

PLANTING POTATOES.

In consequence of the unavoidable delay of the issue of the May Number, the season for planting potatoes will be pretty much over before it reach the subscribers. It will, therefore, be unnecessary to give full particulars as to the management of that important crop.

One of the most prevalent errors practiced in cultivating the potatoe, is, the covering of the seed too deep, and afterwards banking them up so high that they not unfrequently suffer from the drought, and are subject to various other risks. An acquaintance of ours is so fully persuaded on this point, that for the last seven years he has not put a plough in his potatoe field after his crop is planted until it is ready for gathering—his mode is thus:—he ploughs and dungs his land in the autumn, then ploughs again in the spring as soon as he can get on the land, and subsequently harrows a number of times so as to completely pulverise the soil, and if the land require an extra ploughing, he makes it a point to administer to its necessities in that particular. When the ground is ready for planting, which, on an average of seasons, is by the twentieth of May, he ploughs as though for other spring crops, and drops potatoe seed in every third furrow, at the distance of ten inches asunder. The proportionate size of the furrow, average nine inches wide, by four deep.

The after culture merely consists in a thorough harrowing with the lightest description of seed harrows, at the period the plants are bursting out of the ground, and dressings with a horse cultivated water, at suitable periods, for freeing the crop from weeds.

From the above mode of management, from four to five hundred bushels of excellent potatoes, are raised per acre. If the land be of a heavy tenaceous clay, the above might be deviated from, in this particular—by simply running the plough down between the rows, and forming a light furrow, to carry off a superabundance of surface water, if such should happen to be on the land.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

In addition to the regular files of the *American Agriculturist*, we have been presented with the first Volume of that work, got up in a neat and convenient form for binding, and also, a quantity of extra numbers sent for the purpose of distribution among our friends in this District. We would feel a pleasure in distributing them to any who may favour us with a call.

The above Journal has been before the public only fifteen months, and is just what its name purports it to be, a National Journal, or, one of the leading organs of the agricultural classes of the great Republic. Its talented Editor, A. B. Allen, Esq., is evidently a man qualified in every particular to perform the arduous task which he has undertaken, with credit to himself, and the nation whose interests and welfare he advocates.

We learn from a private letter from that gentleman that his Journal is obtaining a circulation which exceeds his most sanguine expectations, and from the account he gives us, we are led to suppose that his work has double the circulation of our own, notwithstanding there are six exclusively agricultural papers published in the Empire State, and only one in the so much boasted Agricultural Province of Canada.

The *American Agriculturist* contains thirty pages on a sheet a trifling larger than our own—any one-sixth—and may be had for one dollar a year, exclusive of American and British postage. Those of our subscribers who would like to take in also, a foreign publication, would do well to forward us their dollar, and we would procure them the above work.

For want of space, we have to apologize for not acknowledging numerous favours from publishers and others, but in future we will endeavour to do more justice to our friends in this particular.

THE WEATHER—THE WHEAT CROP &c.

While writing this article, the atmospheric temperature is extremely cold for the time of year, indeed, vegetation appears very backward. Rain has been much wanted for some time, and we apprehend that crops of every description will be under a medium yield, the ensuing harvest, unless a decided improvement takes place in the weather, during the next fortnight. In such seasons as the present, the application of the following substances as stimulant manures for top dressings are attended with most advantageous success, especially to the hay crop. Gypsum, at the rate of one bushel and a half per acre, salt at the rate of two bushels per acre, and unleached ashes at the rate of three bushels per acre, will be found to add at least fifty per cent to the gross amount of the product. If any are sceptical on this point, let them try one half acre of each, and by that means satisfy themselves as to the correctness of this statement. In the neighbourhood of a potashry or soap-boiling establishment, leached ashes may be procured for the mere drawing of them, and if applied to grass or almost to any crop, at the rate of sixty bushels per acre, will be found a most efficient stimulus to the plants, and will doubly repay for all expenses. The farmers in the neighbourhood of New York, Philadelphia, and Boston, have become so well acquainted with the use and importance of leached ashes that they not unfrequently pay ten cents per bushel and load them eight or ten miles back in the country.

