

in this country. Most persons favor sowing them thickly, and some prefer broadcasting to drilling them to induce a thicker growth. The above mentioned quantities will be ample for an acre. These make not only excellent food for soiling, but if not wanted for that purpose they are equally good as winter feed, and may be cut with the mower and raked with the horse-rake as hay. An acre or two on every small farm will be of inestimable service in the dairy during the months of July and August, while the corn crop is coming on; and several acres should be sown where the herds are large. There is nothing like turning off a large amount of good feed from a small portion of land. We can then afford to rest our pastures and allow them to gather strength for future supplies as well as for self-protection against the drought of summer as well as the frost of winter.

PEOPLE are often found who speak lightly of the value of agricultural shows. They look upon them as of doubtful utility, and as places that make great inroads on the time of the farmer at a season when it is very valuable. This latter allegation is too true, but if the benefits which exhibitions bestow upon the country overshadow the drawbacks, then we cannot afford to dispense with them. It is worthy of note that all the agricultural societies of Britain have found their most useful work to consist in the holding of exhibitions, although in several instances, it was not for this purpose at all that they were called into being. Not only have our autumn shows proved a great stimulus to agriculture in its every phase, but also the spring shows and the fat stock shows as well. While it is true that we may very easily get too many of them, it is equally true we cannot do without them. Our part, then, is to support liberally those that are deserving, and to discountenance such as are doing a lot of harm along with some good. We want shows that will do a lot of good and but little harm, or, better still, no harm at all.

Students' Union at the Ontario Agricultural College.

This annual gathering will be held at the college, Guelph, on Feb. 24th and 25th, 1887. Prof. James, James Cheeseman, Editor *Canadian Dairyman*, Wm. Stover, A. O. A. C., Wm. Ballantyne, A. O. A. C., R. P. Holterman, A. O. A. C., A. Lehman, A. O. A. C., and other gentlemen will read papers. Reports upon experiments with barnyard manure, gypsum, super-phosphates, salt and no manure upon wheat, barley and roots will be given by members of the union.

All persons interested in the progress of agriculture are cordially invited to attend and take part in the proceedings. Reduced rates, one and one-third fare, can be secured by writing to the corresponding secretary, R. P. Holterman, Branford. The college will furnish dinner and tea to those attending the Union on February 24th and 25th. The Wellington Hotel will give meals and beds at a very moderate rate to those in attendance.

We hope that many of our farmers will take a day or two and go to Guelph, if for no other reason than to satisfy themselves as to what is being accomplished. The fruits of this institution are apparent in many ways. We see them, for good or ill, in the character of the farming done, we see them in the reports that are sent out from year to year, and more latterly the different bulletins that are sent to the press. We see them, too, in the futures of the students. But there is no place where they are more apparent than in these annual gatherings of the students and ex-students. This is a form

of harvest that can only be seen at this one time, and we urge upon our farmers to come and see for themselves. Especially do we urge upon those who are opposed to the college on principle to come and see.

If this band of young men will not bear the test of the most careful scrutiny on such occasions, they are unworthy of the institution which has done so much to shape their respective destinies. We need scarcely add that on this score we have no fears. We say then, once more, come to Guelph and see. It is worth going a good way for the pleasure of friendly greeting which the Professors are sure to give, if for no higher reason.

Selecting Seed Grain.

The season is already upon us when seed grain should be selected, and put in a state of readiness to go to the field on short notice. The seasons of growth in this country are short, and like the business men thereof, seem always in a hurry. Spring time, like some capricious maiden, keeps back her smiles for long, and then showers them upon us like an avalanche. In our confusion when not just ready, we scarcely know what to do first. The result is that nothing is done just right, and many important things are not done at all. This at any season is unfortunate, but peculiarly so in spring, as when a crop is not rightly put in, or when seed not properly prepared is used, the harvest is either not forthcoming at all or deficient in quality.

