

Sowing Plaster.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER :

SIR,—I see in No. 6 of THE CANADA FARMER that Mr. John Blesard, of Otonabee, has a quantity of plaster to sow, and he would like to know if it can be done by a machine. The one you refer to in the Rural New Yorker will answer a good purpose, I dare say, but in case he does not go to the expense of that machine, I recommend to him a way I have seen tried with good success. It is to take a horse and cart, make a box the width of the cart, and have it about ten inches deep and twenty wide, with four legs, one at each corner, long enough to raise it nearly breast high. The legs should be cut with a slant at the foot, and be longer on one side than the other, to make it stand level in the cart. You can put half a barrel into it at once. With such a rig a man, with the aid of a small boy to drive the horse, can sow from twenty to thirty acres in a day. The sower must stand with his back to the horse, and sow with both hands behind the cart, as it moves along. In this way you generally escape all the dust, as you are going from it instead of to it on foot.

York Township.

G. W. D.

The Patch of Thistles.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER :

SIR,—If a cat has nine lives, I think a Canada thistle has nine cats' lives. With your permission, I will give my plan of killing this inveterate weed :—1. The land must be in fallow. 2. It must not be ploughed in the fall but let the first ploughing take place in June, when the plant is nearly ready to blossom. 3. Plough again in the course of ten or twelve days; the sun will be hot enough to kill the most of them by that time. 4. I would not use the harrow, as it would surely encourage the thistles, by dragging the roots and dropping them some place where all they want is a good shower to start them into life again. 5. Neither would I mow them before the first ploughing, as I think they die quicker when the top is left on. Lastly, in the hottest weather in July, I would harrow, and harrow again as often as I thought fit before the third and last ploughing. There can be only one objection raised to the above mode of proceeding, viz.: heavy clay land will be hard at the right time for the first ploughing. The pasture of the field, both in fall and spring, will amply compensate for the trouble, and I can assure Mr. G. W. D., of York Township, that I killed as bad a patch of thistles on my farm, in 1862, by the above process as ever he killed by six ploughings of his land.

JOHN COLGAN.

Tecumseth, South Simcoe.

Rape or Colza.

This plant which belongs to the cruciferae, or cabbage tribe, has been brought into notice, within a few years past, by the high feeders of stock in England; more prominently perhaps by Mr. Horsfall, whose essays have been extensively published in this country.

Mr. Levi Bartlett, of Warner, N. H., has cultivated this plant for six seasons, and agrees with Mr. Horsfall, "that as yet I found no green crop equal to the rape for feeding cows in August and September." He publishes the results of his experiments in the Boston Cultivator. In the spring of 1854, he received the seed from the Patent Office. In consequence of a severe drought that season, and of the plants becoming infested with lice, the crop was a failure. Mr. Bartlett says:

The next year (1855) early in June, I manured a smooth piece of greensward, and turned over flat, and rolled it, then harrowed to a fine tilth, and sowed with a great variety of turnip, cabbage and cauliflower seeds, as also, a portion of the land with rape seed. All of the different varieties came up well and grew finely, none of them suffering injury from fly, lice, worm, bug, or "other creature" through the whole season. In July commenced thinning the plants (and fed them to my cows, morning and evening) till the plants averaged not far from two feet each way. This brought it up to sixty-five days from the time the land was plowed. In order to ascertain the amount per acre at that time, I cut at the surface of the ground every other plant on two square rods, being a fair average of the plot of ground. The lightest plant weighed three pounds four ounces, and the heaviest nine and a quarter pounds, the whole number averaging a little over five and a half pounds

per plant. There were fifty-six plants per square rod. But to be sure of not over-stating, I will call it fifty plants per square rod, which gives just twenty-two tons, (of 2000 lbs. per ton) per acre of the choicest kind of green food for milch cows, in less than sixty-five days from the time the ground was plowed.

That season, here, was very wet and cool, perhaps much resembling the climate of England, which is much more favorable to the cabbage and turnip tribe of plants, than our usually hot and dry summers.

