

Perthshire, a sample of excellent quality, and equal in colour to any of the above English samples. The English samples present a marked superiority in colour to the generality of Scotch samples of the growth of this season (1835) owing to the continued wet weather which the latter received in harvesting.

Communications.

ORCHARD GRASS AND PASTURAGE.

Dear Sir,—Having moved the resolution under which the Board of Agriculture is about to introduce Orchard Grass to the notice of Nova Scotia farmers, it may be expected that I should give my reasons for so doing, and state what I know about this grass. The resolution in question appeared in the April number of the *Journal*; and from its perusal everyone will discover that I considered a necessity existed for the Province to import the seed of a good hay and pasture grass, and that my object was to get the Board to establish a grass in our husbandry, the cultivation of which would, in my opinion at least, prove advantageous to the farmers of Nova Scotia in both respects, but more particularly in the latter. Regarding the clovers and timothy in general use, it is a well known fact that the former are often winter-killed, and the latter produces little or no aftermath, yet modern agriculture demands with an exactness that is only commensurate with the results obtained from the practice, that stock be well fed all the year round. And how can the cattle of this Province be kept in good growing condition during the pasture season, unless their owners can avail themselves of the seed of the best grasses, with which to improve their pasture? Hitherto our farmers have had to resort to clover and timothy seed for this purpose, seedsmen not caring to incur the expense of importing grass-seed not generally called for, or sown, in consequence of which, I believe, so far as pasturage is concerned, the farming interest has suffered materially. Many persons wonder why the improved breeds of cattle do not do as well here as in England or Ontario, and why our common breeds are not better than they are, and why our cows fall away so much in their milk in the warm months of summer; but their wonder would cease, should they contrast some of the miserable over-stocked pastures of this country with the well cultivated pastures of England and Canada.

In consequence of the introduction of improved breeds of cattle, and cheese factories getting established in different parts, the subject of pasturage has become one of the greatest importance, and should be thoroughly understood by every

farmer in Nova Scotia. In this connection it might be stated that some of the leading farmers are up to the time on this question, and have had imported for their own use such grass seed as they considered best for pasturage; but their having done so, has failed to popularize any particular kind of pasture grass, and, unfortunately, the Province at large is not filled by such enterprising men. When it is, the further need of a Board of Agriculture will cease to exist; but until the wilderness and solitary parts of the Province are made glad, and the deserts shall rejoice and blossom like the rose, there will be many important duties for a Board of Agriculture to perform, and none more so than that of agitating the question of improved pasturage.

Now, that Orchard Grass is the grass best calculated to supply a great want in Nova Scotian husbandry, I am not prepared from my own experience to state positively, but there is abundant evidence to prove that it sustains, among leading farmers in England and America, a good reputation as a desirable grass, both for hay and pasture. In *Dickerman's Farmers' Book*, edition of 1869, page 184, it is thus noticed:—

“Orchard Grass, or Cocksfoot, is one of the most valuable grasses. It is as early as red clover, and it is therefore the grass best adapted to sow with it. It is productive, yielding from three to five tons per acre. It is very nutritious, and very palatable to all kinds of stock. It gives a bite earlier than almost any other grass, is permanent, will bear close and constant cropping, stands severe drought, and, when cut, will in a week give a good bite to stock. It is therefore admirable as a permanent pasture grass. It blossoms with clover, gives a very large proportion of hay, grows a speedy and luxuriant aftermath, and is well adapted for permanent meadow with clover. It is inclined to grow in tufts, to prevent which it should be harrowed and rolled in the spring, and some other grasses should always be sown with it.” And the following account is from *Fessenden's Complete Farmer and Gardener*, edition 1855, page 14:—

“*Rough Cock's Foot*—Dr Muhlenburg and T. Cooper concur in opinion that this is the orchard grass of the United States. In England, cock's foot is taking the place of rye grass with clovers. Arthur Young speaks in high commendation of it; though all writers concur in the opinion, that it should be frequently and closely cropped, either with the scythe or cattle, to reap the full benefit of its great merits. I should prefer it to almost every other grass; and cows are very fond of it. Cooper rates it above timothy, and says it is gradually taking the place of the latter among the best farmers about Philadelphia. This is

probably owing to the fact that it is earlier than timothy, and of course more suitable to cut with clover for hay. Its growth is early and rapid, after it has been cropped. It does well on loams and sands, and grows well in shade.”

Colonel Powell, a gentleman who combines as much science with judicious practice, especially in cattle and grass husbandry, as any person in the Union, says: “I have tried orchard grass for ten years. It produces more pasturage than any other grass I have seen in America. Sow two bushels of seed to an acre.”

And an article in the March number of *The Canada Farmer* headed *Swamp Lands*, speaks very favorably of the adaptation of Orchard Grass to such lands. When these lands have been cleared up and made fit for cultivation, the writer, who has had considerable experience with such lands, goes on to state:—

“Now begin and sow a heavy seeding of Dutch Clover, Timothy, Alsike, Blue Grass, and especially Cocksfoot or Orchard Grass. This last is most important and excellent in its effects. It forms bunches and mats together, and affords excellent food for stock, and support for their feet, thereby preventing poaching the land when feeding on it. No harrowing need be done, but a bunch of bushes dragged each way by one horse or ox, will serve to cover the seed sufficiently. For one year no pasturage should be taken from land so seeded down. It will yield a heavy crop of hay, and thereby a tough sod will form. If possible, not a hoof ought to be allowed on the after-grass for the first year or two, but a heavy crop of hay may be taken to great advantage. Meadows so treated will be most valuable on the farm, and, acre for acre, will pay better than the best high land.”

In view of these favorable testimonies from some of the chief farmers of the age, relative to Orchard Grass, I hope our farmers will give it a fair trial, and cultivate it after the mode recommended “to reap the full benefit of its great merits;” and whether or not, its cultivation here proves as successful as it has done elsewhere, that its introduction may be the means of creating a growing interest among farmers in the subject of improved pasturage, which will make it necessary for seedsmen, wishing to keep abreast of the times, to have on sale the seed of the best pasture grasses, and thus lend a helping hand to the husbandman in hastening the arrival of the good time coming, when the Province shall be covered by a beautiful carpet, like unto which the late Judge Wiswell in his day compared the verdure of the picturesque valley of Truro.

Yours, &c.,

I. L.