

Correspondence.

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.—1. Please write on one side of the paper only. 2. Give full name, Post-Office and Province, not necessarily for publication, but as guarantee of good faith and to enable us to answer by mail when, for any reason, that course seems desirable. 3. Do not expect anonymous communications to be noticed. 4. Mark letters "Printer's Manuscript," leave open, and postage will be only 1c. per ½ ounce.

SIR,—Inquiry is made through the columns of the *ADVOCATE* about the feeding qualities of Aberdeen yellow turnips. In my experience with feeding cattle from 1838 to 1853, in Scotland, no other kind was used there from the month of September till the month of March, after that the Swede was used for the feeding of stock. All store cattle and milch cows were fed on the yellow till the grass. If your enquirer has plenty of them to give to his cattle, with plenty of cut straw, with a little chopped grain, he need not be afraid to turn them out to any fair for sale. In my time at home amongst them I never saw one pound of hay fed to feeding stock, nor any other stock, nor grain of any kind. Oil cake was used when turnips were scarce. The yellow, if the right kind is got, will keep good till grass, in this country of ours, Canada. I have had them on my farm here for the last twenty years and have had no difficulty with keeping them, but the difficulty I find with them here, we can not get the real turnip. When I first settled in the bush, in the year 1855, I got a few pounds of the real Aberdeen yellow seed from Mr. Stone, of Guelph; I have kept myself from that ever since, but I have run them out. I have purchased seed now for two years, but I have got all kinds for them—this year they are purple on the top and bottom too. But for feeding cattle the Swede is the best for that purpose. But they are not so good for milch cows as the real yellow. Young stock will do well on them if they get plenty of them, but in my neighborhood they get very few of any kind—the strawstack is their feed and their bed as well. BRUCE FARMER.

P. S.—I must state to you about the three-quarters of a pound of the Silver Chaff fall wheat I got from you two years ago this fall. Last fall I had nine pounds of it on my first sowing. I sowed the nine pounds and took good care of it. This fall I threshed 4½ bushels from the 9 pounds. I sowed 2 acres this fall, and gave some of my neighbors of it. There has been no appearance of rust on it this past two years with me. The straw was very white and the berry this year was good. It is a very early wheat. B. F.

[The yellow Aberdeen turnip is so little used for feeding stock in England that it is not mentioned in such a work as the *Farmers' Calendar*. However, it is a good turnip for early feeding—during the winter months; but it does not retain its good feeding qualities throughout the spring. It is good for feeding from September till March—not as good as the Swedes, but it has the advantage that it may be sowed later, and it is sowed after what is called a stolen crop, and sometimes on ground where the Swede has been cut off by the fly, or failed from drought. For milch cows and store cattle it is better than for fattening, for which is never accounted of much value. For fattening, Swedes with good hay will put on good beef, though to finish beeves for the shambles the best feeders use a richer food. We have already said that straw cut at the proper time and well saved is at least as good fodder as inferior hay.]

SIR,—I wish you would in the next number of the *ADVOCATE* give me information respecting the gang plow, as they appear to be coming much into use in Ontario. Of what are they made, wood or iron? How are they operated? Has it handles like a common plow, and will it plow any depth required? Will it plow sod? Would it work on the prairie to break up with? How much will it plow in a day of ten hours? Is it hard to guide? What team is required to draw it? What maker is considered the best? How much do they weigh? By answering the foregoing and giving any other information you can respecting their advantages over other plows, with their price, you will oblige. SUBSCRIBER, Manitoba.

[The common gang plow would be useless on sod. After the ground has been plowed and well rotted, a good span of horses may plow from four to eight acres per day. They are made of iron and steel;

some kinds have some wood about them. They hardly require to be touched by hand, when properly adjusted. We cannot tell the weight; perhaps some of the manufacturers may send you catalogues.]

Honey Locust.

SIR,—Have you Honey Locust seed? Let me know the price per pound, and how much it will take for 70 rods. I intend to set out a hedge next spring. I have 10 rods of Honey Locust and Peppesage Locust about 2 ft. high. Would I be safe in cutting the Honey Locusts off near the ground next spring? Will they grow if cut? They were plants set out last spring, and have grown wild this summer. I wish to try them as they will be cheaper; the ground will be got ready for the seed this fall. I intend to sow thorn seed among them; also some Mountain Ash, and would like to try some evergreens, such as Cedar and Norway Spruce, if I can get the seed. Does the seed need to be set in the fall to get the frost, or will they do to be put in layers in sand in a box, and put out doors? Your opinion and advice are respectfully asked for in regard to the above.

W. M., Forest.

[The young Locusts may be safely cut down, and by so doing they will form a closer and better hedge. We find them quite hardy, having them growing on our ground for some time. To be sown in the fall the seed should have been in the ground before we received your letter. Locust seed often grows where it falls from the tree, if covered by leaves or earth. If seed be preserved during the winter in sand in a box in the cellar, it will grow when sown in spring. Spring is the safest time generally for sowing seeds of trees, but nuts, acorns, peach-stones and such seeds have been found to do best by fall planting.]

Muskoka.