The middle of June is early enough to sow the seed, which should be sown on well manured and prepared land the same for Swedish turnips, or cabbage, in drills, thirty inches distant, and the plants thinned to about the same distance. The young plants, like those of cabbage, can be safely transplanted. I have only failed one year in six in getting a good crop of this plant, but still, should not advise any one to depend wholly upon it for green feed for cows, during our usually dry months of August and September. Last Spring, I sent to a friend in Boston, to procure me some rape seed. He called at the fourth seed store before he could obtain any; at this he found some, it being kept for the feeding of cage birds. The seedman kindly sent me a few ounces, and it has proved as good in every respect, as that received from the Patent Office, several years ago. It cannot be grown here at the North for seed to manufacture oil from—it being a biennial plant, it will not withstand our cold winters, though, doubtless, some of the plants might be stored in a cellar and kept through the winter, and seed grown from them as is done from the cabbage and turnip.—N. E. Farmer.

Table of Quantities.

The following statistics gathered from reliable sources, and verified by some experience, are of course familiar to all practical men, but nevertheless may be useful to many readers :—

FARM SEEDS REQUIRED FOR AN ACRE.

Wheat 1½ to 2 bushels; Rye 1½ bushels; Oats 3 bushels; Barley 2 bushels; Peas 2 to 3 bushels; White Beans 1½ bushels; Buckwheat ½ bushel; Corn (broad cast) 4 bushels, do in drills, 2 to 3 bushels, do in hills 6 to 9 quarts; Potatoes 8 to 15 bushels; Beets 3 pounds; Carrots 2 pounds; Swedish Turnips ½ pound; Clover (white) 4 quarts; Clover (Red) 8 quarts; Timothy 6 quarts, Mixed Lawn Grass 1 to 2 bushels,

QUANTITIES OF GARDEN SEED TO PLANT.

Asparagus, 1 ounce produces 1000 plants; Bean, 1 quart will plant 125 feet of row; Beet, 1 ounce sows 140 feet of row; Broccoli, 1 ounce gives 3000 plants; Brussels sprouts, Cabbage, and Cauliflower, the same as Broccoli; Carrot, 4 pounds to an acre, 1 ounce sows 140 feet of row; Celery, 1 ounce gives 8000 plants; Cucumber, 1 ounce plants 150 hills; Lettuce 1 ounce gives 7000 plants; Melons, 1 ounce plants 100 hills; Onion, from 4 to 5 pounds to an acre, 1 ounce sows 180 feet of row; Parsley, 1 ounce sows 200 feet of row; Peppers, 1 ounce gives 2000 plants; Peas, 1 quart of the smaller sorts sows 120 feet of row, the larger 100 feet; Radish 1 ounce sows 100 feet of row; Spinnage, 1 ounce sows 180 feet of row; Squash, 1 ounce sows 70 hills; Tomato, 1 ounce gives 2000 plants; Turnip, 1½ pounds to an acre.

W. S.

Woburn.

Experience in Growing Flax.

JNO. ANDERSON, of Henry county, Ill., writes us as follows :—As the season for sowing flax is near at hand, and many farmers are no doubt debating in their own minds the propriety of engaging in this new enterprise, I will give my experience for their encouragement.

Last spring I obtained 60 lbs. of good clean flax-seed, prepared by good deep ploughing a little over two acres of tolerably dry, though flat prairie, harrowed and rolled several times, until the surface became perfectly fine and smooth. I then sowed my seed and gave it a light brushing. I cut it with a machine, threw it off in gavils and let it lie until dry. I then thresh it by horses tramping over it, on the barn floor. I cleaned up from this one bushel of sowing, thirty-five bushels and forty-nine pounds of good clean seed. I had about two tons of the straw, which after threshing I hauled out and spread over the newly-mown meadow, and after being properly dew-rotted I collected together and sold for eight dollars per ton to Mr. Thomas, an enterprising gentleman who is buying large quantities for a Chicago firm that designs putting up machinery in this place to clean it,

Flax-Growing.

