

A Fruitful Stalk of Indian Corn.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER:

SIR,—I have in my possession a single stalk of Indian Corn grown on my farm which has produced, and to which are still appended, five fully developed ears. The following table gives their measurement and yield:—

	Length.	No. of Grains
1st ear lowest down	5 inches	154
2nd do. do.	5 do.	163
3rd do. do.	7½ do.	350
4th do. do.	8 do.	420
5th do. do.	8½ do.	420
Total		1,507

The land on which the above was grown was six or seven crops removed from its virgin state, coated with barn yard manure and ploughed under; hills 3½ feet apart each way; time of planting first week in June; number of stalks left in each hill 3; variety, small yellow gourd. R. H. W.

Tilbury East, May 19, 1864.

Root Crops and Canada Thistles.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER:

SIR,—In looking over THE CANADA FARMER, I find you recommend the farmers to adopt a regular rotation of crops, also to grow root crops, instead of having a dead fallow. Now, this would do very well if it were not for the tormenting Canada thistle. I find that growing root crops only encourages this pest to grow, instead of killing it. What I want to know is, how is the Canada thistle to be kept down, without a thorough fallow? If any of your correspondents will give a satisfactory answer they will confer a favor on

A PRACTICAL FARMER.

Uxbridge, May 12, 1864.

Thick Seeding of Oats.

THE *Boston Cultivator* says that, as a general thing, in sowing oats, we do not sow seed enough to produce the best crop. "Having occasion some years since, to look into the statements accompanying premium crops of this grain, in different parts of the country, we found that nearly all the great yields had been produced by heavier seeding than farmers in this section usually give. Instead of two to two and a half bushels to the acre, these large crops were grown from three to four bushels of seed per acre. We should prefer not less than three bushels to the acre for soils of medium richness, though on those very rich, somewhat less, say three bushels—on account of the greater tendency of the plants to tiller, or spread on such soils—might answer."

Good and Bad Implements.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER:

SIR,—In your valuable paper, No. 8, May 2nd, you give us several cuts of ploughs and of their work. I believe there is no part of the farmer's business so much neglected or in which so little interest is felt as ploughing. Let any man take a few days' drive through the country in the ploughing season, and he will at once conclude our farmers are sadly deficient in this most important branch of agricultural labour. If men who are skilled in this branch of labour would give the public, through your paper, their experience and mode of operating, they would do much towards ridding us of a great drawback to Canadian farming. I believe that one source of this evil is the system of false economy among very many of our farmers, who, when they want an implement, ask themselves the question,—Where can I get the cheapest? and, perhaps, purchase an inferior plough for seven or eight dollars, rather than add three or four more to it and get a far better and more substantial article made on scientific principles. If they can get one part of an implement at the manufacturer's they will then get a coultter made at some batch of a blacksmith's and a clevis somewhere else. The pieces are then put together, ploughing is commenced, the work is badly done, the materials are poor, the plough cannot be kept in trim, the man becomes excited, and the team is made to suffer, they get fractious and all goes wrong together. So the work will go on from day to day. The seed is carelessly put in, part of it is lost between the furrows and part by being choked and overrun with weeds, which

spring up where the ground was not properly cut and turned over. When the harvesting season arrives, the result is less than a half crop; no grain to take to market to meet the grocery bill, the mechanics' bill, &c. The next thing will be a visit from the bailiff, and thus ends this false economy. My advice to my brother farmers is, when you want an implement go to some good, honest manufacturer, whose character in business is well established; get a good, substantial article—two or three dollars in the price of an article is no consideration when compared to the disadvantages connected with the use of a poor article. One more evil I wish to notice and I have done. Our country is overrun with implements made by bankrupt establishments both in the States and Canada, and hawked about through the country by pedlars who are as soulless as the articles they would sell. They persuade honest, simple-minded people to purchase, and in the article of ploughs especially, they will promise to supply points and landsides as soon as the ones they have on the plough are worn out. In the height of our hurry the implement is broken and worn out, and two or three days are lost looking in vain to have them replaced.

County of Stormont.

Lunenburg P.O., May 9, 1864.

J. A. D.

THE BLACK THORN FOR FENCES.—A correspondent of the *Valley Farmer* has become thoroughly convinced, from experiments made, that the common black thorn, which grows wild in our woods and prairies, is peculiarly adapted for fencing.

REMEDY FOR SMUT IN WHEAT.—An old experienced and reliable farmer is responsible for the following remedy (from the *O. Cultivator*) for smut in wheat: "In old wheat, and on ground (if stubble) which has been clear of smut the present season. The theory is that smut is caused by an insect which deposits the germ in the succeeding crops; and by keeping the wheat over, the egg is destroyed. By noticing carefully when the wheat is about half ripe, the smut grains will be found to be full of small insects."

THE POTATO ROT.—At the last meeting of the Farmers' Club, Mr. Carpenter said:—"I have read and observed a great deal on the subject of the potato rot, and the sum of the whole seems to be that potatoes planted in moist tenacious soils are much more subject to rot than if planted in dry ground." Professor Mapes remarked:—"I had a field, half of which was under-drained, and I planted the whole to potatoes. On the under-drained portion none of the potatoes rotted, while on the other half they all rotted."

IS FLAX EXHAUSTIVE?—It is believed by many that flax is an exhaustive crop, but it is to be doubted if it is more so than most of the small grains. All of them are so if the land is continually cropped and nothing returned to the soil. Experiments of Professor Johnson showed that flax is less exhausting than either wheat or oats, judging from the amount of phosphoric acid given by its ash. Dr. Hodges, of Belfast, Ireland, recommends the application of 48 lbs. muriate of potash, 16 lbs. soda ash, 54 lbs. bone dust, 56 lbs. sulphate of magnesia, 34 lbs. gypsum, per acre, as a manure for flax land.

