

THE GLEANER.

AND NORUMBERLAND, KENT, GLOUCESTER, AND RESTIGOUCHE
COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL.

New Series, Vol. I: *Nec aranearum sane textus ideo melior, quia ex se fila gignunt, nec noster vilior quia ex alienis libamus ut apes.*

No. 1.

Miramichi, Tuesday Morning, September 27, 1842.

THE GLEANER.

Agricultural Journal.

From the Massachusetts Plouan.

Laying Lands to Grass—new System.—Every farmer of experience has found it difficult to give every field a proper share of dressing in the barn yard. One lot is ploughed, manured and planted; a second lot is treated in the same manner; then a third, and so on. But as it has been customary to plant one lot of grass in succession in order to rot the sod thoroughly, half a dozen years are required to prepare three lots of grass. Now before the lapse of this time the first lot may need ploughing again, though not one half of the good tillage lands of the farm have had a single visit from the manure cart. The consequence generally is that a proportion of the tillage land lies unproductive, and the owner says he is not in his power to make farther improvement for want of manure.

Under that old system of the plough land was turned over except that portion which bid fairest for a good crop of grain, and all those which lay low, or between highland meadow, were suffered to lie unproductive, or to run to bushes and grass.

Now the new system which we have been practising for many years past professes to relieve the farmer from this difficulty. Instead of ploughing and sowing so many acres as to exhaust all the manure of them, we have been urging the propriety of planting less and of keeping more in grass. And in favor of this we have been offering to farmers various weighty reasons.

It is known to all men of experience in these matters that hedges are very expensive, and that they are resorted to in most parts of England for the purpose of fitting the land for a more profitable use—for grass. Very few calculations being remunerated from the profits of the corn field or the potatoe field without taking into account a whole series of crops, including not less than three or four cuts of grass to wind up the series. It is quite common to hear people say they expect no net income from their hedges, but that their harvests will repay all the outlays necessarily made in tilling.

It is quite clear then that the hand tilling, or a part of it, can be dispensed with, no loss will ensue to the cultivator. On the other hand he will be convinced that there is much in every way.

If he can renovate his mowing grounds, or a portion of them, without going through with a tedious process of tilling, he not only saves labour, but he spares his land, he avoids subjecting it to an exhausting crop and he can thus give every field a dressing in due season, because each will require but little manure.

It is quite a common practice to turn a greensward field in the spring and plant it with corn and potatoes without applying any manure during the first season—a little lime and plaster being put in the hill set the

corn growing—and tolerable harvests are often obtained under such culture, reliance being placed on the rotten green sward to carry out the corn, &c. to maturity.

Now instead of letting corn and potatoes have the exclusive benefit of a rotten green sward we may rather let the next year's grass have it, for grass is more profitable than grain. Turn green sward land one month after haying is over and you secure a rowen crop under the sod, more valuable as manure than the grass you turned under in May for corn, consequently but little manure will be needed in addition to give the field a good dressing for grass.

It is agreed by all observers that there is no comparison between grass and grain as exhausters of the soil; that it is doubtful whether grass is an exhauster of the soil. If grass then is the principal burthen of the field, there will be no kind of difficulty in making the field rich; and every one knows that in a great proportion of New England, grass is more profitable than grain.

But is it feasible to keep lands in grass without adopting a system of rotation, embracing corn, grain, and potatoes? This is the point to be proved, and the remainder of this article will be devoted to it, promising that we do not recommend the entire abandonment of any article which the farmer may want for his own use.

Green sward land may be renovated to better purpose by turning it in August and sowing grass seed on the furrow, than by sowing the seed in the spring in company with spring grain. For proof of this we appeal to all who have tried it. We have within four years persuaded hundreds to adopt the practice of sowing grass seed on the green sward furrow; and we have heard of but just two instances of failure where the rules which we pointed out were observed. These two were in Beverly, where the land was dry and sandy, and the seed was thrown on in a very dry time.

It is true we have heard farmers say they had tried fall seeding and did not like it, on enquiry we found they had sowed as late as October—some with manure—some without manure—many had sowed in September, after corn or potatoes had been taken off—or in August, on stubble land, turned over but not manured. The consequence was they did not well succeed—the winter killed the roots or the dry weather scorched root and branch.

On the other hand we have heard hundreds complain of the failure of spring seeding within the last two years. When sown with oats, particularly, if the oats did not so spring up as to choke the grass, when the oats were removed the sudden admission of the sun, on plains fairly exposed to the rays, has proved very destructive to the young plant.

It is not contended that all fields can with equal ease be turned so flat as to be fit for sowing without tilling. We speak of the thousands and thousands of acres, lying within forty miles of the Capital, which may be so turned and sown. Any good plough will turn any tolerably easy land flat enough to be sowed down; and it may be laid

more even at this season than in the spring when the land is full of hard lumps.

