

Colman's Mustard

LUGGIN & SON, Proprietors.

POSTAGE PAID.

SUBSCRIPTION—\$1.00 a year

OLD SERIES VOL. 13, NEW SERIES VOL. 4.

FREDERICTON, N. B., DECEMBER 11, 1876.

NO. 10, WHOLE NUMBER 693

Editorial.

ASPARAGUS.

This culinary plant is considered a great luxury, and may with advantage be cultivated for domestic use and marketing. Being an early spring vegetable, it is the more highly prized, as that season vegetables of almost every sort are scarce, or those that have been kept have lost much of their original freshness and flavor. Asparagus is commonly propagated from seed, and this should be sown at the very earliest moment that the ground will admit of being worked. It is a very hardy plant, and may be grown for very many years, if proper care is taken in the formation of the beds. If instead of sowing the seed, any one should prefer plants, he should obtain those that are good and healthy, young and vigorous. Before planting the seed, however, it is well to put them in tepid milk or water, until they are about ready to germinate. Two things are gained by this, you can detect any bad seed among them, and the certainty of a rapid growth when placed in the ground. Sow about one inch deep, in rows a foot apart, and after the plants are well up, thin to four or five inches between them in the rows. The ground should be thoroughly prepared, made rich with well-rotted manure, and frequently stirred with the hoe, while the plants are growing. The following year the plants will be in good condition to set out.

The roots of asparagus rarely penetrate deeply into the ground, but run out horizontally with the surface a few inches deep. The ground to receive the plants should be thoroughly trenched, but it is best not to bring the subsoil to the surface. The very best and fattest stable manure should be used in the composition of the bed, as asparagus cannot receive too rich a compost. Place the plants not less than two feet apart in the rows. To have the largest and finest plants, three feet apart would not be too much. When planted the surface of the bed should be well pulverized and leveled, and all the work needed during the season is to keep the ground loose and porous between the rows. In the fall when frost has returned the leaves yellow, the stems and tops should be cut off close to the ground and buried. The bed should also be covered with straw or coarse manure to protect the plant during winter season. In more moderate climates this is not needed, but here the plants would be better by being protected. In the following spring a top-dressing of two inches of fine well-rotted manure should be applied, and forked in with great care so as not to disturb the roots. This application should be given at the earliest moment that it can be done in the spring. It is recommended that in gathering the crop none of the young shoots should be cut during the second year following the planting. The best soil for asparagus is said to be alluvial sand, but any soil capable of growing grain, and dandy manure, will be followed with satisfactory results.

Fruit Tree Agents.

During last spring and summer there were, as usual, a number of agents rambling through the Province endeavoring to persuade farmers into buying fruit trees. We have frequently warned our readers to be on their guard against these humbugs, that for some length of time there was a scarcity of these nuisances. They had galled the farmers so thoroughly with the trash they furnished, that to offer American fruit trees to any one of them, generally prompted a look of scorn, or something of that kind, and the farmer became suddenly converted into a thrashing machine of double horse power. The limber legs of the tree pedlar on such occasions, made a speedy acquaintance with the highway, followed by the dog, that greatly assisted his powers of locomotion, and enabled him to get up and get over the ground with a speed unequalled by a two-horse steam engine. These gentry have a new dodge now. They have repented—been to hear Beecher, and "such like," and now they are converted. Don't sell any more American trees, not they. Don't believe them. They have joined the Shripites and "free," that grow trees in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Some of these fellows look as meek as a sucking calf, and are twice as innocent. Well, all we say is don't trust them. They are at their old tricks—wolves in sheep's clothing. While professing to sell you trees from our own nurseries, they palm off a lot of worthless trash that has been gathered here and there and everywhere in the United States. Our

farmers have suffered pecuniary loss enough already by unfortunate purchases of fruit trees. Now our advice is, purchase from no one who cannot produce the most satisfactory testimonials that the trees offered are from our own nurseries. Our nursery men can and do furnish the very best description of fruit trees that are suitable to our soil and climate, and it is the greatest folly to buy any other kind. So, farmers, don't allow yourselves to be swindled. If you do, you cannot say that you have not had sufficient warning.

