

Sowing Mixed Grains.

This subject has been of late attracting more than usual attention from agriculturists, though the idea is by no means a novel one. One who has had considerable experience in this matter writes to the "Journal of the Farm," telling the result of his experience in sowing mixed grains. As they are the observations of a practical farmer, we make some extracts from them for the readers of the ADVOCATE, with notes from our own experience:—

"Having had some experience in sowing mixed grains, I will say in regard of experiments tried by me, that the sowing of spring grains to be used on the farm for stock-feeding purposes, has proved fully equal, if not superior, to those crops that were kept separate; but for market, such mixed grains would not, as a rule, be as valuable as if each variety were sown by itself. I have known some good farmers who make it their usual practice to sow oats and peas quite extensively for a field crop for home feeding to stock, also, rye and oats, and barley with oats. On our dairy farms there is not usually as much grain used as is fed to the stock."

In a former number of the ADVOCATE, in an article on soiling and the rotation of crops, the value of a mixed crop of oats and peas was spoken of; it was one of the crops especially recommended for soiling. We have found them, when sown mixed, a more luxuriant crop than if separate. Peas are not an exhausting crop—on the contrary, they serve to enrich the soil on which they are grown. A careful analysis has shown that the soil on which a crop of peas had grown was richer in plant food than before the crop was sown. They absorb from the atmosphere much of their own nutriment, and convey to the soil elements of fertilization that serve to mature the oats growing with them, while the oats serve as a support for the peas, and thus both grow together more luxuriantly than if separate. And they are, if cut green for soiling, or even in a more mature state, a better food for stock and for milch cows especially, than either would be by itself.

The writer in the Journal adds:—
"In raising corn many of our best farmers say they prefer to mix eight, ten and twelve-rowed varieties of the same color together, thereby increasing the average per acre by from five to ten bushels. That has been and still is my practice, and I think with good results, and in the case of corn when all of one color no objection is made by the purchaser."

The accuracy of this statement can only be proved by experiments carefully conducted. Some of the seed corn planted in the experiments given may not have been good, other varieties good, and in such an instance the result would be that if the imperfectly ripened or otherwise inferior seed were sown alone, the crop would not be equal to that when it was mixed with seed of superior quality.

We must all agree with the writer in his dissent to sowing "mixed seed of wheat, rye, oats, barley, chess and cockle for the food of the human family." We do not know that wheat so mixed is sown in any part of Canada, though some of our farmers may not be as particular in the choice of seed as they undoubtedly would if they studied what would tend so very much to their own profit. If this slovenly farming be unknown here, it is not so in the United States. The writer in the Journal bears testimony that go where you will you will see but few fields of wheat of the winter variety that are not badly mixed with rye and chess, and the spring varieties with rye, oats and barley.

We do not agree in the writer's objection to every mixture of grain for the food of man. Many of our readers must remember the good brown bread so extensively used in the houses of farmers in the old country.—We do not now refer to the bread made from unbolted wheat flour, but to the dark (but healthy) nutritious bread made from meslin-mixed wheat and rye—those large meslin loaves that gave strength and vigor to the robust farmer and stalwart arm of the men before whose sickle and scythe fell the heavy crops of grain and grass when machines for reaping and mowing were unknown.

MESLIN.

Farmers in the best agricultural districts of the old country have found this crop of mixed grain very profitable, not as setting aside the crops of unmixed wheat, but on soil deemed unlikely to produce heavy wheat crops. A light crop is never a profitable one;

and good farmers then make it a rule, not to sow wheat where they would not expect a return of from twelve to sixteen barrels to the plantation acre of wheat. A much higher produce is sometimes obtained. Many fields that from the quality or condition of the soil are not considered likely to produce such a return of wheat, would yield heavy crops of meslin. Rye would do well, and meslin give a good return where pure wheat would not be a remunerative crop. The wheat sown with the rye would do better than if sown by itself. The plant food required by each species being somewhat different, each one would have a greater supply of food, and the naturally luxuriant growth of the rye would stimulate the wheat plants in their growth; so that where wheat, if sown unmixed, would be a light crop, it would, when sown with rye, give a good return. In the good grain markets there was always a ready sale and a good demand for meslin; so that the producer was at any time sure to obtain remunerative prices for any surplus over what he required for his own family use and his laborers.

Meslin bread is said by those who can speak authoritatively on the subject, to be possessed of peculiar qualities that make it preferable to pure wheat bread. There can be no doubt in its richness in the stamina of vigorous health and robust strength; and when baked in large quantities, as is necessary where there are many men to be fed, it retains its moisture and freshness longer than bread of other varieties.

