

Correspondence.

Preservation of Potatoes—Remedy against their rotting

SIR,

At present, the potatoes are rotting terribly. Do you know of any means of stopping the rot, either before or after their being put into the cellar?

A friend told me lately that, once, seeing all his potatoes attacked, and fearing that he could not keep them for seed, he had cut them into sets, dried them thoroughly during the winter, and that, in the following May and June, he planted them, and that all these dried sets grew. His crop, that year, was as good as if the sets had been in their natural condition. This I can hardly believe; but the experiment ought to be tried. If you can give me any information on this point, I should be glad to relate it to our farmers' club, of which I am the president. A. E. G., Témiscamingue.

REPLY.—SIR,—Pack your potatoes in newly slaked lime, so that each potato may be completely surrounded by it.

The partly spoilt potatoes may be cut into sets as an experiment, and preserved in lime as above. E. A. B.

(From the French)

Thoroughpins and Bog-spavins.

What do you think of the following treatment?

Operation for the removal of bog spavins.—The four feet of the horse are bound together, he is cast and laid on his side. The interior (*evidement*) of the hock is then carefully shaven, care being taken to cut off all the hair, not only of the part affected, but also off the entire skin for some distance all round it.

This having been done a cross cut is to be made on the bog-spavin, and the sides of this artificial wound are to be raised carefully, so as to allow the matter contained to escape. This matter is yellowish in colour, and mixed with a little blood.

When the tumour has vanished, the incision is to be rubbed with mutton-suet, mixed with a pinch or two of resin from the fir tree. Then the wound is to be cauterised with a round iron at a white heat; in this way, the resin, in melting, combines with the suet, and with it spreads over the cavities.

The iron must be round, to prevent the tissues with which it comes in contact being torn.

The horse is then to be placed on his feet, but he must be so tied up that he cannot gnaw or scratch the wounded parts, which are to be covered with a piece of a sheep's gall-bladder kept in place by a linen bandage. This is to be kept in until maggots attack the place, which generally happens in four or five days; after this the maggots are allowed to feed on all the clotted matter in the wound. They should be left at peace until it is certain they have got rid of all the synovial matter that was in the tumour and that the organic tissues that were injured by it have reverted to their natural condition: five or six days are usually sufficient to insure this. Then the wound is rubbed with tar and the horse is pronounced cured.

The operation for bog-spavin should be carried out in cool weather, to avoid risk of gangrene, which might be fatal.

If the disease is that of the *thoroughpin* (*ressignons cherillés*) both sides of the hock are to be operated upon.

The Arabs think the horse ought to be kept on his legs during the operation, so that the matter may the more easily escape, without any risk of its entering inwards, which might happen if the horse were cast.

The above is from General Dumas' book: *The horses of the Saharas*. Is *ressignon* alone in English, bog spavin and *cherillé* thoroughpin?

Could you answer the above in the next number of the *Journal d'Agriculture* provided the question may be admitted into the "questions and answers" of that publication?

I should be glad to know if you have ever tried this mode of cure, barring of course the *sheep's gall* and the *maggots*—and if it succeeded, that is if the horse being a racer a hunter, or a hack the bog spavin or thoroughpin did not recur when the horse, supposing it was a racer, was put into hard training, or into the more moderate work of a hunter.

C. F. BOUTHILLIER.

Reply.—The only part of the above treatment that is rational, is the firing and the syringing (*jonction*). The rest is at least *absurd*, if it be not dangerous, on account of the wound coming in contact with animal matter that is about to become decomposed.

There is something like the above treatment now used for these *ressignons* (as the English call them, *Bog-spavins* or *thoroughpins*).

The animal is cast, the *ressignon* is syringed with a sucking syringe, (to prevent air entering the wound) and either tincture of iodine, or of a solution of iserine (?) or a weak solution of corrosive sublimate, is to be injected. Internal inflammation soon appears, which is kept within bounds by ice, &c., and at the end of two months the *ressignon* has generally vanished: At least, if it has not become hard, which is worse than the previous state.

I would not try the Arab treatment on any account.

J. A. COUTURE.

(From the French)

Central Experimental Farm,
Department of Agriculture,
(Copy) Ottawa, 30th Jan., 1893.

G. A. GIGALT, Esq.,
Assist. Commissioner of
Agriculture, Quebec.

Dear Mr. Gigault,

I returned to Ottawa on Thursday afternoon, leaving Quebec on the 10.30 P.M. train, not much the worse for my journey although somewhat tired.

When you wrote to me on the 18th of October last propounding a series of questions, I replied to you stating that I would answer this document as soon as I could get the time to consider the questions you refer to. I will now do the best I can to reply to your questions.

1. "What kinds of grain, oats, peas potatoes would you recommend the farmers of Quebec to sow this spring?" Of oats: Banner, Prize Cluster, Egyptian, Roseale; Peas: Multiplier, Mummy, Centennial and Crown; Potatoes: Lee's Favorite, Daisy, Sunrise, Early Ohio, Rural Blush and White Star. Besides these there is a large number of other sorts almost equally good in our experience.

2. "What kinds are most recommendable, not only on account of the yield, but also on account of their nutritive qualities?" The varieties named are among the largest croppers and are quite equal in nutritive properties to any other sorts.

3. "What kinds of fruit-trees would you recommend them to plant?"