STATE OF GUISANA.—The average of wheat sown is eight per cent. in advance of last year. Oats eleven per cent. The Commissioner of Agriculture for that State urges farmers to sow oats with unsparring hands, believing that in the near future, that grain is to become the great provender crop of the South. The monthly report shows, that in corn the quantity produced is thirty-four per cent. greater than last year. If varying is favorable, the grain crops of 1877 will be much larger than those of 1876. By means of these reports the farmers of that country are enabled to judge with much certainty the kind of crop they can raise with greatest pecuniary advantage. It is hoped that our farmers will some time or other be in possession of similar information as regards what it is best to grow.

Correspondence.

MIXING SOILS.

The mixture of soils is one of the most readily, and at the same time, the cheapest mode of improving and rendering them fertile. Upon this subject I would say, that I have seen, even in soils of all appearances similar in composition, some very extraordinary results from these mixtures. Thus in the gravelly soils of Spring Lake, near Caydon, England, where the ground is often excavated to the depth of many feet, through a stratum of barren gravel and red sand, for the purpose of obtaining a white or silver sand which exists beneath. When this fine sand is removed, the gravel and red sand is thrown back in the pit, the ground merely leveled, and then left to rot for a fortnight, or also it is planted with forest trees. In either case the effect of the white sand being brought to the surface is remarkable. All kinds, either fir or deciduous trees will now grow with surprising luxuriance. In cottage gardens thus formed, several kinds of vegetables, such as beans and potatoes will yield excellent crops, where before this mixture was made they would have perished or refused to grow.

The great advantage of mixing soils is not entirely confined to those of an earthy composition. Soils which contain inert organic matter, such as peat or moss earth, are highly valuable additions to other soils. This peat earth was successfully added to the sandy soils of Monmouthshire, by Sir Robert Vaughan. The Chobish farmers add a mixture of moss and calcareous earth to their tight-bound earths, the effect of which they describe as loosening and rendering the land porous, or in other words, making their strong clay lands less tenacious, and consequently promoting more readily access of the moisture and gases of the atmosphere to the roots of whatever may be planted upon it. The cultivator sometimes doubts himself with the idea that applying sand, marl, or clay, to a poor soil, merely serves to freshen or to enrich it for a time, and therefore the good effects can only be counted on for a limited period. Some comparative experiments, however, made a number of years ago, on some poor, hungry heath land in Norfolk, England, have up to this time, served clearly to demonstrate the error of such a conclusion. In these experiments the ground was marled with twenty cubic yards only per acre, and the same compost. It was then planted with a poorer variety of forest trees, and by the site of this piece of ground, a portion of the same heath, left in its natural state, was also planted trees of the same kind. Sixteen years have served to demonstrate annually, by the luxuriance of the wood growing on the marled land, the permanent benefit of this mixture of soils. The trees have grown rapidly and exhibit in every way a thrifty appearance. On the adjoining piece of land where no marl was used, the trees are of stunted growth, miserable in appearance, and altogether profless to their owner.

J. B. Gardener, Charlotte Street.

For the Colonial Farmer. RURAL TOPICS.

KEEP STOCK WARM.

A cow fed on 20 pounds of hay daily, having no straw in that winter season, except perhaps an open shed about to tumble down, would be in no better condition in the spring than she would be, if fed on 15 pounds daily, and kept in a warm stable at night, and allowed the run of the barn-yard in pleasant weather. This is a result that has substantially been proved a thousand times. Now, I will compute the loss to a farmer on 10 cows, which are left through the winter on the unprotected system and many barns afford but slight warmth to stock over the open air, being boarded up vertically, with cracks between the boards from a half inch to an inch wide, and all such barns come under the losing system of wintering stock. It would be fair to estimate hay to be worth \$10 a ton, as an average value throughout the country. Ten cows not well protected, will require 50 lbs. a day more than when kept in a warm stable, for at least four months, or 112 days, being 27 1/2 cts. daily, or during 112 days \$30.80. Probably the loss on each animal, no matter how fed, would be at least \$5, consequently farmers who study their own interests, build warm barns, but so as to be well ventilated in mild weather, and thus save enough in fodder in a few years to pay the cost of them. But much can be done with old buildings, to make them warm; batens can be nailed over the cracks, the roof can be repaired, doors made to shut close, and thus the comfort of domestic animals can be enhanced, to say nothing of the saving of fodder. Farmers do you realize this important fact? Some of you do not seem to realize it at all; and such men are always talking of "hard times," being slack in all they do.

