

## Correspondence.

## My Farm.

To the Editor.

SIR,—I had a presentiment, which I expressed in one of my former letters, that many of our farmers would get caught in bad weather with their roots, because I saw so many neglecting the fine weather in the early part of November, and putting off the storming in hopes that the roots might grow more. Such greediness for a larger growth has surely brought its punishment upon the man whom I saw drawing in a load of turnips, covered with frozen dirt and snow. When he was lifting roots in a half frozen state, his more forward neighbour, having his roots clean and snug in the cellar, was reducing the expected throng of spring work by steadily ploughing a large acreage this fall.

We have nearly all made a mistake with our wheat this year. We sowed too late, and it will fare badly unless we are favoured with a constant covering of snow during the current winter. Depend upon it, Sir, take one season with another, it is necessary to have fall wheat in the ground by the 10th of September.

The markets have taken an unexpected turn lately. Barley has risen rapidly, and bids fair to hold its own as against oats. It appears that the Western barley crop will fall very short of the expectation. This is always the way. We presume that the probable crop returns of the West are taken from facts collected by the railways. Now, it is to the interest of these large companies, holding immense tracts of land ready for settlement, to make the most flourishing returns of the fertility and productiveness of the neighbouring farming lands, and thus to hold out great inducements to the old country emigrants. For this reason we have the same story every year, viz., that the wheat, the barley, the corn, or some other crop, has not yielded commensurate with the proclaimed expectation.

My farm, inasmuch as it applies in these letters, has pretty well resolved itself into the compass of my buildings, for all the out-door operation that we have performed is the cutting up of rough wood lying about in the bush, and setting it up on end so that it may not be buried by the first heavy snow storm.

Feeding stock is then the first operation, and I will tell you how I feed, and I can only wish that others, especially those who despise the nearest approach to book farming, would let us know how they feed. But as I feel sure that we cannot persuade them to publish their experience, why I will advertise it for them.

I have in my mind's eye a farm, not very far from here, in which all operations are performed on the principle that all tidiness is a

waste of time, and that no advantage can possibly be gained on the morrow by present liberality. Well, I passed the other day, and seeing a young colt that I knew to belong to the place, with a big rip all up one flank, the playful mark of a too close attendance upon a long sharp-horned beast, I called in to see how the farmer was getting on. After considerable talk, and a walk round the buildings and yards, I gathered that the following was the *modus operandi* of feeding.

To begin with the horses. Their stable was built under the mow of the barn. This mow was very badly floored, and as it contained second growth clover cut for seed, you may imagine the state of dirt in which were his horses. Well, he gave his horses no oats since they had stopped ploughing, although they were pretty busy drawing his own wood, and he expected to have lots of work, as soon as sleighing commenced, drawing logs to the mill; but he gave them lots of hay. True, it was old hay, not over-sweet; because, you see, good new hay has been as high as twenty-five dollars a ton.

As to bedding. Well, straw was scarce, and the horses pulled as much hay out of the mangers as would keep them off the floor at nights. Oh, that stable made me shiver; the drafts crossed every way, and on the day that I was in there the thermometer stood at about 8°, and a high wind blowing; those horses stood shivering and humping their backs like a pair of camels. He would not blanket them because they would take cold, standing around, loading wood, &c.

Well, he tied up his cows and fed them about half a bushel of turnips apiece per day. He fed them whole; they were a bit frozen already, but still, he said, the "kye managed to chew them somehow."

The young cattle did well enough; they ran in the yard; it wouldn't pay to feed them; they'd be alive in the spring, and would pick up through the summer; they had a straw-stack to run to, and were very fond of picking about the fresh stable manure, (mighty little there was to pick out of the latter.)

Pigs thrive on turnips, a few, and very solidly frozen. The same slovenly, untidy way of throwing out what food was allowed, on the snow, or on the dirt, was observable through all his operations.

I would now call your attention to the manner in which cattle should be fed, so that you may lay the two plans side by side. To any farmer who feeds ten or more head of cattle, a chaff cutter is, I consider, an almost indispensable item. In a short time I shall have stopped feeding hay entirely. By using the chaff cutter and a moderate supply of chopped barley, I keep all my animals on straw. I consider that the use of barley, when worth 60 cents a bushel, is far more economical than of hay at \$20 per ton, and there is no doubt that a very small proportion of grain, with straw, will satisfy an animal more effectually than hay without grain.

Of course, I am not here speaking of stall feeding. I am only alluding to those animals that have to be wintered and kept growing.

For a week I fed three milch cows upon cut hay and turnips, and the result was 12 lbs. of butter between them; in the next week I substituted straw for the hay, and added two pecks of chopped barley per

day between them, and the result was an increase of 3 lbs. butter per week, or a cash value of 90 cents, at an extra expense in feed of 30 cents, besides the substitution of straw for hay.

OLD COUNTRY MAN.

Ancaster.

## Agricultural Matters in the Northern Districts.

To the Editor.

SIR,—Now that the last crops of the year have been gathered, and much of the grain threshed, a more accurate estimate of the actual amount of produce can be arrived at. The harvest of 1871, judging from newspaper reports, was, in many parts of Ontario, an abundant one; but, unfortunately, several causes contributed to render it less bountiful in this section of the Province. Chief of these unfavourable influences was the remarkably dry weather experienced last summer. Those farmers whose lands had been ploughed in the previous fall, and who were enabled to sow their fields at the earliest moment, reaped fair returns; but where sowing was delayed, the seed, unmoistened by rain for months, died in the parched and dusty soil. Generally speaking, clay land, spring ploughed, yielded a crop very much under the average, so far as grain was concerned; while root crops, in nearly all cases, are very deficient in quantity, and hay is more scarce and dear than ever before known at this period of the year.

While on this subject, it may be remarked that there is no reason why clay land, under proper cultivation, should be affected by drought to any serious degree. But proper cultivation here, though by no means unknown, is altogether unpractised. No hard clay soil can be relied on till underdrained, and, in all these counties there are very few underdrained fields. Some farmers are ignorant of the advantages offered by such a mode of culture; others, possessed of the necessary means, believe that it would be a remunerative operation, but not so remunerative as the lending of money at high interest—a thing always obtainable in a new country; but the great majority would gladly invest capital in the work, did they possess it, or could they procure it at a reasonable rate. An excellent editorial on this question appeared in a late number of your journal, proposing the adoption of the English plan in the matter, namely, that Government should lend money, at low rates, for the purpose. No better measure—no other measure nearly as good—could be proposed for the benefit of the Canadian farmer, or for the benefit of the whole of Canada. But no such measure need ever be expected from such legislative bodies as Canadians have of late years been deceived into electing. Oh, for one year of a Canadian Parliament whose members should apply their efforts towards benefiting their country—not towards enriching themselves.