SIR,—In the numbers of your useful and interesting paper for February and April last I read with pleasure what appeared to be at the time a practical description of Muskoka and its "Free Grant Lands," by Mr. James Aspdin, of Aspdin, Muskoka. Like many other persons, I was anxious to know something of the Free Grant Lands of Ontario, and I decided, after reading the accounts to which I have alluded, to see Muskoka. Accordingly, I left Wallaceburg, in the County of Kent, in September, with a span of horses and a waggon, driving through the whole distance to Muskoka, something like 300 miles. After reaching the Township of Stisted, I examined the land and found it to be much the same as described by Mr. Aspdin. The surface of the country is rolling and the bush is principally hardwood. The appearance of the country is totally different to the district around Wallaceburg, not being so flat, and the soil, instead of a heavy clay, is a rich sandy loam, upon which excellent crops are raised. Muskoka abounds in good water, and is extremely healthy, no fever and ague, which is so painfully prevalent in the counties of Lambton and Kent.

After selecting a lot of land, I commenced building operations, and have now got a house and stable built upon it, and am just settled for the winter. I like Muskoka very well indeed, and am of the opinion that a man can do well here. To those who live on rented or mortgaged farms, and find it hard to make a comfortable living, I would say, come to Muskoka and get land of your own; then you will have the good of any improvements you make, and have something to fall back on in your old age. If any of the readers of the *ADVOCATE* would like to make further inquiries about the Free Grant Lands of Muskoka, and will write to me, enclosing a stamp for reply, I shall be pleased to give them any information in my power. THOMAS TRAXLER.

Aspdin, Muskoka, Nov. 12th, 1877.

Prince Edward Island.

SIR,—The hay crop is very light this year; the wheat crop is very good; potato crop is poor, perhaps not more than half of last year's crop; the oat crop will be one-fourth, possibly one-third, less than last year. Shippers pay about 40 cents per bushel, and a very slow sale at that; potatoes sell for 22 cents per bushel.

J. B. S., Southport, P. E. I.

[Mr. S. differs not a little from the reports that we have had of the potato crop of the Island, but there may be great difference in different sections of the country. Here we cannot conceive how potatoes are sold so low as 22 cents, if the crop be a poor one, but the Islanders are accustomed to heavy crops of the tubers.]

A Farmer's Garden.

Mr. J. F. Otwell, St. Mary's, Ontario, an experienced market gardener, cultivator of fifteen acres of summer and winter vegetables and small fruit, and also cultivator of a farm, writes:—

Many farmers might save fully one hundred dollars a year if they would adopt the following: most of farmers give the whole of their attention to the farm, so much so that they overlook the importance of endeavoring to provide themselves with abundance of vegetables and fruit. Every farmer should have a garden, and as convenient to the house as possible; and I will propose that about one acre of land be fenced in exclusively for a garden. In spring, even though he is much driven in getting in his crop, but very little time would be spent now and then in sowing and planting seeds, vegetables, &c., as would be useful and a saving throughout the summer and following winter. Z.

To Prepare Home-Made Superphosphate.

SIR,—I notice in the *ADVOCATE* a discussion on home-made superphosphates, and it may perhaps be useful to publish a personal experience in one branch of the manufacture extending over more than ten years.

I place side by side two old flour barrels, in one of which I put whatever bones come to hand. In the other I put a bucketful of wood ashes from the house stoves; well moisten them and scatter a few bones on the top. The process is repeated as the bones and the ashes are produced, and at the end of a year some five or six barrels are the result. The mixture should be kept well moistened without being wet enough to allow any drainage, and in about eighteen months the small bones will have disappeared altogether and the large ones will have become soft enough to be easily crushed with the shovel while mixing the compost. The result is a manure which is far too powerful to use without mixing it with at least ten times its bulk of muck, or some fertilizing earth, and which can then be applied with excellent effect, especially to turnip land. I am of opinion that it is almost, if not quite, as valuable as many of the purchased superphosphates, and the plan is worth adopting if it were only to get rid of dangerous ashes and unsightly bones. A. B.

In-Breeding of Swine.

TO MR. H. N., HEMMINGFORD, P. Q.—In-and-in breeding has been practised by the most successful breeders, as, for instance, Mr. Groom, of Kentucky, who is well known not only in the United States, but also in the Dominion. It is said that by this means the peculiar points for which the animals are so much prized are perpetuated. On the other hand, it is said that a long continuance of in-and-in breeding has a tendency to debilitate the progeny. However, we would have no objection to the close breeding referred to in your letter.

The Benefits From Agricultural Literature.

SIR,—I am well pleased with the paper. Young and old long for its coming, and a regular scuffle ensues as to who will get hold of it first. It would be well for farmers if they would devote more of their spare time and hard-earned dimes to agricultural matters, and less to politics. If farmers would profit by their calling, they must study its principles more closely, invoke the aid of scientific truths, and where can they find the assistance they need more readily than in the investigations of those noble old pioneers of the past, whose untiring efforts, skill and forethought have made the once frowning wilderness teem with agricultural life and verdure? If there is a man upon earth who can look around him and say in confidence—"I am monarch of all I survey," it is the thrifty farmer, and in order to be able to so say he must live less for public show or for a train attendant, and more for the glorious privilege of being independent. One dollar-per year for the *ADVOCATE* is money at good interest. R. V. K., Warburton.

SIR,—I would suggest that the time has arrived when it is necessary to have some competent person appointed to the charge of the Herd Books, as it is quite impossible for the Secretary to make the registrations of stock at the time the Exhibition work is going on. The ordinary work in the office is now heavy enough to warrant an assistant being appointed. DELAY, York.