

HOME AND FARM.

HERE AND THERE.—Active farming work must now be engaged in in right good earnest, and, until the crops are all in, we will have to take advantage of every fine day, working early and late. We must not leave our business for a half-holiday in town or a tramp up the fishing stream. These can be left for a more opportune period, and we should not allow anything to call us off from the work of planting, upon which so much depends.

The farmer who is up before daylight in these early spring days, and has to work until the sun sinks behind the western hills, is after all one of the happiest men in the world. His position is one of comparative independence. He is not called upon to work for the advantage of others exclusively; nor is he directed in his work by arbitrary managers and bosses, he is a free man, and hundreds of those who are pent up within factories or machine-shops, or engaged in the more confining occupations incident to city and town life, would gladly exchange their positions for one in which active outdoor exercise would give them an opportunity to inhale the sweet balmy air of a bright spring morning in the country.

Some of the fresh butter which is now exposed for sale in the Halifax markets is evidently of superior make, its flavor and color are all that could be wished for, while the price is large enough to please even a dairyman's heart. Speaking about butter reminds us that the oleomargarine manufacturers in the United States, having found that their business has been seriously interfered with by the law, which obliges them to stamp the product as oleomargarine, now propose to retaliate upon butter-makers by securing the passage of a law to prevent the use of coloring matter in dairy butter. We heartily wish them success, and could wish that the same law applied in Nova Scotia; for coloring butter is deceptive, and although we know it has come to be generally practised, it is quite unnecessary where the cream is rich; and it is certainly unfair to market butter thus colored, as equal in every respect to that made from the milk of Jersey cows.

A large wholesale dealer in Halifax in speaking a few days since about the Canadian butter which is sold in this market, said that our farmers' wives should see to it that more care was taken in the making and salting of butter, and that our country packers should not be so careless about the tubs in which it was put up. The farmers in Cape Breton could readily obtain remunerative prices for their butter in Halifax were it packed in proper tubs. With a few notable exceptions, Cape Breton butter was packed in tubs which, when it came to be used, had acquired a decidedly objectionable flavor from the new wood of the tub. This, he said, had frequently prevented sales being made, which could have otherwise been easily arranged.

POTATO CULTURE.—A letter on potato culture, written by Mr. P. D. Kinney to the *Yarmouth Times*, will no doubt be valuable to farmers in other sections. Mr. Kinney says:—

There appears to be no practical limit to the possibilities of research in the various fields of human knowledge, and in no direction is this more observable than in that of agriculture. Although it is the most primitive occupation of man, and has held, and must always continue to hold, the most important place of all occupations, it has not made that progress which would naturally be expected. But the present generation has witnessed as remarkable an advance in this as in other departments of knowledge, and especially is this the case during the past few years. Every season some new practical truths are drawn from that great laboratory of nature, in response to the keen questioning of scientific investigation.

Only a few seasons since, the important fact, known here and there by a few agriculturists, was practically and widely circulated by a leading farm journal of the United States, that in the cultivation of the potato, it was a sound scientific principle to apply manures or fertilizers on top of the seed, instead of following the primitive and almost universal practice of putting the seed on top of the manure. The writer was struck with the apparent reasonableness of the plan, and after testing it in a small way was so fully convinced of its advantages that he contracted with a farmer of this county to raise several hundred bushels of potatoes, following out strictly the details given by the most successful growers. The result fully met his expectations, and dissipated the doubts of the farmer and his neighbors who incredulously watched the experiment. Last season we obtained equally satisfactory results on a still more extended scale, and with different kinds of fertilizers and manures. Other growers tried the new way of manuring, and in every instance reported were rewarded with good, and even extraordinary crops, the yield in some cases being from one quarter to one half greater than by the old system. Such great difference, however, must be regarded as exceptional, the average being say 10 to 15 per cent. Even this rate of increase is of very great importance, and when reckoned on the whole product of this country, represents a money value of many thousands of dollars. It is to be hoped, that as the potato crop is of such magnitude, this and other improvements in the methods of cultivation may be more generally adopted, thereby adding to the return for labor and money expended something to offset the dull sale and low prices of the present time.

Any inquiries as to details in regard to the above matter, which your agricultural subscribers may be disposed to make, will be promptly and cheerfully answered, either verbally or by letter.

SEEDS AND PLANTING.—A chapter on seed planting is never amiss. If there is one thing of paramount importance in vegetable gardening it is the thorough preparation of the seed-bed. It is even more important to garden than to field-crops that the soil be thoroughly cultivated before the seed is put in the ground, and if this fact was more generally recognized and

practised the frequent cause for complaint that seeds fail to germinate during long continued dry weather would be largely removed. The purity of the seed is taken for granted, as they can and ought to be tested, not only for their germinating qualities, but for their genuineness of kind, before planting. If this is done there will be little difficulty in distinguishing the different varieties when they come up, and in keeping plants that are of the same families a sufficient distance apart. As is well-known a plant gets all of its nourishment from the seed until the leaves reach the surface and expand in the open air. It then begins to draw its nourishment from the soil. If the seeds are planted too deep it will take a much longer time for them to reach the surface, and, consequently, their growth is considerably retarded. From a scientific and practical point of view shallow planting is the best. Potatoes and peas are often covered three inches or more, but in this case the seed is larger and contains more nutriment, which will not be exhausted before the plant reaches sunlight. The very small delicate seeds should hardly be covered from sight, and certainly not planted several inches in the ground.