The farmers, then, who are sufficiently alive to their own best interests will be up and doing from to-day and onward, that when the season arrives they may be fully prepared for it. If the seed is all on hand and not well cleaned, this should be done before April comes with her fitful moods which eventually dissolve the last remnants of winter. Every particle should be properly cleaned and in the bags where the granary is proof against rats and mice, as every moment of springtime is of great value. Where there is the slightest suspicion that the seed has not been properly matured, or has been injured by heating in the bin, it should not be sown, as, if so, the results will not prove satisfactory. Seed may sprout and yet the growth ensuing be sickly, and anything but encouraging, so that testing by planting is not always sufficient.

When the seed has to be purchased, March rather than April and May, unless in the case of potatoes, which are liable to freeze, is the month for securing it. The seedsman has more of leisure at such a time, and is sure to have a sufficient stock of the cereals on hand. It is very vexatious to drive to the seed warehouse when the ground is in course of preparation for sowing, to be told that the stock is exhausted and a fresh supply cannot be had for a few days.

Be chary about investing largely in new varieties. It is always safest to try them at first upon a small scale. Though they may have done well in some parts, it is no guarantee that they will in your section. While it is important that they should be tested in your neighborhood, this may be done as well upon a moderate as on a large scale, and with very much less risk. But in any case if new introductions are to be tested, they had better be purchased in March, when there is a supply on hand, than in May, when there is a scramble for them.

Seed vendors who may chance to come your way with their wonderful varieties for which they have the exclusive right, allow to pass on. Do not give them a meal or their horses provender unless they pay full tale, for usually, if not always, they are a race of vagabonds, whose principal business is to entrap the unwary farmer.

Some kinds of seed may not be in stock in March,

as corn for fodder, turnip seed, etc., but even so they should be purchased before wanted for sowing, that the former especially may be tested by planting. Although we have already said that germination is not a sufficient guarantee as to the full vitality of a seed, in the case of seed corn which is usually imported, it is the only guarantee that we have, which is of course much better than no guarantee at all. The loss arising from sowing corn for the above purpose that will not grow is always great, but less so than the vexation, and the realization that rape seed has been sown instead of turnips is far from pleasant.

These mistakes may all be avoided by exercising timely forethought. No mistakes upon the farm bear fruits so bitter as those arising from sowing imperfect seed, owing to the intimate and inseparable relation of the seed time to the harvest. The wise farmer, then, will guard well this important safeguard.

Agricultural Colleges.

The strong statement was made some time ago in the *Country Gentleman*, that the obliteration of agricultural colleges "would not have any particularly remarkable effect upon the country." A writer in the same periodical in commenting upon this sweeping statement characterizes it as "absolutely false." As proof of its falsity, he says:

"I should like to ask, where have our best botanists, entomologists, horticulturists and agriculturists been educated, and where are they doing the most good? Most of them were educated at an agricultural college, and if they are not now spreading their knowledge by teaching in the same, or some other similar institution, they are employing it to the permanent improvement of the country."

The logic in the above quotation is certainly good. The debt that agriculture owes to science is very great, and where would science in agriculture find a home were it not for our agricultural colleges? The immediate effects of their obliteration would not be felt so markedly as would those more remote, for the present generation would still be the recipients of all the light that science had thrown upon their calling in the past. With the nurseries of science in agriculture locked up, progress in its different departments would be retarded, and the country thus blind to its own interests would be forced to look around on other countries passing them in the march of advance. Facts are stubborn things and we all should be glad that they are, for to them we can always tether reasons and truths with a chain that no refiner's fire can melt, and no gale of theory or blank assertion can snap asunder.

Will those who oppose our agricultural colleges please tell us what we can erect in their place that will do a similar work at a cost no greater? It would be suicidal to the best interests of agricultural advancement to obliterate them, and no opponent of these has shown to the world what would better do the work that they are doing. Then until this much is shown, it would be a huge mistake to think of doing without their help.

We make another quotation from this excellent article. It is the closing paragraph. The writer says:

"To all young men who may read this article, I say: Go to an agricultural college if you want to become intelligent and successful farmers. Go! and thus raise the level of farming as an occupation. Go! that you may afterwards, if you do not make more money, better enjoy what you do make. If there is any enjoyment at all, it comes in knowing the causes and reasons for the various phenomena constantly occurring about you. You will better understand nature's laws, and so be made more able to solve the many perplexing problems, which you now have to call experts to solve. If you are dead in earnest about farming,