FLAX GROWING.—It has often been questioned by practical farmers and others whether flax, as a general crop, was a profitable one. To convince the sceptical on this point, we publish the following account from a well-known farmer in Waterloo. Mr. John Gowdy, which clearly proves that it is a paying crop. He says:—"I have been growing flax these four years and a-half, and find it pays well. Last year the weather was dry in June, which prevented it from seeding well. I had four acres sown, from which I obtained fifty bushels of seed. Of the seed I sold 44 bushels, 45 lbs., for \$67, also \$80 worth of flax, making a total of \$147 received for the produce of the four acres. For labour in growing it, I paid \$20, which left me a balance of \$127 of clear profit."—*Guelph Advertiser*.

PLANTING WILTED POTATOES.—The *Germanstown Telegraph* reports a Pennsylvania farmer as writing thus of this practice:—"I once overlooked a few rows dropped, which remained unnoticed and consequently uncovered during several days, and not only wilted but considerably dried. These had the advantage in the strong and healthy appearance of the tops throughout the season, and in the tubers at digging, over those covered fresh from the pit. Cut the potatoes and scatter on a little plaster, to prevent bleeding, and allow to wilt, if time and circumstances will admit." The editor adds:—"We have long favoured this plan. In the *Telegraph* of the 23rd March ultimo, in referring to some notes on the cultivation of the potatoe, we added:—"Cutting the potatoe, sprinkling with gypsum, and allowed to dry or shrivel for a few days or a week, is undoubtedly advisable."

GROWTH OF WOOD.—The season of the year in which forests are cut off, is believed to have an influence on the succeeding growth. To give some test to this matter, Plymouth county, Mass., Ag. Society, offered premiums, several years since, for experiments. A report was made last year, which set forth the conclusion that—"the nearer the season of the ascending sap, (Spring,) wood is cut, the more flourishing will be its succeeding growth." The person who received a premium for this experiment, states that he is satisfied that the nearer the ground wood is cut, the better; the shoots will start and grow more thrifflily, and are thicker and less liable to split down. By cutting wood often, you insure not only the greatest growth of wood but the greatest growth of money. Cattle should never be suffered to run on a wood lot, while the trees are small."

BONE DUST AS MANURE.—A. P. Cuming, Esq., of the *New York Observer*, writes that in his experience in Winchester county, he has found ground bones the very best and cheapest fertilizer to be obtained outside of the homestead farm-yard. Cost of transportation makes city manure expensive, and especially if not near sloop dock. When within one or two miles of good dock landing, city stable manure will cost six to ten dollars the cord when it reaches the farm. Bone-dust by the quantity costs as to quality from 50 to 70 cents the bushel. Twenty to twenty-five bushels of bone-dust is a good dressing to the acre, and is worth from two to three times the cost of stable manure brought from the city. Bone-dust should be applied to and left as near the surface as may be, and be suitably covered. We usually sow broadcast after the first harrowing. The second course of the harrow will cover near the surface."

HOW TO DESTROY THE CANADA THISTLE.—Not the least among the cares of the farmer is that necessary to prevent the spread of noxious plants, and not the least noxious amongst plants, is the Canada thistle, which has made its appearance in several points in this vicinity. Unless the greatest vigilance is exercised, it will doubtless become, as it has in other places, a most unwelcome intruder. As this pest has already rendered valueless some of the most productive portions of the country, it is very important that the greatest care should be exercised to prevent its propagation, and to eradicate it where it has gained a foothold. When taken in time this may easily be accomplished by proper attention, and the use of common salt.

The way to apply it is this: First bruise the stalk of the thistle at the surface of the ground with the head of a hoe or other instrument, and apply a handful of salt to the root. In this way, it (the salt) is communicated to the sap, and circulated with it through the plant, thus effecting its destruction. A few plants may spring up from distant roots, but a second application will exterminate them. I know a farmer who had Canada thistles over several acres of ground, who destroyed them effectually in this way; and I, with one application, destroyed a small patch on my own farm.

In conclusion I would say, try it effectually, and don't let the thistle pest spread.—*Cor. of Cultivator*.

THE PARSNIP.—The parsnip is one of the most valuable roots that can be grown. In the island of Jersey it is used almost exclusively for fattening both cattle and swine. According to Le Courteur the weight of a good crop varies from thirteen to twenty-seven tons per acre. When parsnips are given to milch cows, with a little hay, in the winter season, the butter is found to be of as fine a colour and excellent flavour as when the animals are feeding in the best pastures. As parsnips contain six per cent. more mucilage than carrots, the difference may be sufficient to account for the superior fattening as well as butter-making quality of the parsnip. In the fattening of cattle the parsnip is found superior to the carrot, performing the business with more expedition and affording meat of exquisite and highly juicy flavour; the animals eat it with much greediness. The result of experiment has shown that not only in neat cattle, but in the fattening of hogs and poultry, the animals become fat much sooner, and are more healthy than when fed with any other root or vegetable, and that, beside, the meat is more sweet and delicious. The parsnip leaves being more bulky than those of carrots, may be mown off before taking the roots, and given to oxen, cows, or horses, by which they will be greedily eaten. Another thing in favour of parsnips for this country, is that the frost does not injure them. They may remain in the ground until spring, when they make splendid feed, at a time every other kind of root or green thing is scarce, or they may be slightly buried, where they can be obtained almost any time during the winter. On account of their rapid growth when young, the weeding is less trouble than weeding carrots.—*Colonial Farmer*.