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Nec aranearum sane telas ideo melior, quia ex se fila gignunt, nec noster vilior quia ex alienis libamus ut apes.

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THE GLEANER.

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CULTURE OF TURNIPS.
Continued.

The quantity of seed sown should always be liberal, for by sowing too little the crops have frequently failed, and the attacks of the fly are uniformly found to be more severe upon a thin than upon a thick crop. Two pounds per acre is about the quantity generally sown, but Mr Coke of Holkham, a celebrated cultivator of turnips, allows three pounds per acre, and his crops are uniformly good. If the plants are too thick, it is easy to take out the supernumerary ones, and this ensures a more equal crop throughout a field. When the plants are braiding, it will be found of great advantage if the leaves of the seedlings touch each other, for if too thin, the plants will be uniformly found to be tardy and stunted in their growth.

The quality of the seed is also a matter of the first importance, and as there are no rules for sowing the seeds of the different sorts, to ensure its being good and of the right sort, every farmer should grow his own. Care must be taken, however, when plants are cultivated for seed, that they do not grow in the vicinity of cabbages, colewort, or even wild mustard and charlock, for these being of the same class with turnips, the pollen from their flowers is apt to spoil the turnip seed, being carried from the one plant to the other by the wind or bees. The best way of collecting seed is to select samples of such sorts as bear a good character, and sow them in different lots. The best roots can be chosen when they arrive at maturity, and planted out in good soil of considerable depth, at from fourteen to eighteen inches apart. The different varieties should be grown at considerable distances from each other, to prevent the possibility of their mixing, and thus producing hybrid sorts. In July or August following the seeds will be ripe and can be thrashed in any convenient method. The stalks should not be too ripe when cut, or a loss of seed will be sustained, both from shaking and the depredations of birds. The stems of the Swedish kind are sometimes so long that they require to be supported by stakes. This plan of procuring seed is very often neglected, although it is the only method of procuring it really good.

Turnips are regarded as a complete fallow crop, and on this account are introduced into that part of the rotation which closes one course and opens another. When drill-sown, the land is ploughed with a deep furrow early in the autumn, when the grain crop is removed. Some farmers give the ground three ploughings, one in the direction of the former furrows, the next across, and the third as the furrows are wished to lie. This must depend upon the nature of the soil, however; heavy clay lands requiring more work than those of a lighter description. The harrow and roller are also used to pulverise the ground, and

the use of the latter especially is thought to improve the crop. The weight of the roller must depend upon the soil and weather; care being taken that it is of sufficient weight to break any lumps that may occur. A heavy roller has been recommended to be used after the second ploughing, as it is said to prevent moisture from escaping too rapidly. If the land is rolled after the second ploughing, and allowed to stand for a week or more, numbers of weeds will spring up, which are destroyed by the third ploughing and other operations. All perennial roots should be carefully picked out, and, unless the land is very foul, these three ploughings will be found sufficient. The ground is next formed into ridgelets, and the manure applied between the rows.

If lime is used as a manure for turnips, it will be applied in either of the modes recommended when treating of that manure. Well-rotted dung is of the greatest importance, and is given in quantities varying from 12 to 20 tons per acre, as the state of the ground or variety of turnip may require. In carting the manure, single horse carts should be used, as they do least damage to the ridges. The manure is laid down in small heaps, at equal distances. Care should be taken to spread the manure equally; and to ensure this, some farmers are in the habit of sending an experienced workman before the spreaders, whose duty it is to make the heaps as uniform in size as possible, and divide the manure equally between each row. The spreaders then lay it evenly at the bottom of the drills, and the plough immediately follows, reversing the ridgelets, and forming new ones over the dung, which effectually covers it.

When the soil is light, and the land is only to receive one ploughing for the grain crop which is to follow, it is sometimes the practice to make the drills for the turnips in a contrary direction to that in which the ridges for the grain are to lie. By this cross ploughing the manure is spread very equally; but it cannot be easily accomplished on soils of a wet, retentive nature. No crop which is raised so well adapted for the application of any kind of manure as turnips. Ashes, rape-dust, bone-dust, oil-cake, sea-weed, and numberless other manures are all admirably calculated to produce large crops of this vegetable, which, when consumed upon the ground by sheep, must communicate a high degree of fertility to the soil.

The seed should be sown as soon after the manure is covered in as possible, and while the land is fresh and moist. Drill-sowing is almost uniformly practised, although the broadcast method is used, in spite of all experience. Turnip seed requires to be as near the manure as possible, and it is only by drilling that this can be accomplished. It is a matter of great importance that the working of the ground, the laying in of the manure, and sowing the seed, should follow each other as closely as possible, that the seed may have all the moisture from both ground and manure. In dry seasons, the seed should be sown deeper than when the wea-

ther is wet; and when the land is very dry, it has been found of considerable benefit to moisten the manure before applying it to the land.

