

## THE INJURY AND WASTE OF GRAIN FROM THE PRESENT PRACTICE OF TOO THICKLY SOWING.

Through the politeness of Frederick Widder, Esq., we are in receipt of a pamphlet, written by Mr. Hewitt Davis, and published for the truly patriotic purpose of directing his brother farmers in Britain to the great waste that is entailed upon the agricultural community, and upon the nation, from the practice of too thickly sowing grain. The statements of Mr. Davis appear to be written with candour; and, from the fact that the author is a successful practical farmer, on a large scale, and has himself practised his plan for many years, his new and novel theory deserves attention. From what has come under our observation, we have come to the conclusion that too little seed is sown upon the old cultivated lands in this country, and have, therefore, recommended the practice of increasing the amount of seed, with an unlimited degree of confidence. We are not prepared to retract what has been recommended, as our own crops, as well as the crops of our neighbours, that were sown tolerably thick, are evidently much better than those that were sown thin, for experiment, as set forth by Mr. Davis.

Notwithstanding that thick sowing is better adapted to the system of cultivation at present practised in America than thin sowing, still it does not follow that if the system were changed to suit the latter method, but that thin sowing might be found to give the same results here as in England. We are inclined to entertain the opinion, that if it were practicable to bring farming operations to the same standard in Canada that Mr. Hewitt Davis and thousands of others have in England, that still more favourable results would be effected from thin sowing and the thorough system of culture practised, than in that country.

We feel confident that thin sowing can only be practised with success upon land that has been long under cultivation, when accompanied with the practice of sowing in rows, as directed by Mr. D., and also horse or hand hoeing. Depositing the seed in rows, and horse hoeing, will yet become the most popular style of growing grain, especially winter wheat; and we have no doubt that both will be practised on a large scale in this country as soon as a few well-directed experiments have been made, to ascertain the amount of benefit that would re-

sult from the practice. Even hand hoeing would pay, if labourers could be had at the rate of a bushel of good wheat for hoeing an acre. If the wheat plants be in rows, about fourteen inches asunder, a smart boy and a horse will hoe about three acres per day, with but little effort, and an ordinary workman would hand hoe two roods per day upon land which had been previously horse hoed.

As wheat growing is the principal branch of farming that is depended upon as a source of raising large sums of money in this country, it is therefore of the utmost importance that the cultivators of the soil should be in possession of a correct knowledge of the various systems of managing the soil which is successfully practised in other countries. Now, it appears to us that the multiplicity of evils which are attendant upon this, the golden crop to the farmer, may, in a great measure, be obviated. A rational system of rotation of crops, deep ploughing, thorough culture (such as Mr. Davis recommends), and, in every instance when circumstances are favourable, depositing the seed in rows and horse hoeing, are parts of a system of farm management which would better remunerate the farmer than the slovenly and uncertain system which is too generally practised.

Many of the subscribers to this paper are abundantly able and quite capable to try any experiment in farming that would have for its object the advancement of their honourable profession: to such we would direct their attention to the importance of sowing small portions of the same field with seed averaging from one to two bushels of wheat per acre, and also an experiment in drilling or ribbing, together with horse or hand hoeing; and by duly reporting the results of such experiments to the public, through the medium of this journal, they would have the gratification of seeing that the farmers in general would, by degrees, adopt such methods as science and experience may have proved to be most successful. By acting upon this principle, in the various details of husbandry, an entire change for the better may be brought about in Canadian agriculture. As a stimulus to those who may be willing to test the methods here adverted to, as well as to test every other method calculated to improve the agriculture of the country, we would say, that what we recommend to the attention of others shall be practised by ourselves, on a

scale that will assist in establishing Canadian husbandry upon a sound basis.

If grain of any description be sown in rows, and the soil frequently stirred with a hoe, and thoroughly cleared from weeds and grass, a much less quantity of seed would suffice than if the seed were sown broadcast. Three pecks per acre really appears to us too small a seeding, but if it should prove sufficient, when accompanied with drilling and hoeing, it is of much importance that the fact should be generally known. It is of more real consequence than most people imagine to attend to even the most minute details of any operation,—for instance, steeping seed, deep ploughing, thorough pulverization, water furrowing, and a score of other details, the neglect of one of which might alone be the means of lessening the product 100 per cent.; and also, if it should prove correct, as appears from the facts upon record before us, that three pecks of seed wheat will insure a greater product than six, the quantity usually sown in this country, we trust that all who have any desire to profit by farming will take the necessary steps to ascertain this fact. We seldom have the opportunity of presenting to our readers so complete a system of operations as those contained in the short treatise before us, the most essential portions of which we insert for their benefit. We assert, with it fear of contradiction, that one page of matter, arranged in Mr. Davis's practical style, would prove to be of more real benefit to the practical farmer than a whole volume of much of the theoretical writings that have been published of late years;—

## THE INJURY AND WASTE OF CORN FROM THE PRESENT PRACTICE OF TOO THICKLY SOWING.

As in the following paper I shall propose to the cultivators of my country a very considerable reduction in the quantities of seed which they have been accustomed to use, and shall endeavour to show to them that the question requires their serious attention, not only for the economy of seed, but principally as very materially affecting the after growth of their corn; it may be well to premise that this recommendation does not emanate from a theoretical agriculturist, farming only in his closet and over his books, or from one who follows agriculture as an amusing occupation; but on the contrary, that besides being largely engaged as a land agent, and in the cultivation of farms for the proprietors, I am a practical and successful farmer on my own account of between seven and eight hundred acres of highly-rented poor land; and, moreover, that whatever I