Trip Through Scarborough, Markham, Pickering and Whitby.

Crops generally light in Whitby; peas look the best. The spring wheat looks better than in the west. Turnips late; potatoes did not come up well in many places. The bugs are beginning to be lively down here; the farmers neglected using Paris Green too long.

The Markham crops are looking better.—We called on G. Miller, Esq.; the old gent. is fairly raging against Christie. We saw his cows and calves which he intends bringing to the Provincial Exhibition. He has a fine lot, and he says he is determined to lead one of them into the ring himself, even if he should have to be wheeled in in a wheelbarrow to do it. We called at Mr. Bell's farm; he has the celebrated bull "Doctor," imported by Cochran. He was offered \$3100 for him; we do not think he will get it offered again. He is a beautiful bull, but has not grown as well as he might have done; perhaps he was over-worked when young.

Went into Mr. John Miller's, Pickering.—His crops looked better than any we had seen. He has been using salt and plaster on his farm for some years, and with most beneficial results. His two-year old bull "Lord Strathallan" will attract attention at the Exhibition; he will be hard to beat. Mr. Miller has now about eighty head of Durhams, and a fine lot they are. He looks on R. L. Denison as one of the best and most useful men that ever had anything to do with the Provincial Exhibition, and that he is made the scape-goat for the sins of others.—We have long been of a similar opinion, and despite the result of the investigation that we caused, we always held Mr. Denison in the highest respect; but arbitrations and laws sometimes bring unexpected conclusions.

We scarcely see any fall wheat growing in this part of the country. The spring wheat through Pickering and Whitby will yield about as much per acre as the fall wheat in Middlesex. It is not damaged in this part of the country by the weevil, as in the west. The Fife Wheat is the principal variety sown.

We paid a visit to the farm at Whitby that was examined by the Committee to select a site for the Government Farm. If economy, the farmers' interests, or educational interests were the first points to be considered, we think worse places might be found.

The Yorkshire Cattle Feeder.

Having conversed with farmers that have used this feed, we would again call the attention of our readers who may have animals that are not in a thriving condition, or who may desire to fatten animals either for sale or for show, that this is found to be a very valuable, useful, safe and sure stimulant.—See the advertisement in the paper.

Markham Farmer's Club Meeting.

The members of this Farmers' Club have had a very interesting and agreeable meeting at the hospitable residence of the President of the Club, John Gibson, Esq. We much regret that though they met early in June, the report did not reach us in time for our July number. Even now we gladly give a condensed report of it. There was a goodly number of members present, and to add to the pleasure and interest of the meeting, the ladies gave added charm, many of the members being accompanied by their wives, availing themselves of the invitation of Mr. Gibson, the worthy host of the day.

The President farms on a regular system, and he now took the opportunity to point out to the members of the Club the several growing crops of the seven-year rotation, the course he advocates and successfully practices, reasoning by actual demonstration of its advantages.

At 2.50 o'clock p. m., they met in the beautiful shaded hall of the President, on such a day a delightful place of meeting.—The meeting was called to order, as usual, by the reading of the minutes.

Agricultural topics discussed: Objections to the seven-year rotation, and the difficulties of carrying it out. The President, referring to the objections frequently made to the system, said it was one that could be advantageously carried out by every farmer, though farms differed very much from each other, and would, as being flat or rolling and as of different soil, require different cropping. This difference did not at all interfere with the working of the system, which under any kind of cropping proves advantageous. Under any treatment there will be a failure of some crops, but if this system be fully carried out, failure will be less frequent. The rotation system was obligatory on tenants in Scotland. Since commencing the rotation have had only one failure, a partial one, and that owing to couch grass, which choked out the seed.

THE MODEL FARM QUESTION.

This subject the President thought quite sufficient for the day's discussion. He thought the Government Farm was disgracefully managed, and that thirty thousand dollars were taken out of our pockets. It was, he considered, a subject for the Club to discuss, simply as an agricultural question, irrespective of party feeling.

THE TURNIP CROP.

Mr. Armstrong said he found the turnip crop essential for the feeding of stock. He sowed eight or nine acres annually. His method was to manure and plough in the fall, in the spring work the ground well, and about the 20th of June sow two pounds of seed per acre. He found the application of salt, 200 pounds to the acre, a great improvement to the crop, especially in a dry season. He sowed the Skirving and the Bangholm Swedes. This year he intended to sow two acres of Stone turnips. Had always been successful in raising root crops.

