

raise his own grass seed, we have been accustomed every year to select some of the best portions of our meadow and let it ripen for seed. In 1849 we saved about two acres of timothy grass; and as it yielded several bushels more than we wanted to sow in one season, it was kept in barrels in the granary. The seed sown in 1850 took well. In 1851 we sowed about one bushel of the same kind of seed, and were much surprised to find that but a small portion of the seed ever came up. Not having occasion to use the remainder of the seed, it was kept until the spring of 1855, when we sowed about two bushels of it, and none of it grew. The cause of failure was thought to be the universal dryness of the soil.

In the spring of 1856 from one to two bushels more were sown, but none of it vegetated; and in September last about two bushels more were sown after wheat on summer fallow, where the soil was very mellow and moist, and as favorable as a soil could be for seed of any kind, and not one single spear can be found which has sprung from the seed sown at that time.

In a few instances, in years gone by, we have sown turnip seed which was from two to three years old; and from such seed we never obtained many turnips; while from new seed they were almost apt to stand too thick.

In the spring of 1853, we used carrot seed which was three years old,

and not one seed in one hundred vegetated. In the spring of 1855, we used carrot seed two years old; and in some rows of one hundred feet long, there would be but six, eight or ten carrots; and not one-tenth part of the seed in all the rows, ever came up. In the spring of 1853, I sowed a paper of carrot seed, which we have good reason to believe was old seed, and the result was, we did not raise one single carrot.

What the experience of others may be on this subject I am not able to say, but what I have penned I know to be veritable truth; and, furthermore, I know that the cause of failure was in the seed, and not in the unfavorableness of the soil. And if such should be the result with old seed on my farm may we not safely conclude that when a failure has been attributed to a poor and barren soil in many instances, the fault was in the seed? We know that grass seed is kept on hand many times by proprietors of agricultural seed stores until it is several years old, and it is no uncommon thing for country merchants to keep clover and timothy seed from year to year, and sell such for fresh seed; and if my seed should lose its vitality in so short a period of time, it would seem to be the dictate of sound wisdom for every farmer to raise his own seed from year to year; or sow none except that which is known to be the product of the previous year.

A Curious Question.

It is a singular illustration of the inexactness of agricultural knowledge, that the question how many seeds there are in the pound of our commonly cultivated field plants, should still remain to be answered. It is plain that the answer will not necessarily affect farm practice—for the quantity of seed which it is proper to sow per acre, is a matter to be determined by experience, not by argument apart from trial, and yet surely it is most desirable to compare the number of the seeds we ordinarily sow with that of the plants we raise. If in ordinary practice, 1,200,000 seeds of wheat are sown on every 40,000 superficial feet, or what is more extraordinary, fifteen

to eighteen million seeds of flax are scattered on the same extent, about three to every inch of land, it is surely well to let the farmer know it. He knows very well he does not raise so many plants as this—and struck, as he may be, by the enormous disproportion between the means he uses, and the result he gets, he will inquire into its causes.

The turnip seed employed per acre, numbers from 600,000 to 1,000,000, according to the kind and quantity adopted; this, if the rows are two feet apart, is two or three dozen seeds per foot or row, where a single plant alone is to be grown. No doubt nothing like so many generally come up, but