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The Rural Canadian.

EDITED BY W. F. CLARKE.

TORONTO, APRIL 29TH, 1882.

POPULAR IGNORANCE IN REGARD TO THE CLOVER PLANT.

Once more the wail has been lifted up in various parts of the land, "our clover is winter-killed! Few have any idea that this wail is the echo and revelation of ignorance. Yet such is the fact. The greater part of the clover said to have been killed has not been killed at all, but has only died in the natural course and order of things. When a very old man dies of mere age, it would be absurd to say he was killed. But it is not more absurd than to say clover has been killed, when the fact is, it died of old age last fall, and an open winter has merely heaved out the dead roots.

Clover is classed as a biennial plant, though, strictly speaking, its life-time is about eighteen months. The plants that grow from clover seed sown the present spring will die during the fall of 1883, and if the succeeding winter is an open one, will be heaved out of the ground, and set every ignorant farmer who sees their dead remains bestrewn the land, bewailing, as now, the winter-killing of the clover.

The common idea about clover is that you can seed land with it for a term of years, the same as timothy. This idea has grown up in consequence of a neglect of careful observation as to the nature and habits of the clover plant. Clover constantly re-seeds the ground in which it has gained a foothold, and, late in the fall, the young seedlings get a start. If the winter is favourable to the protection of these weak and tender plants, they will survive and grow with great rapidity the following spring. But an open winter is fatal to them. These young seedling clover plants may be seen in the early spring, after an open winter, lying in bunches and strings on the top of the ground, as though they had been drawn out with a rake. No farmer ever thinks of seeding down to clover in the fall, for he knows there is little or no chance of getting a catch if he sows then. But the great majority of farmers in reality depend on a chance fall catch of self-sown seed to renew their clover fields.

It may be safely affirmed that no clover plant of the first year that has had a whole season's growth was ever heaved out of the ground by the succeeding winter's frost. Give clover a fair chance, in ordinarily good soil, and before winter sets in its roots will have struck into the soil to the depth of four or five feet, or even more, with innumerable horizontal fibres ramifying out in all directions. At the end of the second season the plant dies, and consequently the fine fibrous rootlets quickly decay, leaving the old plant an easy prey to the heaving frost. Many old, experienced farmers doubt the fact of the clover roots going down to such a great depth. During a long life-time, they have never so much as followed a vigorous clover root with a spade to ascertain the hold it has got of the soil. If any farmer, young or old, will dig a few holes beside thrifty clover plants not over a year old, the probability is that the attempt to find the bottom of

the roots will be given up in despair. These assertions are easily verified, and if any reader is disposed to question or deny them, we beg that he will take a little exercise with a spade before doing so. It is absurd to suppose that a plant which takes such a mighty hold of the soil as this is ever winter-killed, except after its roots are dead, or in the case of late fall seedlings, which could only be expected to grow in very exceptional seasons. Wheat has stood the brunt of the past winter very well, yet it takes but a slight hold of the soil compared with clover. It is only a surface plant, while clover is a deep-growing, tap-rooted plant. There is no need to bewail winter-killed clover. The old roots that died last fall form valuable manure, being rich in nitrogen, and the baby seedlings that just sprouted a few inches before winter set in, could not be expected to live.

Clover is both a crop and a manure, and its chief value is as a fertilizer. The best results are obtained by sowing it alone—that is, without a grain or grass accompaniment—as early as possible in spring. A moderate outing of hay will be had that year. The second year, a crop of hay and a crop of seed may be taken off, after which the land should be ploughed for a crop of spring wheat or barley the following year. What is left of dead leaves and roots in the soil is equivalent to a dressing of manure. A good cereal crop may be safely counted on after the land has been two seasons in clover. That eminent veteran agriculturist, Mr. Lawes, says:—"One fact is perfectly clear, that whatever may be the source of nitrogen in clover, the plant furnishes that substance in the cheapest possible manner; and so long as good crops of clover can be obtained, the farmer need not have recourse to any costly artificial compounds for its supply." Clover should never be sown as a permanent seeding down of land. Strictly speaking, it is not a grass, and requires different treatment from the grasses. It should have a regular place in the rotation, mainly with a view to its manurial value. The facts stated in this article are incontrovertible. Popular ignorance pooh-poohs them, without putting them to the test, which is easily done. All we ask of the sceptical reader is a fair trial of the system we have recommended. We have no fear as to the results of so doing.

ONTARIO VETERINARY COLLEGE.