A LANDED proprietor and agriculturist of skill and experience in Scotland writes us as follows :—

"I wanted to tell you about my success in flax-growing this season, which I hope may be an inducement for farmers to begin to grow it as a crop that will remunerate them much better than wheat, or indeed any crop at the present prices, and should we have a Continental war, of which there seems to be every prospect, we must be shut off from any lint or linseed from the Baltic. Dundee will be brought to a standstill, like Manchester, for want of the raw material. We send out seven millions, I believe, chiefly in gold, for these articles, all which we might keep at home, as there are thousands of acres that will yield good crops of flax. I sowed one quarter of an acre of good land worth £3 an acre, and the produce was eleven bushels of seed. Putting it at the lowest price that linseed can now be got—viz., 10s.—an acre of seed alone would be worth £22. The seed is beautiful, much better than any foreign seed I could get, and I have all the straw, which I intend to dress as soon as the weather permits; but it ought to be worth, deducting all expenses, from £12 to £14 an acre. The seed I sowed cost 18s. per bushel."—Scottish Farmer.

FLAX CULTIVATION IN IRELAND.—The movement designed to promote the extension of flax cultivation and the establishment of manufactures in the south of Ireland is being vigorously prosecuted—landed proprietors, merchants, and others uniting in giving effect to a scheme which will unquestionably benefit all classes. Efforts are making to establish a Flax and Linen Company in Cork, under the Limited Liability Act, with a capital of £60,000, divided into shares of £10 each, in order to bring it within the reach of all classes of capitalists; and the promoters state only half the above sum will be required to be paid up to afford sufficient means to erect the requisite buildings and machinery and to purchase raw material to keep 5,000 spindles at work. Other influential towns in Munster are also moving in the matter, and idle buildings of ample size for factories and with every facility for manufacturing purposes, are pointed out as being easily convertible into spinning or weaving establishments.—Irish Farmers' Gazette.

ON SOWING SEEDS.—Seeds should be intrusted to the ground in dry weather, though it is of great moment that they should be visited soon after with gentle showers. The dryness at the time of sowing is essential to enable the operator to keep the ground open and porous on the top; for by trampling and raking it while wet, the seeds would be shut up, as it were, in a prison, and would not germinate at all readily. The advantage of subsequent rains is to soften and swell the different parts of the seeds, burst its integument, and assist in developing its vegetative powers. It is remarkable that seeds which have to lie a long time in the ground before the occurrence of congenial weather, never produce such fine or healthy plants as those which develop themselves immediately under favouring influences. And this fact should teach the cultivator to calculate as accurately as he can the state of the weather which will follow his sowings, and even to put off any sowing which may be deemed necessary at a particular time until a prospect of suitable weather arrives.—Scottish Farmer.

CULTURE OF THE MANGOLD WURTZEL.—This crop like the carrot requires deep culture, and if the field for it has not been recently subsoiled it should now be done and the ground thoroughly pulverized. In order to get the greatest yield sow about the middle of May in drills two and a half feet apart, and cover according to the texture of the soil, the average depth being about one inch; thin the plants to twelve or fourteen inches. Good crops are frequently raised sown a month later. A dressing of six or eight hundred pounds of salt is recommended in addition to other manures.

On all farms where the Mangold Wurtzel is grown, there should be a sufficiency of Swedes and other turnips raised for the cattle during the early part of the winter. Mangolds are not suited for early use, as they contain a peculiar acrid principle when freshly taken out of the ground, which exercises an injurious effect on cattle, producing a very laxative state of the bowels; but which, in the course of a month or two, entirely disappears, or undergoes such a change as renders them harmless.

The best way is to feed the soft turnips first, and the Swedes next, which should last till January, when the Mangolds will be ready for use. The change from turnips should be gradual with all animals, to prevent their producing the laxative effects alluded to.—Ohio Farmer.

MILLET.—We think our farmers will do well to give more attention to raising millet. It is one of the best and most profitable hay crops we have. If cut when in full bloom, it is considered by good judges to be