SAVING MANURE.

Probably but few farmers exist who have not read articles in the paper, advising them to keep their stable manure under cover, or in a stable close, or under a shed; but in both places dung is liable to become too dry, and the straw among it will not decompose so rapidly as it will when exposed to rain, or if manure dung be mixed with it, or if it be all horse dung, it will "fire-fang," and will be greatly injured. A cellar under the stable stalls, into which all the manure and urine of the stock is received is a good thing, but it would be a great deal better if the manure could be thoroughly wet once a month from a pump adjoining or near the cellar. The same can be said of manure under a shed when piled deep; it must be kept moist, or it had better be kept in the open barn-yard. Indeed, I am of the opinion that when a barnyard is made concave, with no drain to it, manure can be kept in it from fall to spring without any loss. Some farmers think that much of the virtues of manure in open yards, pass down into the soil, and are lost; but such is not the case, as it will be found on removing it in the spring, or if manure under a shed when piled deep, it will be found to be full of its juices by two or three inches deep. Now, I claim that an abundance of litter heaped upon the surface of the manure to retain moisture and to prevent evaporation, but that a farmer makes can be well preserved in his open barnyard as under cover, and I would prefer to have my manure spread over the yard occasionally, and covered with straw, than to have it thrown into heaps by the stable door, and through windows back of the stalls, and so remain all winter, with much of its virtues washed away and lost.

PROTECTING STRAWBERRY PLANTS.—Strawberry plants require protection about December 1st, and after the ground has frozen; and anything as leaves, straw, or hay is suitable; but a great many people injure, and some times destroy their beds of strawberries by covering them too thick, and thus smother the plants. The covering must be light, and admit air to the plants, or they will be found to be dead in the spring. A dressing of fine, well-rotted manure spread among them before they are covered would be beneficial, but not particularly necessary. The covering may be left on in the spring as a mulch to keep the ground moist; but it should be removed from over the crowns of the plants to give them room to grow. Some strawberry growers add more hay or straw in the spring to their mulch, so that no weeds will grow before the plants fruit; but this mulch system cannot be adopted where the plants are grown in matted beds, but only where they are grown in rows or hills.

THE BEST BREEDS OF POULTRY.

Everybody who keeps domestic poultry desires to keep the most profitable fowls; and if we examine the poultry papers we shall find so many conflicting opinions, that we might as well not read them, so far as giving reliable information is concerned. Then if we should ask the question, "Which is the best breed of fowls?" of a score of the most experienced fowl breeders in the United States their replies would be so various that we would be in the fog. Perhaps there is no man living who has had more experience in keeping poultry, and writing on the subject, than I have for about half a century; yet it is a question were put to me, I could not give a direct answer. It depends on what you desire to make of your fowling. One who wants them to sell dressed, and a breed that will produce a large number of eggs would need a good sized fowl as the Brahmas. Then if eggs be the chief object, a smaller breed would be better as the Hamburgs and Leghorns, which are non-sitters and excellent layers. I think no other breeds are superior to the three I have named. The white Brahmas are the most popular, and may be kept on about the same quantity of grain as the Leghorns, and the Hamburgs. I assure that the list of breeds of poultry in this country is more extensive than elsewhere, the additions that have been made during the last ten or fifteen years from France, and other countries, being more for the benefit of dealers in poultry, than because beneficial, the additions that have been made during the last ten or fifteen years from France, and other countries, being more for the benefit of dealers in poultry, than because beneficial, the additions that have been made during the last ten or fifteen years from France, and other countries, being more for the benefit of dealers in poultry, than because beneficial.

POULTRY-FOOT.