After listening to the admirable papers presented at your meeting on Wednesday night by Mr. Dupuis and Mr. Shepherd, I think you have far more reliable information in these papers than I can give you from our experiments here, as they give the results of actual tests in the province of Quebec. This reply will also cover your 4th question on "what kinds of small fruits should they grow?"

With regard to questions 5, 6, 7 and 8, in reference to the question of canning, drying or evaporating fruits, on this subject I have had no experience. There are some very good canning establishments at Aylmer and Hamilton, Ont., but I do not know how the institutions are paying. I have no doubt if you were to inquire from Mr. L. Woolverton; Editor of the *Canadian Horticulturist* at Grimsby, Ont., he would be able to give you all the information you desire on this point, as he lives in the midst of the fruit industry of the Niagara Peninsula.

9. "Can agricultural societies and clubs buy from you some of those grains, oats, peas, potatoes, etc., and at what price?" I would say that our stock at the Experimental Farm is never quite sufficient to meet the requirements of those who apply for 3 lb. samples of those different grains, so that all we have is used up in this way, and we do not have any which we could sell by the bushel. I think it would be well if your Agricultural Societies when offering prizes for the best grain, would also purchase this grain and distribute it for seed, as such well grown samples in your own Province would be thoroughly acclimated and perhaps more useful than seed sent from other Provinces or countries. I do not think that the information I am able to communicate to you in reply to these questions is of sufficient value to make it worth while publishing in Bulletin form. It is intended merely as a guide to your self in reaching conclusions on these points.

Yours very truly,
(Signed) Wm. SAUNDERS,
Director.

P. S.—I shall be glad at any time to give you any further information at my command. I shall shortly be able to send you some particulars as to the fruit trees we promised to supply you with.

(True copy.)

Quebec, Dec. 29th, 1892.

Dear Sir,

I happened to glance over a little book to day "La culture du blé," by M. Bernard Lippens, in which, at page 20, he says:

"Is it absolutely essential to change the seed from time to time? Is it true that any kind of wheat, grown on the same farm, loses strength every year, and that this enervation exists in the very essence of the plant? Many people believe this to be the case, but they are greatly deceived."

A little further, I read: "M. de Dombasle grew the same wheat during 20 years: it was finer the twentieth year than the first."

I also see in the "Report of the Special Committee on the Agriculture of Canada 1884," at page 13; in the evidence given by Mr. Brown of the Ontario Agricultural College:

"The fine old varieties, *Soule* and *Fife*, we have lost; not, however, because they were not suited to our soil and climate, but simply because, like every other plant grown in the same soil during a certain period, they required a change of seed. We have not allowed

them to revive their original fecundity by a change of soil and climate, which is the sole means of giving renewed health and vitality to all vegetation. Hence arise disappointment and serious losses, which too often are assigned to other causes."

Now, if M. Lippens had said that the same variety of wheat could be cultivated in the Province, in a county, or perhaps in a parish, and would retain its productiveness, it would have seemed to me that it was a correct statement; but to hear that a man can cultivate the same wheat on the same farm, which generally contains but one kind of soil (loam, or sand, or alluvium, etc.) for a great number of years, seems queer.

And, the mention M. Lippens makes of M. Dombasle cultivating wheat for twenty years on the same land is by no means a good proof of what he (M. Lippens) says. M. Dombasle was no ordinary farmer; and besides, the land in which he sowed his wheat was perhaps not wheat soil when he commenced his experiments, and, by means of proper fertilisers, it became at the end of twenty years a soil that could produce perhaps three times more than the first year. I should like to know your opinion on the subject, as it is one of great importance to farmers who generally neglect this important (I think) yes, very important point.

I hope you will not think it too bad of me that I have sown a great many *ands, thats*, and *perhaps* in this too long epistle from.—

One of your Quebec readers.

Answer.—A considerable experience in the cultivation of wheat leads us to feel confident that a change of seed is absolutely necessary. In fact, we never heard its necessity doubted before. On the second rate soils of Kent, England, the finest Chidham wheat, a superb, almost translucent white kind, a great favorite with biscuit-bakers, degenerates into a wheat, almost as brown as the Lammas-red, or the Spalding, unless the seed is changed at least every third rotation. The change is usually sought for from the chalk-soils. Ed.

The Agricultural Societies.

We beg to draw the attention of our readers to the following article from our correspondent, *Agricole*; it will be found to be a very elaborate enquiry into a subject of the highest interest.

The *Courrier de St-Hyacinthe* has just published a '*communiqué*' on the Agricultural Societies. Very well expressed otherwise, this letter asserts that it is intended to abolish these societies and to replace them by Farmer's Clubs. The writer deceives himself, if he think that in the eloquent work lately omitted by M. Gigault, he can discover the condemnation to death of the Agricultural Societies in general. The farming public admits the usefulness of many of these societies which are well managed, but into most of the county-societies abuses have crept, the most outrageous of which at least must be extirpated, and means must be taken to insure that the farmers who dwell far from the centres in which these societies operate, be not deprived, as they now are, of the encouragement granted by the law, not only to some privileged places in each county, but to every part of the province.

Let us, first of all, see what should be the aim of the agricultural societies according to the laws that sanction their existence.

Clause 1646 of the Revised Statutes says, in substance: the aim of the county Agricultural Societies is to encourage the improvement of farming,