

AGRICULTURAL.

[FOR THE BEE.]

ON THE CULTURE OF TURNIPS.

A celebrated writer on agriculture says, that "Nova Scotia is capable of supporting a dense population." While the truth of this remark must be evident to every reflecting mind, it is no less easy to perceive, that the agriculture of the Province must be considerably extended, before the assertion can be verified. The attention of the farmer is now, almost exclusively, directed to the culture of wheat, oats, and potatoes. But the soil is capable of producing other articles equally useful. Of the various esculent roots which might be cultivated with advantage, the turnip is not the least profitable; but while it forms a material part of the agriculture of other countries, a few drills, in the corner of a field, is generally, all that even our most extensive farmers ever attempt to cultivate. And why is this the case? Are its profits and uses not known? In Nova Scotia, where a substitute for hay has ever been a desideratum, no crop, with the same amount of labor, can be more profitably cultivated. In the New England states, upwards of nine hundred bushels are frequently raised on an acre of ground; and in testimony of the profits attending their culture in England and Scotland, I make the following quotation from the *Letters of Agricola*, by John Young, Esq.

"In the Fullarton Farm, belonging to the duke of Portland, under the management of Woods, they found that a Scotch acre,—which is a little more than an acre and a quarter, English measure—produced in turnips,

	tons.	cwt.	lbs.
Of bulbs without the leaves	76	0	0
Of leaves by themselves	14	0	0
Total,	90	0	0

"Forty bushels are about equal to a ton, and the quantity per acre, therefore, in bulbs alone rise to the enormous amount of 3640 bushels, besides 14 tons of leaves of highly nutritive quality. Estimating the bulbs at 2s. per bushel—their value in this market—an acre will fetch £304 currency—a sum sufficient to awaken the utmost agricultural industry.

"On the glebe of the Rev. James Muir,			
The bulbs weighed	49	11	17
The leaves	17	5	51
Total,	66	16	68

"At Stonecastle, belonging to William Taylor, Esq.

The bulbs weighed	48	7	16
The leaves	20	0	0
Total,	68	7	16

"The same proprietor had yellow turnips, of which

The bulbs weighed	31	5	80
The leaves	10	5	80
Total,	41	11	48

"There was nothing singular stated as to the mode of cultivation. These quantities although not extraordinary, must not be supposed to be unprecedented; for throughout all Scotland and England, crops of similar bulk and weight could be selected in every parish and county."

These facts ought to afford sufficient inducements to every farmer, to devote a part of his time and labor to the cultivation of this vegetable.

I shall make a few general observations on the culture of Ruta Baga, or, as it is called, the Swedish Turnip.

Preparation of the Soil.

Contrary to an opinion entertained by many, among the farming community, ruta baga requires a deep, rich soil. Clay ground should be avoided, where a sandy loam can be procured. Having selected a field, it must be deeply ploughed, and the furrows harrowed down. Drills are made, from twenty to twenty-five inches apart, and supplied with a quantity of strong manure. Furrows are then turned, back to back, so as to form a ridge over the manure; these are gone over with a hoe, and small stones and lumps of earth, lying on the drills are removed, and the top gently levelled down, for the reception of the seed.

Sowing, &c.

Various opinions are entertained with respect to the most suitable time for sowing; but experience proves that no definite period can be appointed. One person will obtain a good crop from seed sown early in June, while his neighbor, who is equally successful, defers sowing until the middle of July. In England and Scotland, where the crop is permitted to remain in the ground during the winter, late sowing is perhaps preferable; but in Nova Scotia, where the crop must be harvested in autumn, early sowing should evidently be adopted. But as turnips are liable to peculiar accidents, there can be no surer way of securing a crop than to have the seed sown at different periods. By this means, the depredations of flies may frequently be obviated, and more time is afforded for hoeing and cleaning the crop. The seed is sown evenly along the top of the drills, at the rate of about 1lb. or 1½lb. to the acre, and covered with a light drill harrow; or, where this cannot be obtained, it may be done by hand, with a brush or rake. The drills must then be rolled, that, by levelling the soil, too rapid evaporation may be prevented.

Every person should raise his own seed, for the purposes of always having it good, free from mixture, and of the kinds he requires.

Hoeing and Thinning.

