

## RECLAIMING WILD LAND.

I. W. DOHERTY, Kent, N. B.:—"A part of my farm is a light sandy loam, occupied by a growth of sweet brier, lamb's-quarters and blueberry vines. A few years ago I undertook to clear a portion, and had the brush and vines mowed and burned. I then sowed buckwheat and seeded down to timothy and Canada blue grass. To my disappointment the sweet brier and other plants grew faster than my buckwheat and grass, and it is again a bed of briars, etc. I took another piece in hand and had it plowed, and in doing so two men were required, one to hold the plow, while the other had to haul the roots away from in front of it. Before I could plant anything on the ground I had to cart off the roots, and when done there appeared to be no humus left, and my first crop of oats was a complete failure. By supplying humus in the shape of barn manure I grew a moderately fair crop of potatoes, turnips, mangels and carrots last season. I then had it plowed, applied a good coat of top-dressing of rich compost, and wish to seed it down for a sheep pasture. My intention is to grow oats with the seeding down. I intend to make Bromus inermis the greater part of the seeding. What would you advise to mix with it, as I don't want to break up the field again for years? I have thought of Canada blue grass and brown-top, with red clover, alsike and white clover. I have a few pounds of Lathyrus sylvestris Wagneri. Would you advise mixing it with the other clovers, or sowing a portion where none of the others are put? In dealing with the rest of the land, do you think the expense of bringing it into proper cultivation will be greater than the land will afterwards be worth? Would plowing with a very sharp coulter, then harrowing with a disk harrow, and again plowing and harrowing, answer the purpose? Would a coating of decayed oyster shells (commonly called mussel mud), after plowing and harrowing, assist materially in decaying the roots? Would air-slacked lime answer a better purpose? If the roots have to be carted off before anything is planted, it is useless to expect anything to grow till humus in some form is replaced."

[So far as the best method of clearing the rough land and the profit of doing so is concerned, it would seem to us that Mr. Doherty's experience must be the most reliable teacher. The method employed to get the potato and root crops referred to, would seem to be the best to follow. Probably the best implement to use would be a prairie breaker, if such can be secured. A breaking plow has a very sharp coulter and share, and turns a wide furrow—14 to 16 inches. We would suggest cutting off the briars, etc., with an underbrush scythe, and removing or burning them at a time when the soil is not dry enough to burn, breaking the surface as we have mentioned not more than about four inches deep. Roll down and leave till it can be backset, or re-plowed, in the same direction, two inches deeper than before. Much of the weeds, briars, etc., will be rotted by the following spring, when a coat of manure or mussel mud can be given and a root crop planted. A dressing of lime would hasten the decomposition of the roots, etc. The following spring the piece should be sown with oats thinly and seeded with the mixture referred to. The Lathyrus sylvestris seed may with advantage be mixed with the other grasses.]

## DAMPNESS IN BRICK HOUSE.

SUBSCRIBER, Huron Co., Ont.:—"Would you kindly advise through the columns of your excellent paper: Would painting the exterior of a brick house, with a solid wall, be sufficient to exclude the dampness, or would stripping and lathing and plastering be the better plan?"

[We judge there is some other cause for dampness in Subscriber's brick house than the material of the walls, as brick walls are not conductors of moisture. We would rather attribute the dampness to faulty drainage from the cellar, and to lack of proper ventilation. We cannot see how painting the walls would be of any advantage. Lathing and plastering inside would help to keep out the frost, and thus keep the house drier, if properly drained and ventilated.]

## STRAWBERRY CULTURE.

MAYLOR HAYNE, Lambton Co., Ont.:—"In your next issue kindly tell us the best way to set out strawberry plants—how to cultivate and transplant them?"

[The best time to set out a strawberry bed is in early spring, as soon as the ground will work well, or else in the fall. When set in spring, which is the preferable time, the soil should be well manured and deeply prepared the previous season, and if necessary underdrained. It is also well to put it up in ridges, or drills, before winter, that the frost may pulverize it well and that surface drainage may be facilitated. In spring, as early as the soil will work well, cultivate deeply rather than plow. Next harrow and level smoothly, and mark the ground four feet apart one way and fifteen inches the other. In planting, use a spade, which should be thrust into the ground perpendicularly and pressed over. Against the perpendicular side place the roots of the plant—spread out in fan shape. Set the plant to the same depth as it previously stood and fill in the earth, pressing it firmly with the foot at the side of each plant. Use plants that are one year old, that have not borne fruit. It is well to have the plantation divided

into three parts, plowing up one-third each year after the crop is off, manuring well and plowing again before winter. A green crop, such as peas, may be grown here to be plowed in if so desired. In this way the bed is being renewed every three years, and two-thirds of it bearing each season.

