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Agricultural Journal.

From the Albany Cultivator.

SPRING GRAIN.

Expecting the liability of spring wheat to be attacked by the insect improperly termed "weevil," we believe it may be assumed as a rule, that spring grains generally succeed best when sown as early in the season as the ground can be brought into a proper state to receive the seed. For oats, in particular, and especially on light soils, our experience leads us to prefer an early seed time. In this latitude, the ground frequently becomes so far settled during this month, that warm, light soils may be sown. The proper quantity of seed per acre, is a matter on which much diversity of opinion prevails. From one and a half to *five* bushels of oats are sown by different farmers. In our opinion, the quantity of seed should be varied according to the nature of the soil, and the time of sowing; so that no fixed rule can be laid down. Of the grain we are now speaking of, we should use from two to three bushels per acre, in the ordinary mode of sowing. And we would here remark, that our experience has shown that *less* seed is required on *rich* than on thin soil. The reason is this. That in the first case the abundant food the plant receives induces it to *tiller*, or spread; whereas in the latter case but a single seed stem, perhaps, is thrown up. It should therefore be made an object to sow on thin land as much seed as will be sure to cover the ground at once with a sufficient number of plants, for if this is not done, weeds, or some foul growth, will be sure to infest the soil to the injury of the crop.

As regards the practice of sowing four or five bushels per acre, as we have mentioned is sometimes done, we must confess we have seen no satisfactory evidence of its expediency.

For barley, a loamy soil is considered preferable; we have, however, seen good crops grown on quite stiff clays, properly drained and worked. We have sown from two and a half to three bushels per acre.

For wheat, loamy soils, which contain some lime, are best. We prefer sowing about two bushels of seed to the acre. We remarked above, however, that the quantity of seed depended somewhat on the *time* of sowing—thus, early sown grain has more time to tiller, and it actually will spread much more than late sown. In our remarks about the quantity of seed, we have had only in view the ordinary modes of sowing; no doubt is entertained but by the adoption of other modes, much seed might be saved. Sowing or planting in drills, by machines, has been much practiced in England, and to some extent in this country, and so far as we have known with success. *Dibbling*, or planting in hills, is also somewhat practiced in England under the *allotment* system. In this way a few quarts only of seed is enough for an acre, and the product is very great, making an average in some districts, of forty-eight bushels per acre. But it must be recollected that under this system the ground is hoed and kept clean while the crop is growing—the cheapness of labor, and the dearness of land, justifying the course. But the American farmer would hardly find his account in bestowing so much labor in proportion to the quantity of ground and the quantity of produce.

We have said that spring wheat is liable to be injured by an insect. We think that which is sown early is most subject to injury from this cause. If the sowing is deferred till the latter part of May, it is thought the *season* of the worm becomes past before the wheat is sufficiently advanced to be injured by it. But as the late sown wheat is more liable to injury from rust, &c., than early sown, the farmer must make his calculations as he best can, which enemy is most formidable, or in what course lies his greatest chance of success.

Peas, for early use, cannot be sown too soon after the ground is dry enough to work. Select a warm piece of ground, rather sandy, and do not put on too much rank or strong manure, as it tends to throw the peas to much into vines.

The pea crop is a very profitable one in many situations. Sown on a sod furrow, it furnishes an excellent preparation for wheat, or any other crop. Very hot weather seems not to be favorable to the *filling* of peas; therefore it is advisable to sow them so early that they may get well advanced before the hottest and dryest part of the summer comes on.

Peas and oats are sometimes sown together, and are considered profitable. Ground into meal, they form an excellent food for fattening hogs and other animals, and in sections where Indian corn cannot well be grown, are highly esteemed.

Raising Early Cucumbers.—H. G. Dickerson, of Lyons, Wayne county, N. Y. one of the most successful cultivators of garden vegetables, adopts the following mode of raising early cucumbers. He makes his hot-bed at the usual time, and when the soil is placed upon the stack of manure, pieces of turf are placed just below the surface, on which the seed are planted. If the grass of this turf is alive, it is to be put upside downwards. On the arrival of warm weather, and when the soil in the open air becomes fit for cultivation, these pieces of turf are removed entire, with the young plants upon them, and placed in highly manured ground where they are finally to grow. In this way the roots are taken up without the least mutilation, consequently no check is given to their growth. Afterwards, whenever there is any probability of a night frost, each hill is covered with a bell glass. These glasses have a small opening at top, which prevents the sun scorching the plants in case they are not removed in time; they are obtained at the glass-works in the neighbourhood, for four cents a piece; but where they cannot be had, boxes with panes inserted, will answer nearly as well.

By this means cucumbers fit for the table, were raised the past season, by the first of sixth month, (June.)

Farming Experience.—*Mr. Editor*—In farming, as well as in other operations, mere theory and speculation is worth but little; *practical experience* is what is wanted to uphold the business. The results of experience in farm management, are what farmers want to read and study. Every farmer has a system of management, which to his own mind seems most correct. It may be the system practiced by his father, of increasing to the greatest possible extent, his number of acres. Now I would never leave the old way for a new one, so long as it was certain that the old way was the best, nor would I follow the old track for the reason that it was old, when convinced, after careful examination that a new one was to be preferred.