A writer in the *Country Gentleman* says: "In my experience, I have found foul-foot to be the result of a disorganized or over-heated system, more than of anything else. To corroborate what I say, I will give you a very strong instance of it. One year ago last spring, I had a valuable herd of Short Horns under my care. Among them I had 13 cases of very acute foul, in animals from six to eighteen months old. Every one of the infected animals were being highly fed. In addition to oil-cake, they were getting a very liberal allowance of chopped wheat daily. About 20 younger ones were receiving chopped feed of the herd only oil-cake and bran. Now those 13 cases all happened among those that were being fed on wheat. Not a single case happened among those that were not fed on chopped wheat. All alike were kept scrupulously clean under foot. On reference to my note books, I observed for three previous years, the result had been the same. This illustrates plainly that foul-foot is the result of a disorganized or over-heated system." His remedy is first to give the animal a large dose of salt; then as soon as drenched, proceed to clean thoroughly the affected feet of all outside uncleanliness, then lift the foot, and pass a hair or bany comb through the hoof, drawing it several times to and fro; continue this gently till you have removed all dirt and noxious matter. The next operation is to poultice the foot for 24 hours at least—and longer if necessary—till the inflammation is thoroughly reduced; use bran, turpentine or linseed meal for this purpose.

For the Colonial Farmer. An Enquiry.

Mr. BURTON.—I set out a lot of apple trees from Woodstock one year ago last spring. They did well until last summer, when they became infested with green lice, which made them curl up, and they continued so until the frost killed them. Can you or any of your readers tell me what to do to clear the trees of the lice? J. B.

Miscellaneous.

COMPOST FOR PLANTS.—A good compost for most common house plants can be made up of one part clean sand, free from salt; one part mud from thoroughly decayed leaves; one part cow manure, well rotted and pulverized; two parts rich garden soil or better, well-decayed turf mould. About one fifth of the pot may be filled with materials for drainage, composed of oyster shells, charcoal, or broken bits of pots or crockery. A small quantity of moss placed over this prevents the earth from washing through.

Several kinds of roots should be given to supply cows with succulent food in winter. Common turnips do not keep so well as ruta bagas and mangold wurtzel, and sugar beets are still better for use in late spring.

Bury Your Potato Stalks.

As the old gentleman who was too late for the ferry-boat, said, he should be in good time for the next one, so I can say to those who have dug their potatoes, my advice will be in good season for next year. The potato fields of some farmers, after they have done digging, look very much as though a herd of swine, possessed of as many evil spirits as those that in olden times ran down a steep place and didn't come back, had been turned loose into it to ransack. Many small potatoes, under such circumstances, with an occasional large one, with the tops picturesquely scattered in groups of various dimensions, would be the natural result. If, however, vegetable matter is of any benefit to the soil, and agricultural scientists say it is, and they ought to know, why in the name of common sense don't people bury them? The potato itself removes a good deal of material from the soil, that is necessary to the succeeding crop. The potato top, with the difference of more woody fibre, holds much the same ingredients as the potato itself. If these substances can be retained in the soil by burying them up, then the time spent in doing so is anything but lost, to say nothing of the superior tilthness of this mode of disposing of them. Some will say they are in too great a hurry to do this. This is very much like saying they are in too great a hurry to haul their manure. If the tops are pulled for the diggers, let them be thrown in one space, and the dirt drawn over them, and the potatoes in the other space. If the diggers pull them, let them put them in the holes of the hills and they can hardly avoid burying them as they go along. Don't let them bleed to nothing like the skeleton of a ghost. —*Cor. Dirigo Rural.*

The Farmer's Hard Lot.

When a farmer can so manage his farm as to make "both ends of the year meet," even if it be with the most rigid economy, he should be contented with his lot. If we take a survey of the business men of our villages and cities, we find that only three or four in a hundred realize a competence for old age. Then imagine the unhappiness of those who sooner or later fail to support themselves and families respectively—the cares and anxieties that constantly produce and range from evening to evening. These men may apparently lead pleasant lives, as the outside world can hardly witness the emotions of a man who daily strains every financial nerve to meet his notes falling due on the bank. The time between 1 and 3 o'clock every day, in the city of New York, brings more anxiety to business men than all the farmers in the United States realize in a lifetime. No farmer, your lot is not a hard one. Your food may be plain and the cost of your costs may not be as fashionable as those of the merchants of the day; but when you lie upon your pillows your repose is sound and sweet. The horrors of protracted sickness seldom keep you awake at night, and in the morning as you go round to feed your flocks and view your crops that have visibly grown while you were in the arms of Morpheus, you may take more real enjoyment of life in one hour than many city merchants and manufacturers do in a year. Our advice, therefore, is, be not discouraged. The times may now be hard; but you are promised a "seed-time and harvest" to the end, and with hard labor and judicious management, you come out in the end victorious. —*Rural New Yorker.*

Home Decorations.