The following paragraph should have appeared in our last, but it is still in good time, and we have much pleasure in chronicling the continued success of this important institution, and the well-won honours bestowed on its able principal, Dr. Smith:—

"The closing exercises of this institution took place at Toronto, March 30th and 31st. On the first of these days the examinations were held, the Board of Examiners having been appointed by the Government. Out of some forty-six applicants, forty gentlemen were successful, and received their diplomas. On the following day a large gathering of students and friends of the College assembled to witness the conferring of prizes and honours. The Hon. Minister of Education and other leading gentlemen spoke, highly congratulating the principal, Prof. Andrew Smith, V. S., on the success of the College. Mr. T. B. Colton, Mount Vernon, Ohio, carried off the silver medal in pathology; Mr. W. A. Dryden, the silver medal in anatomy; and Mr. J. Hugo Reed, the gold medal for the best general examination. A magnificent full-length oil portrait of Prof. Smith was then unveiled, and, in a neat address, presented for his acceptance as a mark of the esteem in which he is held by a large part of the veterinary

profession of America. The professor replied in suitable terms, stating that he had laboured earnestly for the advancement of the veterinary profession in America; and that the efforts of himself and those associated with him had not been altogether unsuccessful, the attendance this session of 120 students at the Ontario Veterinary College would show. He thanked the donors heartily for this mark of confidence."

SALE OF ENGLISH DRAFT HORSES.

We learn from the *Prairie Farmer* that there was an auction sale of English draft "shire," or "cart" horses, at the Chicago Stock Yards, April 5th. Some of the animals were superior, but others were decidedly poor specimens. The prices obtained show how much heavy horses are in demand among farmers and others in the U.S. The particulars of the sale are as follows:—

Peeping Tom, 6 years, to Jacob Schnook, Jefferson, Ill.	\$ 920
Hard Times, to same	1,525
Grey Prince, 4 years, to John Barr, Wilton Centre, Ill.	1,025
Milton Duke, 8 years, to J. E. Miller, Hartsburgh, Ill.	1,185
Prince Tom, 4 years old, to D. G. Brown, Chicago, Ill.	1,600
Young Boxer, 6 years, to Ingersen Bros., Bryant, Iowa.	1,200
Prince of the Isle, 6 years, to D. G. Brown, Chicago, Ill.	1,600
Challenger, 6 years, to John Haxley, Anawan, Ill.	875
King Pippin, 8 years, to Jones & North, Rochester, Sangamon Co., Ill.	950
Loyal Tom, 2 years, to John Faulk, Mendota, Ill.	1,000
British King, 2 years, to John Barr, Wilton Centre, Ill.	975
Young England's Glory, 4 years, H. H. Coolley, Chicago, Ill.	900
Rob Roy, Ingersen Bros., Bryant, Iowa.	1,825
Young Honest Tom, 3 years, to W. J. Ford, Urbana, Ill.	825
Honest Heart, 8 years, to Thos. Bennett, Rossville, Ill.	1,800
Prince, D. G. Brown, Chicago, Ill.	725
Goliath, 6 years, to Jacob Degan, Ottawa, Ill.	1,275
Isle of Ely, to H. H. Coolley, Chicago.	1,400
Prince of the Isle 3rd, 6 years A. C. Logan, Moline, Ill.	1,125
Brown Prince, 6 years, Jacob Degan, Ottawa, Ill.	850
Prince Albert, 8 years, to D. G. Brown, Chicago.	725
Primus, 2 years, to J. B. McFarland, Chicago.	850

These horses came from the ten districts of Cambridgeshire, and were nearly all purchased from the Duke of Beaufort's tenantry, on the Isle of Ely. Among the lot sold were several first prize winners at some of the principal shows in England in 1881.

The *Prairie Farmer* states that the demand for draft horses in the U.S. appears to be almost without limit, and hence that the importation of this class of animals will probably be large during the coming season. It adds:—"The trade in Percherons and Clydesdales has never been as active as it is at the present time, and it is likely to remain so for some years. The Shire horses of England constitute another important source whence this demand may, in part, be met, but it is well to guard against imposition, and not snap up everything that may be offered because they happen to come from districts in England where these horses are bred, or picked up in Canada and represented as well-bred Shire horses. The Clydesdale interest has suffered from such practices, and it is well for farmers, as well as for legitimate breeders and dealers, to be on their guard against speculating sharps."

A GOOD PAPER.

Sixteen years ago the *Turf, Field and Farm* located its offices at 87 Park Row, New York. The rooms at once became a favourite resort, and thousands of distinguished men, fond of breeding and sport, left their footprints upon the stairs. The journal echoed the best thoughts of these men, and it became a power in the land. It made popular and respectable the literature of sport. It excluded from its pages everything that was not elevated and manly. Its circulation rapidly spread