Mr. Tran approved of Mr. Armstrong's mode of cultivation. Had used plaster and salt, equal quantities of each. Last year he sowed his turnips the 27th of June, and the land was not properly prepared. Sowed 50 pounds of plaster and salt to the acre, and had a good crop. His neighbor had used plaster only and the results were good.

Col. Button.—If the ground be in good order and plenty of seed sown, with showers occasionally, the root crop is pretty sure.—Without rain there is no use in sowing turnips.

Hon. D. Reesor.—The theory of many agriculturists is that one bushel of plaster per acre is as good as five bushels; as only a moderate quantity can act as food for the plant, the remainder lying dormant.

The President.—Does not believe that plaster can take the place of manure. How long could turnips on any soil, with only plaster for manure, yield average crops?—Such reasoning is like expecting a man to be able to do his work day after day on only a dram of whiskey night and morning. To get substance from the soil there must be substance in it.

Is the root crop profitable?—This was the subject of discussion among the members; Messrs. Reesor, Crosby, Armstrong, Tran, Pike, Whiteside, and Milne for the affirmative, and by the President, Col. Button, and Mr. Jennings. Mr. Gibson's summons to tea brought to a termination this very interesting discussion.

And for us, we must thank our esteemed correspondent for his courteous kindness in sending us the report of the meeting. We hope to hear from him often. The reports of the meetings of Farmers' Clubs are at all times interesting to us whose occupation and delight are in the cultivation of the soil.—We would wish to have similar reports from many Clubs.

Ontario Agricultural Convention.

In these days of flourishing agricultural societies, we all admit the benefit to be derived from exchange of ideas among farmers. From our experience in travelling all over the Dominion, and careful examination of the methods of farming in the different places, we feel satisfied that every section has something to learn from others, and almost all have some profitable knowledge to impart.

Our aim has constantly been to act as a medium for just such interchange of sentiments and facts as these. We have constantly endeavored to point out good systems where we have seen them in operation, and distributed the knowledge through the length and breadth of the land. What we have always desired was that the FARMERS' ADVOCATE should be, not a reflex of our own system, but a journal of the best systems of every farm in Canada combined in one.

What we now propose is a union of the leading spirits of the agricultural societies of Ontario into one body, for the discussion of interesting and valuable points in agriculture. Supposing that each agricultural society shall select one member, whose duty it shall be to represent that society at the Convention, and then have a meeting in some central town in Ontario, for say a week's discussion of such subjects as they may deem necessary. Hold the meeting in winter when we farmers have time on our hands for such matters, and let each representative go to it determined to gain information which he can disseminate when he returns home; and let him go there with facts concerning the raising of crops, &c., in his own township.

Canada's only dependence is upon her farming, and anything which tends to improve this ought to be well supported by the country. Parliament ought to make a grant to aid in carrying out this idea.

The present Board of Agriculture and Arts does not embrace as wide a field of action as we contemplate might and should be embraced in the Agricultural Convention. The principal business now devolving on the Board is the management of the Provincial Exhibition, and attention to a few minor affairs, such as arranging the Herd Book.

We believe a general Convention for the discussion of the interests of agriculturists would be of much benefit. Each County Council might appoint one farmer—who should be one of the most enterprising practical farmers in the county—to attend the Convention, to make suggestions and bring back reports to the county sending him.

Our markets for all agricultural produce might form a subject for discussion; the treatment of stock, handling the crops, the management of the Provincial Exhibition, the management of the Government Farm, the agricultural press, and such subjects as might be discussed with great profit to the country.

P. T. Barnum to the Public.

A rumor,—originating with, and industriously circulated by unscrupulous showmen—having gained some credence, that I would divide my Great Traveling Exhibition on leaving Boston, I beg to state that such an idea has never been entertained for a moment. The vast enterprise,—involving a cost of one million five hundred thousand dollars,—is the crowning event of my managerial life, and, although acting against the advice of many experienced showmen, I shall adhere to my determination to keep the monster combination intact during the entire season.

The public's obedient servant,
P. T. BARNUM.

THE Agricultural Show of the Ameliasburg Agricultural Society will be held on Saturday, October 11th, at Roblin's Mills, Ameliasburg. Edw. ROBLIN, Sec'y.

A gentleman addicted to scientific inquiry has discovered that thirty-three days complete the cycle of the potato bug generation; that 709 of the critters are the average product of one female, from which the family grows in the second generation to 245,000, and in the third to 82,700,000.