Perhaps your home is but scantily furnished, and you can afford few ornaments or pictures. Well, then, give us Nature's treasury to draw upon. Have flowers in your room. Your cost little, and the pleasure they give is beyond price. If you can have a flower for your window, so much the better. What can be more delicious than the sun's light streaming through flowers—their mingling of crimson, fuchsias or scarlet geraniums! To look out in the light through flowers—is not that poetry? To and to break the force of the sublimity by the tender resistance of green leaves. If you can train a nasturtium round the window, or some sweet peas, then you will have the most beautiful frame you can invent for the picture without, whether it be the busy crowd, or a distant landscape, or trees with their lights and shades, or the changes of the passing clouds. Any one may look through flowers for the price of an old shawl. And what pure taste and refinement does it not indicate on the part of the cultivator. A flower in the window sweetens the air, makes the room graceful, gives the sun's light a new charm, rejoices the eye,

and links nature with beauty. Then, as for pictures, what can be more beautiful than a group of tastefully arranged autumn leaves and ferns? Brilliant-hued leaves also make lovely transparencies. They can be arranged between two panes of glass, or simpler still, formed into a wreath, just fastening the edge of one leaf to another with waxing, and then hanging them in the sunshine by one of the stems. For a creditable ornament nothing is prettier than a simple fernery, which may be arranged by your own hands. Simply grown in a common flower-pot, with a little charcoal beneath a rich, loose soil, they will soon obtain a fine start. Placed in a basket upon the centre-table, no prettier ornament can well be imagined; the graceful, feathery fronds drooping over the sides, or standing upright in green and diaphanous beauty. A pretty, floral ornament may be made by filling a shallow dish with moss of different shades, bordering it with the trailing vine of the partridge berry. And the only price we have to pay for all these woodland treasures is exercise and air. More recuperating, invigorating, and restful, in nine cases out of ten, would be a walk in the country side than the after-dinner nap. It might not be on the first trial, but persevere all through these fully-ripened days, before the grand stockhouses of Nature, with her kind regards from heaven, will be superfluous fall openings, are over and locked up for the winter.

Curious Process for Making Cheese.

Among the curious methods for the manufacture of fine cheese, the process described by Mr. Joseph Harrison, of Derbyshire, England, will be of interest. The curd is not scalded, but heat being supplied after the milk is set for coagulation. The expansion of the whey, or its separation from the curd, is effected by putting the curd and under-press, being accomplished by a process quite different from anything known in practice in this country. But what will be surprising, perhaps, to most of our factory cheese makers, is the fact that the cheese made under this process is of the finest flavor and quality, and sells in the best markets of England for "top price" on a par with English cheddar. The curd is not scalded, but heat being supplied after the milk is set for coagulation. The expansion of the whey, or its separation from the curd, is effected by putting the curd and under-press, being accomplished by a process quite different from anything known in practice in this country. But what will be surprising, perhaps, to most of our factory cheese makers, is the fact that the cheese made under this process is of the finest flavor and quality, and sells in the best markets of England for "top price" on a par with English cheddar.

Mixing Soil Around Fruit Trees.

In disposing of the soil, which has been dug from the foundation for a new house a few years ago, it had been spread under the adjoining trees to the depth of ten or twelve inches, and at the present time every tree so treated presents an unhealthy appearance, which may gradually, but will most surely, end in premature death. This injudicious practice should be condemned on every hand, so that the ignorant, as well as the careless, may be forewarned of the evil consequences which must eventually ensue. If soil must be so disposed of, it should be as nearly as possible of the same texture and composition as that in which the trees are growing, and then only to a very limited depth, so as not to destroy, even for a short time, the natural prosperity of the surface soil, which is so largely produced by the roots themselves. In respect to those trees which are not so easily injured by this practice, and which will bear any reasonable amount of soil being laid over their roots, I will think the same rule in respect to the texture and composition should be as nearly as possible, adhered to, and if placed near the stem, a cavity quite round the tree, and down to the roots, should always be left, and of sufficient width to allow a free circulation of air, and also to admit of being cleared of any matter which may, and does, freely accumulate in it. The sloping bank system answers well in some situations, and has the advantage of showing more of the trunk, but if the surface of the ground incline to that particular point, or the soil be very tenacious, or if the ground be not of a thirsty nature, evils may accrue from an accumulation of too much water.—*The Gardener.*

The Useful Work of Insects.