The plants will, in general, make their appearance about ten days or a fortnight after they are sown, according to the quality of the soil, and the state of the weather. When the second or rough leaves are about two inches high, a horse-hoeing is given between the ridgelets, to cut up the weeds close to the turnip plants. The hand hoe is then introduced, to thin the plants, leaving them of from eight to ten inches apart, the Swedish kind being somewhat wider. This distance is thought quite sufficient to ensure plants neither too large nor too small in size. The soft turnip, when allowed too great a distance, is apt to become very large, and its nutritive juices are found to be quite lost. The Swedish and other hard turnips should be allowed sufficient room to become as large as possible, for their nature is such that there is no fear of their being over bulky. The hand hoeing and thinning are generally performed by women and boys, and three expert hoers will go over an acre a day. A few days after the hoeing, a small swing plough is used to make small ridgelets between the rows; and when weeds are still in abundance, it will be necessary again to horse or hand hoe the ground, which levels the intermediate ridgelet. After all weeds are thoroughly destroyed, and the thinning accomplished, the earth is sometimes gathered up about the plants by means of a small plough, with two mould boards. This operation however, is objected to, on the plea that the earth prevents the bulb from growing, and also when the produce is to be consumed on the ground, the sheep may be injured by falling into the hollows between the rows. On wet soils, the earthing up is very beneficial, as it allows the free discharge of superabundant moisture; and when the weather is frosty, the earth is an excellent protection to the plants. Some farmers do not use the small plough between the rows, contenting themselves with hand and horse hoeing, which, when the soil is dry and well prepared, are thought quite sufficient. However, if couch-grass and other weeds infest the soil, the ploughing is the easiest way of getting rid of them. The expense of weeding and thinning turnips varies; but ten shillings an acre may be considered as about the sum.

The produce and quality of this must vary, like every other crop, according to the nature of the soil and season. A good crop of the white globe turnip will weigh twenty five or thirty tons an acre, and even forty, if the season is favorable. The Swedish and yellow kind weigh a few tons less. Of late, there have been instances of much heavier crops; and it is stated in the Farmer's Magazine, that above sixty tons have been raised on an English acre, the leaves not included. Such an extraordinary crop however, must have been produced by larger applications of manure than usual, or from lime having been applied to the soil previously, and the fertility communicated in no way exhausted. It is

stated by Sir John Sinclair, that on a farm belonging to the late Mr Rennie of Phantassie, the produce per acre was thirty tons of Swedes, and forty tons of the common globe; the Swedes were manured at the rate of twelve, and the common turnips at ten tons per acre. The largeness of this crop was attributed to the circumstance of the land being limed at the rate of 300 bushels per Scots acre, though so far back as sixteen years ago. It appears, from a paper published by the Kilsyth Farmer's Society, that, in a competition which took place in that parish, the produce per acre was—yellow, 46 tons 8 cwt., Aberdeen or green top yellow, 40 tons 17 cwt.; Dale's Hybrid, 35 tons 21 cwt.

Turnips may either be consumed on the field where they grow, on grass fields, in fold yards, or in feeding houses; and in the vicinity of large towns, they are sold to cowfeeders. The greater part are eaten by sheep, which sometimes belong to fashers; and in this case the turnips are sold growing, at so much per acre. The price depends upon the weight of the crop, being greatest near large cities. It is stated that fields of turnips near London have been sold as high as eight or ten guineas an acre, which is considered an average price; but in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, thirty pounds, and even a larger sum, has been got for an acre of good turnips. Turnip crops, when intended to be consumed on the ground by sheep, are divided into lots, by means of hurdles or nets, in order to have them regularly consumed. When the first lot is nearly consumed, the shells, or parts which the sheep have left, are taken out of the ground, and a new portion lotted out to them. It is usual to leave the part of the field just cleaned open, for the sheep to lie in, and to consume any nutritive matter which may remain in the shells. Sometimes a part of the turnips are taken from the field before the sheep are turned in; but this must depend upon the nature of the soil. Cases will occur where the soil will be so much benefitted by the sheep, that it is more profitable to consume the whole; and in very rare instances, the ground may be so rich, that the succeeding crop will be injured by eating any part of the turnips on the field. In wet weather, the turnips ought to be carted to an adjacent grass field, it being thought injurious to allow the sheep to lie on the turnip field during rain.

A cheap and expeditious mode of lifting turnips has been practised in Ireland. The tops are first cut off with a scythe and given to young cattle, and the bulbs are ploughed out of the soil which being afterwards harrowed, they are left entirely free of the ground. The turnips are then gathered into carts, commencing at the top of the field and going down regularly so that none may be bruised; and it is calculated that six labourers will lift an acre of turnips by this mode in a day.

Young cattle and sheep when shedding their teeth, are unable to break whole turnips, and in this case it is necessary to cut the bulb into slices, which may be done either by a chopping knife, or a machine made