

AGRICULTURE.

News of General Interest.

THE FARM.

In older sections of the country farmers have learned to sow clover on new land as soon as it is smooth enough to seed down. Waiting to sow clover after fertility has been so exhausted that even clover will not grow does not pay.

There are said to be carried off from the soil 9 pounds of lime in 25 bushels of oats, and 15 pounds to 38 bushels of barley. There are 36 pounds of lime in 2 tons of clover, 140 pounds in 25 tons of turnips, and 270 pounds in 9 tons of potatoes. Some soils contain an abundance of lime for a thousand years, while other soils require an occasional application of lime as a fertilizer.

Stable manures are often the agencies by which weed seeds are spread over the farm. This is more especially the fact with topdressing wheat, where there is less opportunity to destroy the weeds by cultivation. Before applying top-dressing to wheat it is worth while to think whether the manure does not contain weed seeds, which had better be applied to crops where cultivation can insure their destruction.

From my experience in raising potatoes under straw I believe they could be raised in this way successfully, and save the labour of cultivation. I had my ground broken up deep, working a rich and well-rotted compost thoroughly in the soil. The soil was now levelled and smoothed. The seed pieces were planted on top of the soil in straight lines ten inches apart and eight inches apart in the lines. The whole was then covered with about six or eight inches of straw. I found the moles would raise the soil some, but did not molest the potatoes any. A liberal sprinkling of unleached ashes about twice during the growing season is of great advantage. Many vines when stretched up measured five feet, and the tubers were the finest I ever raised.

Do you curse your luck, and say farming does not pay? How so! You know Wild. Everybody does hereabouts. He makes farming pay. You go from your weedy, starved, shiftless-looking place, to Wild's, and he smiles, hums a tune to himself, looks at you sarcastically, and he knows why you grumble. Order, neatness, clean farming, well fed fields, a clear head, there you have them! all requisites in successful farming. But what good comes from lessons taught that go in one ear and out the other? If you can't make farming pay, you may feel assured that the fault lies with you, and you only. A well ordered machine must have bolts and nuts in place, and all must work harmoniously. Is your machinery in good working order?

PLOUGHING.

This is the season when the attention of farmers generally is directed to the subject of ploughing, and there is no subject connected with farming that deserves more attention. If wheat be sown on a badly ploughed fallow, the defect must tell in the crop—there is no remedy. In none of the processes of farming have the improvements of the present century been more distinctly marked than in ploughing preparatory to a crop. The ploughing we see to-day is better than that which our fathers did, chiefly on two accounts—the improved plough, and the better condition of the ground. The writer of this paragraph well remembers when breaking fallow required two horses, a man and two boys to each plough, turning a cut of ten inches to a depth of three inches. The force was thus distributed. The horses drew the plough, the man guided it and loosened it from the roots when it became fastened; one of the boys rode the lead horse and guided the team, for the ploughman was entirely engaged in managing the plough; the other boy walked beside the plough and relieved it when it became choked and attended to the cut, if it was disposed to fall back into the furrow. But our sulky plough would have made a sorry job among the roots and stumps of that day.

POTASH FOR POTATOES AND FRUIT.

The following is taken from the report of the Massachusetts Agricultural Experiment Station, which was prepared by Prof. Goessmann:—In an experiment made in manuring for potatoes, with sulphate of potash and muriate of potash, it was found that potatoes grown where the latter form of potash was used were almost entirely free from scab, while another plot manured with sulphate of potash, and still another with no manure, were seriously disfigured by scab. This, however, is but the result of a single experiment, and another trial may show the reverse condition. It was also observed that corn sown showed itself far

more on an unmanured plot than on plots that were made rich with manure or fertilizers. The further experiments in the use of potash compounds for fruit growing confirm previous conclusions that such compounds act very favourably upon the quality of fruit, increasing its saccharine matter and rendering the plants more healthy. Muriate of potash seems to be a specially useful fertilizer for peach trees affected with the "yellows."

HOG CHOLERA.

