to obtain 400 to 500 bushels of potatoes per acre for several years past. He selects the earliest and best potatoes of the variety he wishes to grow, in the fall, and lays them away for seed. He fall ploughs the land 8 inches deep, and cross-ploughs it in spring 4 inches deep, thus leaving the seeds of weeds, &c., at the bottom of the seed bed. He plants about the 12th of May, cuts his seed into from three to six pieces each, a week before planting time, and is careful not to have the eyes sprout before planting. He has the ground well harrowed and levelled, marks rows both ways two and a half feet apart each way, by means of a wooden rake with four large teeth in it, each the required distance apart to mark the rows. He drops three pieces of potato at each cross mark, and does all the afterwork by means of a plough which he runs both ways between the rows; and harvests his crop of potatoes fifteen to twenty days ahead of any of his neighbours. He grows potatoes on the same land for three years in succession, and then puts in wheat, of which he always gets a good crop after potatoes. The varieties he grew were Peachblow, Pink-eye, Irish Melvine, and China White.

We hope yet to see the sugar beet in some measure taking the place of turnips, as it is a much easier and more certain crop, not being so liable to suffer from insects or drought, and will give as much weight of food per acre, when properly grown.

The *Utica Herald* gives three rules for renovating old pastures: 1. In winter, lime them in the wet places. 2. In summer, mow them where bushy. 3. Keep sheep on them, and feed the sheep with beans and oil-cake.

Flax Culture.

To the Editor.

SIR.—Now that spring is fast approaching, farmers will be laying out their plans and deciding what crop they shall sow in their respective fields. With wheat at the present price, many, I have no doubt, will change their minds, and instead of putting in their ten or twenty acres of spring wheat, will probably sow instead, barley, oats and cereals of various kinds. And while we are all most anxious to make the most of our lands, flax presents itself as another of the crops well worthy the attention of the farmer, from the fact that it is bringing as high a price, when ready for market, as it did during the American war: and it only fluctuates in price like all other products.

Farmers have often been urged through the press to sow this crop, each on at least a couple of acres on his farm. This would soon be the means of flax mills for scutching being established in every part of the country.

From the experience of every man that has tried flax, in this country, it has been found to answer best when it is early sown, so that it may get a clear month before drought overtakes it. To those who have not made the trial before, I would say it is desirable to put flax in a piece of the cleanest and richest soil on the farm—clay loam is preferable to any other when the soil is deep and friable. On such land you may safely sow two bushels of seed to the acre.

If you want to seed down, do so by all means, with flax; there need be no apprehension about the clover plant being removed on pulling the flax. On the contrary, it moulds the plant and causes it to spring up with more vigour and freshness.

Let not the pulling deter the farmers from growing flax any longer, as they can as readily obtain a machine for pulling purposes as they can a reaper for taking off their grain, and at the small cost of \$75 or \$80 each.

I should have said, while speaking of the proper kind of soil to sow flax on, that nothing can beat a piece of old lea, and if ploughed in the autumn, it may be sown in the spring with great certainty of a good crop. Let the ridges be made as wide as possible, with as few furrows as you can get along with, as the plant invariably grows more in length along the edges of the furrows, and it is most desirable to have it all as near one length as possible.

A word to the Scotch Millers before closing. They should be allowed to compete at the annual Provincial Shows, by producing the quantity required, 100 lbs of clean scutched flax, of the crop of the preceding year, as there never is time to prepare flax for the exhibition in the autumn, and this has been invariably the cause of so few samples being shown. A false impression has gone abroad with some of our flax millers, that I have been an exhibitor and always carried off the prizes at the Provincial Shows. This

I most distinctly deny, as the books of the Board of Agriculture will show. I have only exhibited small samples for the benefit of the farmers, and a collection of Canadian samples for which I had the honour of receiving a medal and diploma at the Paris Exhibition last year. I have acted as judge every year since 1861, except last year, but never received a dollar of prize money.

This important new branch of Canadian industry is yet destined, I believe, to prove entirely successful, and add materially to the resources of the country.

JOHN A. DONALDSON.

Early Potatoes.

To farmers near the city, and owners of suburban lots, it should be a matter of some consideration to be able to raise early potatoes, an article that always finds a ready sale at high prices, when brought to market before the first of July. It does not, as a general rule, pay to grow them at a distance from the market, nor for those who have large farms to look after to leave their work and their hired help to themselves for a whole day, in order to peddle out a wagon-load of early potatoes: but these should at least grow a few for early use at home. For a very early potato we must have a short-stemmed, quick-growing kind, that does not blossom, of which there is none better than some of the early English varieties, such as the Ash-leaved Kidney, Early Handfield, Myatt's Prolific, and Early Shaw. Seed of these varieties can be procured from most of the large seedsmen. They are all small-sized, quick growers, maturing in from six to eight weeks from planting. For an early crop, potatoes may be planted as soon as the ground is dry and warm, say by the middle of April, and to save them from being cut off by an untimely frost at night, it is a good plan to spread strips of matting, or straw, over the young plants at night and on cold days. The straw may be raked off, to remain between the rows during the day, and again replaced at night, if there is a probability of frost occurring.

As a matter of course, it would be useless to attempt to grow early potatoes with any prospect of success, unless the soil is rich, light and warm. Coarse barn-yard manure would be useless to the crop, but a dressing of well-rotted compost, or guano, thoroughly incorporated with the soil, would prove advantageous in stimulating growth.

For a medium early kind, to send to market during July and August, the Buck-eye, Early Goodrich, and perhaps the Early Rose, and two or three others of the new varieties just now being brought out by speculators, will prove the most desirable. They grow to a larger size than the very early English sorts, so require more time to grow before they are fit to eat, for it must be borne in mind that a large potato, half-grown and unripe, is not such wholesome food as a smaller one, of a variety that attains maturity early and at a small size.