

EARLY SPRING GRASSES.

The EARLY SPRING GRASSES have hitherto occupied very little attention in this Province.

Nova Scotia is obviously well suited as a grazing country. The one drawback under which our farmers labour is the long winter, during which animals have to be kept upon dry fodder. Our dry-feed season is not indeed quite so long as that of Upper Canada and the Western States, for our grass lands remain long green in the fall, and we seldom really suffer from summer drought; but, nevertheless, the winter is a dreary time for the farmer's stock. Could we shorten the winter, how great would be the advantage! But let not our farmers call upon Jupiter to help them out of the long winter, but rather put their shoulders to the wheel, and try to shorten it. All who try can do it.

How is it to be done? It may be done in two ways:—first, by growing crops that will give a late bite in the fall, and carry stock into the winter in good condition; secondly, by raising early spring feed. This may be done as is practised in England on sheep farms where early lamb is an object, by sowing fields of winter rye. But this, and some other methods that might be referred to, would, in this Province, involve labour and expense sufficient to counter-balance, in many cases, the advantages obtained. The plan that seems to be best adapted to the present circumstances of Nova Scotia, as involving least labour, and being most certain in its results, is to introduce into our grass lands such grasses as are known to start early in spring. Timothy and clover may probably never be surpassed as a summer grass crop in this country. But it is well known that there are many grasses that make considerable growth in the spring before either timothy or clover have started. All early grasses, however, are not suited to the object in view. Whilst we write, the fragrant Holy Grass (*Hierochloa borealis*) is already in blossom on the banks of the Sackville river, so also the sweet-scented Vernal Grass,—and by the waysides in Halifax the little *Poa annua* will soon begin to flower. But none of these grasses are suited to yield a large amount of nutritious food. It is otherwise with the much despised Couch Grass (*Triticum repens*), which is nearly the first common grass to show a green blade in spring, and it at the same time grows so vigorously, and has such a store of nourishment in its creeping root, as to bear any reasonable amount of eating down without arresting its growth. Couch Grass, although such a noisome weed in lands where the ground has to be stirred, is nevertheless a very valuable grass in pastures, and even grass lands intended for hay.

Botanically the Couch is 'own-brother' to wheat; and, in Nova Scotia, if properly used, might be not inferior to it in agricultural value. On Canadian farms it is not uncommon to have a patch of Couch handy to the barn yard to afford early feed for horses and other valuable stock; yet, the Couch has rather taken possession spontaneously than been encouraged by the farmer. If our wild and unimproved hill pastures in Nova Scotia could be simply covered with a turf of Couch, they would yield ten times the amount of herbage which they at present do with their tufty mantle.

But there is an early grass which is of more importance as yielding early feed, viz. the Meadow Catstail, (*Alopecurus pratensis*.) This grass resembles Timothy in appearance, but has softer heads. Before the middle of last month, (May), Alfred Thomas, Esq., of Windsor, had sent to us, from a field on his farm, long stalks of this grass, with fully formed heads an inch and a half long. We showed them to many persons in Halifax, all of whom were more or less incredulous as to their having been produced this season. The following is Mr. Thomas's note accompanying the specimens:—

Windsor, May 14, 1866.

DEAR SIR,—I enclose you two specimens of the Meadow Catstail as you requested me to last fall. I think, by comparison, they are the real *Alopecurus pratensis*. I think you will agree with me that any grass thus far advanced in an unusually backward spring, will be of great value, when the necessity of sowing grasses, especially for pasture, is fully recognized. I will send you another specimen when in bloom. This was picked on the dyke yesterday. The grass is unusually backward this year. I recollect to-morrow twelvemonth walking with Mr. Hendry through the dyke to Martock, when we had to find paths through the long grass; now there is hardly a bite for cattle on the best dyke.

Yours truly,

ALFRED THOMAS.

THE ELLERSHOUSE EXPERIMENT WITH WINTER WHEAT.

Last fall, F. Ellershausen, Esq., laid down a very large breadth of Winter Wheat, (several hundred acres we believe) on the newly-cleared land of Ellershouse. We are happy to learn that the wheat has passed safely through the winter, and gives promise of a good return. The winter was severe, but the spring has been very favourable. This is one of the largest experiments in the growing of winter wheat that has been tried on a Nova Scotian farm for many years, and its success may induce others to follow.

ACT AGAINST RINDERPEST IN NEW YORK STATE.

AN ACT to prevent the introduction and spread of the disease known as the rinderpest, and for the protection of the flocks and herds of sheep and cattle in this State from destruction by this and other infectious diseases.

Passed April 20, 1866; three-fifths being present.

The people of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. It shall be the duty of the health officer of the port of New York in addition to the duties now imposed on him by existing law, to examine and enquire whether any animals are brought in any vessels arriving at said port in violation of any regulation of law passed by the Congress of the United States prohibiting the importation of such animals.

§ 2. Whenever any animal brought as a ship's cow, with no intention of landing the same or of violating any such law or regulation of Congress as aforesaid, the same shall be carefully examined and kept in quarantine for the space of at least twenty-one days, and if any symptom of the infection or incubation of the disease commonly known as the rinderpest or any other infectious or contagious disease shall present themselves, it shall be the duty of the said health officer immediately to cause the said animal or animals to be slaughtered, and their remains boxed with a sufficient quantity of quick lime, sulphate of iron or other disinfectant, and with sufficient weights placed in said box to prevent the same from floating, and to be cast into the waters of the said port: It shall also be his duty to cleanse and disinfect by suitable agencies the berth or section of the ship in which said animal or animals were lying or slaughtered, and also to cause the clothing and persons of all taking care of the same or engaged in slaughter and burial to be cleansed and disinfected.

§ 3. William Kelly, of Dutchess county, Marsena R. Patrick, of Ontario county, and Lewis F. Allen, of Erie county, are hereby appointed as commissioners under this act, and with power and duties as hereinafter enumerated.

§ 4. In the event of any such disease as the rinderpest or infectious disease of cattle or sheep breaking out or being expected to exist in any locality in this State, it shall be the duty of all persons owning or having any interest whatever in the said cattle, immediately to notify the said commissioners or any one of them of the existence of such disease; whereupon the said commissioners shall establish a sanitary cordon around such locality. And thereupon it shall be the duty of the said commissioners to appoint an assistant commissioner for such district, with all powers conferred by this act on the said commissioners or their agents or appointees, which said assistant commissioner shall immediately proceed to the place or places where such disease is reported to exist, and cause the said animal or animals to be separated from all connection or proximity with or to all other animals of the ruminant order, and take such other precautionary measures as shall be deemed necessary; and if in his opinion the said disease shall be incurable or threaten to spread to other animals, to cause the same immediately to be slaughtered, their remains to be deeply buried, and all places in which the said animals have been confined or kept, to be cleansed and disinfected by any of the agencies above mentioned; and also to cause the same to be carefully locked or barred so as to prevent all access to the same by any animals of a like kind for a period of at least one month. Any animal thus slaughtered shall be appraised under the supervision of said commissioners, and one-half of the value of said animal shall be paid by the State to the owner thereof.