Insects are useful in destroying dead vegetable substances, which are even more pernicious to man than animals in the same condition, and not only the soft and succulent portions, but even the solid wood is destroyed by them. In the immense forests of the tropics the ground would be covered, and new shoots be choked up by the rains of trees which had fallen by accident or age, and which it would require ages to disperse without the aid of insects. But no sooner is a tree fallen than one tribe of animals cut its bark to pieces, another bores holes in it in all directions, so that the moisture from dew or rain may stand, decompose and rot. Others come in to eat off the parts that are softened, and so on till it is entirely broken up and scattered, and this is done with such expedition that the tree will, in a few weeks, destroy and carry away the trunk of large trees without leaving a particle behind, and in places where, two or three years before, there was a populous town, if the inhabitants, as is frequently the case, have chosen to abandon it, there will be a very thick wood, and not a vestige of post to be seen.

SELL THE POOR STOCK.

If farmers have too much stock to carry through the winter, now is the time to select the oldest, meanest and poorest to sell. Feed well, fatten, and be sure to sell at some price. Never sell the best stock. If you keep stock at all, good stock is worth more to you than any one else. Weed out and sell the poor stock.

WINTERING BEES.

The requirements of wintering bees in cellars are dryness, darkness and pure air. The temperature of the atmosphere should not be warmer than 50° at any time, and to range the most of the time from 35° to 45°. The bees, as in bee-houses, should be rated an eighth of an inch, and the passages-way closed with wire-cloth. Very weak families, in both cellars and bee-houses, do not require the hives to be raised, as sufficient air will enter through the wire-cloth over the passages-way. The less the bees are disturbed the better in all methods of wintering; but if any families require feeding, let it be done in the evening, as bees are less disturbed at the close of the day, even when in total darkness, than at other times.

A NEW KIND OF BUTTER.

Butter, or what passes for such, is manufactured in England from the oleaginous deposits in the mud of the Thames. The collection of this substance has become a profitable industry, yielding the gatherers as much as three shillings and sixpence a day, and is done by planting in the mud at low tide small glasses, the ends of which, matted with hair and woolly fibres, which the fatty substances the water attach themselves. The source of the grease thus obtained is the drain-pipes of kitchens. The butter produced by some mysterious process from this refuse grease, is said to be unobjectionable so far as taste and appearance are concerned.

No Chinese Farmer Over Sows a Seed.

No Chinese farmer ever sows a seed of grain before it has been soaked in liquid manure diluted with water and has begun to germinate; and experience has taught him (so he asserts) that this operation not only tends to promote the growth and development of the plant, but also to protect the seed from the insects hidden within the ground.

Correspondence.

For the Colonial Farmer. Mr. ERTON.—A person signing himself G. Holland Snow, has been amusing the public through the columns of the Courier...

The Officers and Members of Valentine Lodge No. 283, Order of British Templars, to the White and Blue Lodges of New York City.

THE BROOKLYN CALAMITY. Our correspondent "Jerk" sends us the following account of the burning of the Brooklyn Theatre...

The following letter from Mr. Sergeant Cox, Chairman of the Middle Sex Board of Health was read at the recent trial of the incendiary...

NEWS BY TELEGRAPH. The Democratic Caucus has nominated Daniel S. Dickinson for Governor of New York...

DEATHS. At Hampton, 2nd inst., after a lingering illness, Mrs. Elizabeth C. Hunt, aged 78 years...

THE GREAT REMEDY. This is the only medicine in the world that cures all the diseases of the human system...

THE COLONIAL FARMER. The present political situation of the State is such that it is necessary for the farmer to be vigilant...

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