A new bed is best cared for by cultivating it once a week with a cultivator or hoe. All runners should be removed up till the middle of July, otherwise plants will exhaust themselves by starting runners. Plants properly cared for will in a favorable season so cover the ground with runners before winter that it will be necessary to hoe a track through between the rows. It is well to remember in setting out strawberry plants that some varieties bear imperfect flowers, and when these are selected every third row in the patch should be of a perfect-flowering variety of equal earliness with the others, that they may be duly fertilized.]

## COPPER SULPHATE TO KILL MUSTARD IN SEEDING FIELD.

F. L. FULLER, Colchester Co., N. S.:—"I read with much interest articles in several issues of your paper on the subject of spraying with sulphate or copper or iron to kill charlock. Being much troubled with this pest, I have decided to try spraying, but the fields I want to try it on have been sown with clover when the oats were sown and the clover plants will be very young and tender about the time I want to spray. I should like to know what effect the solution will have on the clover?"

[According to a number of experiments conducted in England in spraying various crops infested with wild mustard and other weeds, there is little or no damage done to smooth-leaved plants, such as growing grain crops, clovers, etc., provided the solution is not used too strong. An effective strength is acquired by dissolving two pounds of copper sulphate in ten gallons of water, or dilute one pint of a saturated solution (about 32 per cent.) with two gallons of water. The spray should be applied in a fine mist. See FARMER'S ADVOCATE, May 15th, 1890, page 287.]

## METHOD OF CASTRATING LAMBS.

SUBSCRIBER, Elgin Co., Ont.:—"Several articles on this subject have appeared in the FARMER'S ADVOCATE, but there is one point that has not been made clear. After cutting off the end of the scrotum and pressing the testicles forward, do you then draw them casings and all, or do you cut through the casings and then draw the testicles, leaving the casings in? I have from 50 to 75 lambs yearly and cannot find a man who can castrate them without killing from 8 to 10 out of 25 operated on. They all cut through the casings, as in the case of a calf or pig. Kindly answer and enlighten many who are in a similar quandary."

[The operation should be performed when the lambs are from two to three weeks old; at same time they should be docked; it should be done in the following manner:

The assistant takes the lamb in his arms, grasping all four legs, two in each hand, placing the back of the lamb close to his body, with its head nearly touching his shoulder. The operator seizes the purse, or scrotum, of the lamb and gently draws on it, and with a sharp knife takes a piece off the same, so that the testicles are quite visible. He then places the thumb and forefinger of his left hand close to the body of the lamb and forces the testicles forward, which he seizes one at a time with his teeth and gently draws them out casings and all, keeping his thumb and finger moderately tight together close to the body of the lamb. When the testicles are drawn out, draw slightly on the scrotum. It sometimes happens, the operator not biting sufficiently hard, that in the drawing out of the testicle the casing will slip off the testicle; in that case seize the testicle without the casing and draw it out; this will seldom happen if the operator is careful to take a firm hold of the testicle. Some people use forceps to draw out the testicle, but I prefer the teeth. I always make it a point to castrate in the morning on a moderately cool day, and the lambs should be always housed for the night after the operation, unless it is very fine weather. I have followed this plan for over forty years and do not remember of losing a single lamb from castration, and have operated on thousands. I think it very essential to success that the two operations, castrating and docking, should be done at the same time. Take off the tail at the joint, pushing back the skin with the left hand, which in returning to its normal condition partially covers the wound. A little practice is all that is needed to successfully perform both operations. It sometimes happens that a lamb will bleed too freely after docking; in that case tie a piece of small soft string moderately tight around the tail till the bleeding stops.

If your subscriber will follow these directions, I will venture to say his loss will be reduced to a minimum. If it so happens that these operations have to be performed when the weather is hot and the fly busy, take a little sheep dip, mixed pretty strong, and wash the parts; it will prevent the fly from striking them. The wash can be repeated if necessary. I would advise your subscriber, if he has a son, say fifteen years old, to let him try to operate. I commenced when in my teens and operated on one hundred for my first attempt, and did not lose one. The operation is simple and safe; it only wants a little confidence and care.

Bruce Co., Ont.

HENRY ARKELL.]