But in this system we are not confined to the common tillage lands of the farm. We plough all our low grounds that will bear a team. We plough the strips lying between meadow and upland. We plough glades of land that have borne nothing but brakes and rushes, and low blueberry bushes. We plough lands that are not suitable for planting, on account of the springs that gush up in the early part of the year; and we lay these lands as even as a carrot bed. Lands that we could not meddle in May, we can manage with perfect ease in August.

By turning the sod under and keeping it there, we render the soil more light, and it holds in grass two years longer than it will when it has been thoroughly rotted; and there can be no question but that the green crop of grass, &c. which we turn under will be very suitable manure for the grass that is to follow. Grass must be as good manure for grass as rye straw for a new growth of rye, or as corn stalks for a new growth of corn. But a light top dressing is required in all cases, to insure a good growth for the scythe next season, and to guard against the frost of the coming winter.

As a general rule, the best time for sowing grass seed is about the last week in August. If sown earlier than this, we are in more danger of summer killing—if later, we run more risk from winter frosts. It frequently answers well to sow rich land in the month of September, and we have known very good swaths to be cut in the summer, when the seed was sown the preceding October; but we cannot recommend this late sowing as a safe practice.

If grass is not an exhauster of the soil—and we cannot perceive that it is—how rich any tolerable farm may be made, when the principal product is grass? How light, also, the labour of managing a grass farm, compared with one that has numerous acres in tillage? Lastly, and above all, compare the profits of grass with the profits of corn, or of any kind of grain, in the district extending 40 miles each way from the capital, and you will see the propriety of so filling our own markets with hay as to put a veto on all importations on the article from other States. We would rather buy grain than hay.

Let nothing be lost—save Manures.—Great quantities of manure may be saved on every farm, provided proper attention is paid. Farms that are worth having, have on them all that is necessary to make them rich. To say therefore, as some have done, that they can make no improvements because there is no manure that can be purchased is wholly erroneous. Few are so situated as to be able to purchase manure to good advantage; yet we see that a whole town or county may be much improved by proper effort. This could not happen if it was necessary to purchase manure for the purpose, for if one should purchase of another he would diminish the other's means.

A wood lot will become rich in a few years by its own means,—so rich

as to yield an abundance of timber and wood, and then several crops of grain without any artificial appliances. So will a field, if we are cautious not to subtract too much from it. Pasture lands, it is quite notorious, do not grow poor by depasturing—and we cannot perceive that mowing grounds become poor though they may be robbed annually of a ton of hay for ten years in succession. When we plough them again they yield as well as if we had shorn off the hay for only three successive years, and then turned them to tillage.

A farm, then, may be made to grow rich from its own resources; and he who folds his hands and says my farm must remain poor because I cannot purchase manure, may be classed with the idler in the scriptures who said, 'there is a lion in the way.'

At this season the sink drain and the back house should be so managed that no offensive scent may be perceived. Foul air near a dwelling house should never be allowed by native Americans; none can stand it in August but tenants that have been used to kennels, and that have lungs nursed by putrid fumes. Loads of loam should be carted to the vicinity of such places, and a few shovels full should be thrown on to cover up all the offensive matter at least twice in a week. The hog pen also must be near the kitchen for convenience of feeding; and this will prove no nuisance to him who thinks it important to secure valuable manures. Loam will sweeten the pen, and after doing this service will enrich the fields much faster than if it had always remained a stranger to the pigs.

Every article of manure that can be gathered from the barn yard, from the hog pen, and from the house, will be wanted before September, by every farmer who understands how to manage his mowing grounds. This is the month to prepare for another hay harvest, and he who neglects his farm in August will have but little work for next July, and but little hay for sale.

Try half an Acre.—A farmer who is oppressed with doubts whether he shall ever be remunerated for the outlay he may make in attempting to bring his low bogs into English should begin on a small scale; he may try half an acre or less. Let him try one square rod if he will not venture more; by trials of this kind he will be able to calculate the cost of reclaiming an acre. There are various modes of bringing these lands into good bearing, and every farmer of ingenuity will judge according to circumstances what mode will be best to be pursued; meantime he cannot fail of deriving some advantage from the failures and the success of others who have gone before him.

To preserve Eggs.—Apply with a brush a solution of gum-arabic to the shells, or immerse the eggs therein, let them dry, and afterwards pack them in dry charcoal dust. This prevents their being affected by any alterations of temperature.

Sweet Corn Pudding.—Take three large ears of fresh sweet corn, split the kernels lengthwise of the ear, and with the back of the knife scrape off the corn, leaving the hulls on the cob;