The time for spring planting depends upon the weather, and not upon any fixed date of the month. The best rule is that as soon as the ground can be worked, the seed should be put in. One great fault of our northern climate is that the season of growth is of too short duration for many crops, and the earlier the seed can be put in the ground the better they will be off in the end. Corn, for instance, will be of the largest and finest growth that is planted early in the season and has a longer time to transform soil into stover and grain. After the frost is out of the ground, the land should be worked at once; but this is often made impossible owing to the accumulation of water on it, which must have time to settle down and leach through the soil. This often takes from a day or two to several weeks, according to the composition of the earth. But all this time the farmer is losing valuable time. The clear, early spring weather is proving of no value whatever to him, although the weeds and noxious vines are freely making use of it. To surmount this difficulty the field should be drained on the surface, and thus an earlier start obtained. Nearly every land requires surface draining in the spring, and the advantages derived from such work can never be over-estimated. Furrows may be drawn from the centre of the field to each side, and from thence through the sods of the fence-rows to lower ground off the cultivated field. If there are many steep slopes and low places, the need of surface draining is all the greater. Very shallow furrows should be drawn on the hillsides, as gullies will be formed by the running water if they are made too prominent. Gullies are always disagreeable things to have in a field, as water will naturally flow into them the whole summer long, and will often cause considerable damage to the plants. When ridges run round the hill-sides, the water will be dammed up, and the fountain head of gullies formed. These should be carefully drained, and the water conducted off the field by a series of shallow drains.

Of course, early pasture is acknowledged by all to be desirable, and this can be obtained only by sowing the grass seeds very early. The sooner the land is prepared for these seeds the better chance will the plants have of outgrowing the weeds, and eventually of crowding them out of existence, but early pasture does not mean turning the stock on it as soon as it is high enough for the animals to eat it. In addition to trampling down the tender plants and stunting their growth, this practice would also prove of little benefit to the cattle so far as nutriment is concerned. The animals do not fatten off it, but quite frequently lose flesh. Young grass contains a greater proportion of water than anything else, and but little nutriment.

If the soil is well cultivated it is better to put in the seeds right after a rain. They will then be supplied with the necessary amount of moisture, and little risk will be run of having them washed out by another rain a day or two after planting. If considerable rain falls right after seeds are planted many of them will frequently rot in the wet soil. The practice of soaking seeds which is adopted by many farmers is little better than useless. Seeds thus soaked will be more liable to rot than those put in dry, and if seeds are planted right after a rainfall they will germinate as quickly as those that have been soaked.

GEO. E. WALSH.

METHODS OF RESTORING OLD LACE GOODS TO THEIR ORIGINAL COLOR.—The following singular method of treating old and valuable lace goods so as to restore them to their original shade of color and condition is said to have been one of the secret processes used by Parisian dyers but now made public in the *Farber Zeitung*. The lace is lightly ironed to smooth it, then folded with care and sewn up in a linen bag, which is then suspended in pure olive oil for twenty-four hours; the oil drained off without disturbing the lace, and then altogether placed for fifteen minutes in hot soap in l water, then in warm water, and lastly in cold water containing a little boiled starch, and again drained. The lace is now taken out of the linen bag and dried in a stretched state upon frames provided with needles.

ADVICE TO MOTHERS.—Are you disturbed at night and broken of your rest by a sick child suffering and crying with pain of Cutting Teeth? If so send at once and get a bottle of "Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup," for Children Teething. Its value is incalculable. It will relieve the poor little sufferer immediately. Depend upon it, mothers; there is no mistake about it. It cures Dysentery and Diarrhea, regulates the Stomach and Bowels, cures Wind Colic, softens the Gums, reduces Inflammation, and gives tone and energy to the whole system. "Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup" for children teething is pleasant to the taste and is the prescription of one of the oldest and best female physicians and nurses in the United States, and is for sale by all druggists throughout the world. Price twenty-five cents a bottle. Be sure and ask for "MRS. WINSLOW'S SOOTHING SYRUP," and take no other kind.

A CARD

To all who are suffering from the errors and indiscretions of youth, nervous weakness, early decay, loss of manhood, etc., I will send a recipe that will cure you, FREE OF CHARGE. This great remedy was discovered by a missionary in South America. Send a self-addressed envelope to the Rev. J. T. INMAN, Station D, New York City.