## WHAT BREED OF SHEEP FOR NOVA SCOTIA?

T. W., King's Co., N. S.:—" (1) What would you consider the best breed of sheep for Nova Scotia (a) as regards mutton and (b) wool? 2. What would you consider the best winter ration (hay) for my ten sheep, of grain, ensilage, and hay? We have grand opportunities in the valley for raising sheep, but farmers here do not engage in sheep-raising to any great extent."

[We have no knowledge from personal observation of how sheep do in the locality indicated, but judging from those seen at the St. John and Halifax exhibitions should judge that sheep of any of the breeds succeed well in the Province generally. The best breed is a matter of taste and preference, and depends to a considerable extent on the markets available for wool or mutton. The long-wool breeds—Lincoln, Cotswold and Leicester—attain to greatest weights (except, perhaps, the Oxford) and shear heavier fleeces, but the Shropshires and Southdowns produce the best quality of mutton, as a rule. Success and profit in sheep-raising depends more upon skillful treatment and management than upon the breed. Choose the breed you like best and study to make the best of it. 2. Two quarts each, daily, of oats and bran, equal parts of each by measurement, or one quart, daily, of oats and peas mixed; six to eight pounds ensilage each, daily, and what good clover hay they will eat up clean, should bring them through in good condition.]

## BRUCE COUNTY LANDS.

E. D., Wentworth Co., Ont.:—"Can you or any of your subscribers give me some information about the price of improved farms in Bruce County? What is the rent of 100 acres with good buildings? I understand it is a good mixed-farming county."

[Bruce is one of the newer counties of older Ontario. The first settlers came in about the year 1850. With the exception of the Indian Peninsula, the land was nearly all taken up by 1860. The people taxed themselves for public improvements. The County municipal indebtedness is only about \$10,000. The public buildings and roads of the County are almost the equal of any other of the counties of the Province. The County is well equipped with high and public schools. Nearly all parts of the County are convenient to railway facilities. The markets are fairly good and within easy access of all parts of the County. There are many progressive farmers, and the farm buildings are as substantial and up-to-date as in any other part of the Province. The soil in the greater part is a good clay loam, with good natural drainage; but soil from a sandy loam to a fairly stiff clay abounds. With the exception, perhaps, of one or two townships, the County is abundantly watered with numerous spring creeks, and, except in a few localities, water can be got anywhere at a reasonable distance by digging or boring. Farm lands sell from \$30 to \$60 per acre, according to locality and improvements. Farms rent from \$2 to \$3.50 on the average per cleared acre. In the newer townships of the Indian Peninsula lands are some cheaper than quoted above. J. T. Walkerton, Ont.]

## STRAWBERRIES AND POTATOES.

FRUIT FARMER:—"1. What substances do strawberries require from the soil, and which is the better—a sandy or clay loam?"

"2. How can I produce fruit from my strawberry plot, the only variety planted being imperfect flowered?"

"3. What is the fertilizing value of seaweed, and for what crops is it suited?"

"4. What trees or shrubs besides willow may be grown from cuttings?"

"5. Do you advocate the cutting off or breaking of stems of potato plants (during hoeing) if there should be, say three, four or more stems from one seed; if so, to what extent?"

[1. Strawberries draw more or less largely upon all of the elements made use of by other plants, but they particularly require plenty of potash. They usually do better upon a rich clay loam, although they may be successfully grown upon more sandy soil, provided it is well mulched to retain moisture and to keep the fruit clean.

2. Keep bees and trust to them to bring pollen from the perfect flowered varieties of your neighbors. This is the only kind of stealing we know of that benefits all concerned.

3. Seaweed has a manurial value almost on a par with barnyard manure, and it may be employed wherever barnyard manure could be used. It is particularly valuable as a mulch on strawberry plantations.

4. The willow grows from cuttings probably the most readily of any of our native trees. There are a number of others which may be propagated in the same way, although most of them grow best from seeds.

5. No; we would not advocate breaking off any of the potato tops. This would more or less check the vigor of the plant.

H. L. HUTT,  
Ontario Agricultural College. Horticulturist.]

## SUMMER ENSILAGE.

SUBSCRIBER, Victoria Co., Ont.:—"I have a silo which is entirely out of doors and without any roof, and I will have about four feet of ensilage left in the bottom after my cattle go on the grass. Do you think it would keep to feed out when the pastures become dried up?"

[Certainly. It will no doubt be all right except a few inches on the top which has been exposed to the air, and which must be thrown out before commencing to feed again.]