In the due performance of this part of the work, depends much of the success of the crop. But farmers in Nova Scotia have such a propensity for *jobbing*, or working for other people, that their time, during the summer months, is seldom devoted to the improvement of their own farms; and turnip-hoeing, like other duties, is either left to minor branches of the family, or it is not done at all. Consequently, in autumn, a luxuriant crop of weeds is growing, where a profitable field of turnips might, with due attention, have been raised. Hoeing should be performed when the leaves are about three inches long, and at the same time the superfluous plants must be cleaned away, leaving each remaining root from eight to twelve inches apart. A second hoeing is required about three weeks afterwards; and, if the soil is apt to produce weeds, a third hoeing will be necessary, when the rows must be examined, and the remaining superfluous roots removed, and preserved for table use, or carried to market, where they may be readily sold.

Harvesting and Preserving.

Harvesting must be delayed in autumn as long as the weather will permit. When it is commenced, the turnips must be carefully lifted and placed along the field with the tops of every two rows together. A person then follows, and with a bill-hook, or large knife, separates the bulbs from the tops; and the latter, being excellent food for cattle, are carried to the barn.

Dry parts of the field are selected, on which the turnips may be placed in heaps, containing thirty or forty bushels each. A quantity of dry straw, or spruce boughs, is placed over them, and the whole is finally covered with a thick, inverted grass turf. A drain is then dug round the base of the heap, to carry off the water;

and, generally, one or two very small holes are made in its top, to permit the air to circulate. In this state, they will remain with safety until spring; but if required, they can be removed at any period during the winter.

Uses and Profits of Turnips.

With the same amount of labor, no vegetable can be raised, so useful, and at the same time so profitable, as the turnip. Cattle may be fattened almost exclusively on them. Sheep, hogs, and horses eat them freely, and are much improved by their use. In many parts of England they are steamed and given to horses as a substitute for grain. With a crop of turnips, a person may winter his stock with at least half the quantity of hay that he would require without this root. And while they are useful on the farm, they will always meet with a ready sale in the market, at a price that would amply remunerate the grower. Any person that has in the spring, the produce of an acre, perhaps 600 bushels, to bring to market, he will readily obtain 2s. per bushel for them, and might return home with £600 in his pocket, as the reward of industry.

Although the above directions are given for the culture of ruta baga, they will apply with equal propriety to other kinds of turnips. But the common yellow turnip, and several other species, may be sown at a later period than ruta baga; and where a very early crop of hay or potatoes has been secured, some of the latter kinds of turnips, may be cultivated, with profit, as a second crop.

MELVILLE.

June 17, 1837.

SPRING, 1837.

R. DAWSON,

Has received ex barques Sally, from Liverpool, and Isabella from Greenock,

A GENERAL ASSORTMENT OF
IRONMONGERY, HARDWARE, AND
CUTLERY,

CONSISTING of—English and Swedes Iron; Crawley, German, blister and cast Steel; Borax; spikes, nails, brads and tacks;

PLOUGH MOUNTINGS, complete, pots, ovens, gob'ets, and sauce pans; copper and iron coal scoops; copper, B. M., and metal tea kettles; griddles;

SADDLERS' ASSORTED FURNISHINGS; coach lacings; cabinet and house brass furnishings; locks and hinges, (variety); fanner mountings; bed screws; garden hoes and rakes; Philad. plate mill saws, frame and other saws; razors; mathematical instruments; pocket compasses; butcher, shoe, table, jack, pen, and desk knives; iron and B. M. spoons; coffin furniture; plough traces; door knockers;

MATHIESON'S JOINERS' TOOLS,
(well assorted);

Coopers' tools; lines and twines; Blacksmith's and other files; coffee mills; spades and shovels; brushes; candlesticks; CRIMPING MACHINES; brass sofa and table castors,

COUNTER BEAMS & WEIGHTS; sad and box irons; cart and wagon bushes; chisels and gouges; Tailors' and other scissors; combs;

FENDERS AND FIRE IRONS; Blacksmiths' bellows, anvils, and vices; cue irons; bullet moulds; patent shot, powder; window glass putty,

PAINT AND OIL; scythes, sickles; weavers' reeds; fiddle strings; mirrors, (variety); Tinsmiths' iron and wire; &c. &c.

A suitable assortment of
WOOLEN, COTTON, AND SILK
GOODS.

A few Chinese and other rich SHAWLS; Palm leaf HATS, by the dozen; stuff and silk Hats; &c. &c.

ALSO:

TEAS, SUGARS, COFFEE, RICE, a parrot ginger, tobacco, snuff, cigars, molasses, vinegar, crockery, sets China; shoe leather, &c. &c. Water street, Pictou, June 6. if