

CULTIVATION OF THE BEAN.

The *Bean* is much more extensively cultivated in the neighbouring States than in Canada. It may be profitably adopted as a field crop upon many of our light soils. We copy the following remarks on its culture, from one of our exchanges, the *R. N. Yorker*.

For a few years, in those portions of the State, where the enemies of the wheat crop have rendered the production of that cereal a labour of risk, and oftentimes a loss to the cultivator, much attention has been given to the growth of various grains, roots and plants as a substitute therefor. Among those which have assumed a prominent position, as regards freedom from pernicious and destructive insects, profitable returns for time and labour expended, facility for marketing, yield of provender for farm stock, etc., will be found the bean.

In the culture of the bean, the soil should be one of a light loamy texture, of at least medium fertility, and needs fine tilth, as well as cleanliness at the hands of the cultivator. What is known as a quick, dry soil, seems to be the desideratum sought for by most of those engaged in its production. Upon clay or retentive lands, the crop is liable to be severely affected by droughts or heavy rains—a superabundance of moisture injuring the pods nearest the ground by rot. In addition to the benefits derived by the crop from a judicious selection of soil, the cultivator will find that land easily kept friable and free from weeds, will lighten labour materially. If manure is used, it should be well worked in, and it were better if applied some time previously to planting, as decaying matter tends rather to the development of straw, than the formation of seed.

The preparations for *planting*, as well as the *after-culture* of the bean, should be most thorough. The ground needs to be well pulverized, and if retentive of moisture, ought to be ridged. Hill and drill planting are both followed—with about equal success as to product—but we are inclined to think that the former mode involves the greatest amount of labour. All danger from frost should be over before planting, as the bean is not hardy.

The common practice in planting, is rows three feet apart, and in hills about one foot distant. Should the rows be brought nearer together, it would be well to give more space between the hills. The distance given, however, is as close as can be worked to advantage where the cultivator is used; where the hoe is depended upon, 20, or 24 inches will cover the ground better. The last of May or first of June will be found a propitious time for depositing the seed. When planted in hills, from 4 to 6 beans is sufficient. In drill planting, from 3 to 5 pecks are used. Many farmers plant the bean in rows or hills, alternate with corn, and seem to think that advantages are derivable from such procedure.

As, in the culture of any new branch of the farm economy, a diversity of opinion is apt to exist, and detailed experiments are worth more than all that can be said theoretically, we are induced to note the conclusions of a few of those who have given the subject attention. A Chautauque County friend writes:—"I do my work the last day in May. Plough and harrow the ground smooth, mark out in shallow furrows, about two and a-half feet apart, with a corn plough, then drop the beans, two or three inches apart, in the furrow. I can plant, with the assistance of a couple of hands, four acres per day in this manner. When the young plants are three or four inches high, use the cultivator, and weed and hoe them well. When about eight or ten inches high, use the common plough, turning the soil against the vines. I sometimes sprinkle my beans with plaster when I hoe them. Average yield, twenty to twenty-five bushels per acre. Save the vines to feed the cattle. I have wintered cattle and kept them in good order, with little else than bean straw, the cattle consuming the product at the rate of about one and one-third acres per head."

In Orleans County, where much space is given to its culture, the planting is usually done with machinery manufactured for the purpose. A man and boy will plant twelve acres per day. One bushel is the quantity used for seed. Variety—the "medium white." Average yield, 18 to 20 bushels per acre.

The time of harvesting has arrived when the pods turn yellow, and the beans should be pulled and stacked. If the weather is fine it will prove of benefit to place them in rows for a few days, that partial curing may ensue. Care must be exercised that sharp frosts do not catch them still in the ground. To stack them, drive a stake in the ground, cover the earth with something that will keep the beans from it, and lay the beans about