Mr. John R. Cowley, of Cargill, county of Bruce, writes as follows:— "Having read very carefully the report of Mr. F. C. Grenside, V.S., on hog cholera in Essex, I wish to give a prescription for the benefit of any person that may wish to try it. I prescribed the same some years since for the herd at Carhead farm, near Crosshill, in Yorkshire, England. One tablespoonful of smith iron ore for each pig (in severe cases three times a week) amongst their food until they are better; after that administer the dose once a week. I purchased the smit ore at Barrow-in-Furness, Lancashire, and sent it by rail to Yorkshire. I had a letter back in a few days to say that the pigs were all getting better, and none had died after treatment. The iron ore kills the parasite in the blood and soothes the whole system. I will be willing to give any further information to any one that may require it by writing to my address.

Wood Flour.

A new and mysterious industry has arisen, according to the St. James's Gazette, in the Catskill Mountains, in the State of New York—namely, the production of "wood flour," which is described as "a kind of cousin to wood pulp." It was first manufactured in the Catskills about nine years ago, and now over twenty mills are in full blast. The process is exceedingly simple. Any soft wood tree—poplar is the favourite—is felled and drawn to the mill. The bark and boughs are removed, and the trunk put in a machine which is like a lead pencil sharpener on a large scale, with four or more knife edges instead of one. The machine, on being started, revolves with great swiftness, and in a few minutes converts the log into fine clean shavings. These are ground and bolted exactly as in a flour mill. The product is a soft, fine, yellowish white flour, similar in appearance to a very well-ground corn meal. It possesses a slight woody smell, and is almost tasteless. When ready for use it is put up in large bags, and is then despatched unmarked to the buyer. Who the purchasers are, or for what purposes it is bought, is a profound secret. Some persons, it is stated, mix it with meal and give it to pigs and other animals; and it is also suspected that contractors occasionally utilise wood flour in a like manner for army and Indian supplies. This, however, is mere conjecture. All that is known for certain respecting this flour is that it is largely manufactured, and finds somewhere a ready market.

Teaching Colts.

In teaching the colt words always accompany the words with an explanatory act—something which will call his attention to the connection between the word and the act. For instance, in saying "whoa!" always pull upon the reins or foot strap. Never use the words either in or out of the barn, except for a purpose. Such words as "stand round!" "take care!" are proper to be used when occasion requires; but you should not say "whoa!" when you mean "take care!" in approaching the colt, nor "whoa back" when you mean either one or the other. It is well known that it is difficult for a person to control himself in this particular. I therefore strongly impress its importance upon those having to deal with colts. Always use a short joint-bit with long bars on the colt, on account of teaching him the right place for the tongue, &c. Kickers in harness should always be checked high. The colt should be caught with your hands and held at two days old and tamed before haltering, haltered and taught to lead at between two and three months old, broke to harness from two to three years of age, broke to ride at three years old, and not to be hard worked until five. A mare may be worked one year younger. The whip should be feared rather than felt. Whenever used it should be accompanied with the proper words and its meaning understood. Use the whip only to ensure promptness, not to teach.

The Little Wonder revolving fork can be attached to the single furrow plough of any maker by an ordinary farm labourer in two minutes, and is a very useful addition for many purposes. It is claimed for it that it will break up and pulverise the land into a perfect seed bed, and lift and fork out any couch grass, exposing it to the surface without breaking it into short lengths, with no perceptible difference to draught of plough. It is also well adapted for raising potatoes.

Agricultural Notes.

The following method of keeping butter firm in hot weather is recommended. Dissolve half a teaspoonful of saltpetre in a pint of water, and put this in a dish. Place the butter in a jar or basin, and set it in the midst of the saltpetre water. Lay a clean cloth over the butter, and let the corners rest in the water. Keep the butter in as cool and dark a place as can be found, and change the water frequently. Fresh butter keeps well also when kept in water which has tartaric acid dissolved in it in the proportion of half a teaspoonful of acid to a quart of water. Salt butter should be well washed, first in several waters, and then in milk. After this a little salt and white sugar may be added to it, and the treatment will improve it considerably.

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