

Turnip Culture.

Editor of the Agriculturist,

As the benefits which are derived from the growth of this important crop become more widely known, it is yearly receiving a larger space in our fields, a space, yet, however, very diminutive indeed. To cultivate turnips successfully a good deal of labour and attention is indispensable, and perhaps, were we possessed of a practical knowledge of their culture, or proper mode of treatment suited to the requirements of our climate, we should not so often have occasion to complain of a want of success. At your suggestion and request, I shall mention a system which I have found to succeed pretty well; also, a few facts that came under my observation which may possibly be interesting to some of your readers:

In the fall the land intended for turnips was manured with farm-yard manure, and ploughed nine or ten inches deep; cross-ploughed in the spring as soon as it became sufficiently dry, then harrowed and rolled, ploughed again about a week or ten days before sowing, harrowed and rolled until a fine deep tilth was secured. The furrows should be kept going immediately after the plough, or that which is ploughed should be harrowed at least every night, to prevent the moisture from evaporating and the land getting too dry. By thus treating this length of time before sowing, the seeds of weeds are afforded an opportunity to sprout, and are destroyed when drilling commences. There are now many kinds of artificial manures used for turnips, such as guano, bones &c., which are effective in producing large crops, and are much more easily applied than farm-yard manure, on account of their small bulk. Long, poorly rotted manure is ill adapted to this crop, for two reasons: it is not in a fit state to be taken up by the roots of the young plants, at a time they most require to be forced, and it acts injuriously, especially if applied in large quantities in this way; it is with difficulty covered when closing the drills, and when a roller is passed over, a very shallow covering remains in which the seed is deposited; the warm weather and drying winds which we frequently have at this season of the year, dry up the earth on the top of the rough manure, and much of the seed does not sprout at all, and that portion which grows is not unfrequently much injured or quite destroyed before the roots penetrate through the moist earth beneath.

If possible, drills that are opened in the morning should be manured, closed, and sown in the evening. The proper depth to deposit the seed, is a question often discussed. I have these two last years made experiments with reference to this question, and have both times arrived at similar results. The machine with which I sowed would either sow half an inch or one and a half deep; that portion which was sown the former depth, braided very irregularly, and

much of the seed never grew at all. That which was sown the latter depth, or one inch and a half, came up much earlier and was altogether a better braird. The only reason I can assign for so marked a difference is that the earth becomes so dry at the former depth—that the seed cannot sprout unless it be favoured with damp or moist weather, when a good braird is secured. The grand secret of success is frequent stirring with the cultivator, or as often as the land becomes hard or baked, taking the weeds in time and keeping them down.

J. W.

June, 1862.

[As our young friend has made so good a commencement, we shall hope to hear from him occasionally, giving the results of his observations and practice. Short practical articles, embodying the results of experience such as many of our readers could, with a little pains, communicate, are what we particularly need.

EDS.

Report of the Minister of Agriculture for the year 1861.

To His Excellency the Right Honourable CHARLES STANLEY, Viscount Monck, Baron Monck of Ballytrammon, in the County of Wexford, Governor General of British North America, etc., etc., etc.,

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY:

The undersigned, in conformity with the 6th section of 22 Vic., cap 32, has the honour to submit his annual Report, for the information of Her Majesty's Government.

IMMIGRATION.

The encouragement of Immigration forms a most important branch of the duties of the Minister, and is one to which the especial and most earnest efforts of the Department have been directed.

Frequent representations have been made of the great difficulties in procuring accurate information and statistics relating to Canada, experienced by intending emigrants, many more of whom would probably make Canada their home, were her vast resources and the advantages and inducements which she holds out, more widely advertised and proclaimed.

With a view of testing this question, and of enabling Canada to compete more favourably with other British Colonies and the United States, for the advantages attendant upon the settlement of certain classes of emigrants among us, additional agents have been temporarily appointed to represent the emigration branch of this department in the north and south of Ireland and western Europe, respectively.