Accounts have reached us from almost every state in the Union, relative to the prospects of the wheat crop, and in summing up the whole testimony we give it as our opinion, that the prospects were never better.

We notice conflicting accounts in the English Journals, relative to wheat plants, but from the best sources which have reached us for obtaining the necessary information, it is our opinion that the prospects of a good crop are flattering.

Information from the very best sources, have reached us from almost every celebrated wheat growing District in Western Canada, and with but three exceptions, all agree in giving it as their opinion, that the wheat plants never looked worse at the advanced stage of the season, indeed, it is thought that fall sown wheat will not yield more than half an average crop, providing the summer season be ever so favourable. We understand that one half of the crops in some of the townships, have been ploughed up and sowed with spring grain.

The sickly appearance of the wheat crops may be attributed principally to two causes. The unfavourable and backward season in which the seed was deposited in the ground last autumn; and the great depth of snow which lay upon the ground during the past winter. We understand that many farmers have ploughed up their whole crop, and re-sown the land with spring wheat.

It has been frequently remarked by us that the system, or mode of managing farms practiced in Canada, is the real source of much of the distress at present experienced by almost all classes; if we required further testimony than what has been already adduced to substantiate that assertion, we would only have to point to the fact, that, during the last four years, only one good crop of wheat has been harvested, or in other words remunerated the producer. In the harvest of 1838, the crops of wheat yielded abundantly per acre, and the prices were exorbitantly high—in 1839 a general failure took place, owing to the mill-dews which was prevalent. The failure was so great that thousands of fields were not touched by the reapers, and many of the best and most wealthy farmers in the province, were under the necessity of obtaining a supply of bread stuffs from the United States;—in 1840 there was a medium crop, and if it had not been that an unusual quantity was sown the autumn previous, we would have been under the necessity again sending to our neighbours for a supply for home consumption. The average that year did not exceed 16 bushels per acre; in 1841, the snow fell exceedingly deep and remained on the ground for upwards of five months, the consequence was, that the wheat plants were smothered, and the yield per acre, was very similar to that of the year previous;—the small quantity of snow which fell upon the ground, during the winter of 1842, tended materially to injure the plants, from quite an opposite cause; and now, in 1843, the snow has fallen so deep, and remained on the ground so long, that, we hear of nothing but sad complaints about the severity of our rigid and "Laplandish climate," and other hard epithets about our country; and it is generally supposed that the ensuing wheat harvest will come far short of the average above quoted.

The difficulties which a Canadian farmer have to surmount, under the present system of farming, are so diversified in their general character, that it would almost puzzle a philosopher to recommend a mode for amelioration, however, we feel a sympathy for our brother farmers, and shall lose no opportunity in giving them such friendly advice, as may suggest to our mind, while engaged in the operations of farming. In the meantime, we would take the liberty to say, that no one should depend solely upon the wheat crop, at the same time, we recommend a better system of management for that important crop, which will lessen the risk, and add materially to the product. The manure intended for the summer fallow, should be thrown up in large heaps and covered with surface soil, to prevent loss from fermentation. And another method we have practised to a limited extent, and one we can safely recommend, which is to draw out the barn-yard manure, during the month of June, and plough it under with the first ploughing.

After all that has been said, respecting the Canadian farmers turning their attention to the dairy business, we fear but little action will be taken on the subject; and a small and inferior quantity of butter will be exported the forthcoming autumn.

If farmers were only enterprising, and felt an interest in the success of their own welfare, all the difficulties that they have to encounter, would be comparatively trifling, when compared to the natural advantages which the fertile lands of Canada present, for the growth of flax, hemp, grass, &c. dairy produce and many other articles which might be enumerated.