Reading agricultural papers, may perhaps be said to constitute the first step towards improvement. This reading gives an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the practical experience of farmers. It is much to be desired that more of this class of farmers could be induced to give their views. There is too frequently a reluctance to writing. This reluctance should be overcome. It is not to be expected that plain farmers should always frame sentences in the style of *literary* writers, nor is this necessary—give us the *facts* in an intelligible manner. Any man that can give his ideas to his neighbor in conversation, can do this and this is all that is necessary.

BLACK SEA WHEAT.

Mr Tucker—This wheat is found to be so valuable a variety of spring grain in this and some other of the New-England States, that I am disposed to trouble you with another letter on the subject. It is evidently a very hardy grain, and not liable to suffer from the depredations of insects. It will grow and yield a fair crop, on almost every variety of soil, rich or poor, on very rich land it fills well even where it is inclined to lodge.

It has been suggested that it would be profitable to introduce this wheat into those parts of Michigan and Illinois, where the winter variety suffers much damage, and yields poorly on account of the luxuriance in growth.

Most farmers here fail by letting this Black sea wheat stand too long. It produces less bran, and the bread is whiter and sweeter, where the crop is gathered in a greenish state. When allowed to stand upon the ground till perfectly ripe, there is a black mould, or substance, which frequently may be seen between the lobes on the belly of the grain.

I believe this grain was first shipped to Portland in the State of Maine, and it proved to be so valuable in that State, that the Kennebec County Agricultural Society have recently made two additional importations from the Black Sea, both of which have proved entire failures. In 1841, they had forwarded through the agency of Thomas Cordis of Boston, sixteen bushels. It was distributed, and sown by different individuals in that county, on various soils in the different locations, and in all cases it mildewed. Some was sown again with no better success in 1842. In that year, through the same agency, they procured about the same quantity, which proved to be the same variety, and they met with equal bad success. They were in hopes to have obtained some of the Siberian wheat in the last attempt, but were disappointed. I understand they are about to try again their success in another importation. We have proved by actual experiment, that not only this, but other kinds of winter and spring wheat will produce better to change the seed back and forth every year, from east to west, and from west to the east, between Maine and Michigan. I understand that Mr. Cordis has a nephew at Smyrna who is happy to confer favors on such as are striving to improve the agriculture of the country.

I sowed this season on about two acres, near 3 bushels of seed, from which we harvest 71 1-2 bushels of plump wheat. I took to Sprague's mill in this town, some of this Black Sea wheat, which was cleaned in "Bailey & Rich's Smut Mill," (which, by the way, has proved to be the best machine to clean *damp grain*, that has ever been introduced among us.) There carefully measured in a sealed measure, seven bushels, which, weighed on the scales, 478 lbs. and 3 ounces, which is 68 lbs. 5 ounces to the bushel, after it was manufactured into flour. The yield was 360 lbs. 8 ounces, or 51 lbs. 7 ounces of flour to the bushel, and 14 lbs. and 10 ounces of bran and amiddlings—waste, 2 lbs. 5 ounces. To every 60 pounds of wheat, the produce is 45 pounds of flour.

There appeares to be two kinds cultivated here, the white and red chaff. The heads of both varieties are guarded by a stout and long beard. The red chaff is generally preferred to the white. The berry of this wheat is large and of a dark color, very hard, and not subject to shed in the gathering; it requires a threshing machine to beat out the grain; it also requires more moisture to swell the berry, and is not as liable to grow by standing out in the field as any other kind cultivated here.

S. W. Jewett.

From the British American Cultivator.

AGRICULTURAL KNOWLEDGE.

In the *Farmer's Monthly Miscellany* we find an address by Professor Johnston. The subject of the address is the "Diffusion of Agricultural Knowledge." The following quotations may serve to give our readers some idea of the importance which the learned Professor attaches to liberal agricultural education. In the course of his remarks he concludes that the most efficient means that can be adopted to produce the blessings to the agricultural population, that he so fully enumerated, was by establishing cheap agricultural papers, of which he says nine have lately been started in Scotland. In confirmation of the Professor's opinion, we would mention one fact which is too notorious to be contradicted. Twelve years ago agriculture in the United States was in the lowest possible state of degradation but owing to the agency of cheap agricultural magazines, the improvements which have been subsequently made, are without a parallel in the history of agriculture in any age or country. There is in that country upwards of fifty agricultural papers, all of which have their thousands, and some their tens of thousands of paying subscribers; and the beneficial influence that those journals have upon the minds of the general community, can scarcely be imagined, much less described. There are but few who have formed a correct estimate of the requisite support which enables a publisher to afford his work of an unusually cheap rate. It requires a large circulation to even cover the actual costs of a cheap production. For instance the *Cultivator*, with its limited circulation, has involved its editor in a loss of £500, besides upwards of three years valuable time. With a circulation of 10,000 copies, at the average price of two shilling and six pence each, he would have sustained no loss, and would have been moderately remunerated for his time. There is every probability that this circulation will very shortly be had, as the interest in favour of the enterprise is gradually on the increase. But suppose by way of illustration, that agricultural improvment should become the popular question of the day, and that 30,000 of the inhabitants of Canada should before the lapse of the present year resolve to become readers of the *Cultivator*; with this support at the low price mentioned, the publisher could afford to issue *four extra numbers, or a volume* of 512 *pages*, illustrated with more than 100 costly engravings,—and this valuable volume could be offorded for the very low price of two shillings and six pence. If those who desire cheap and valuable agricultural information would bear these facts in mind and act accordingly, it might possibly so turn out that the advantages and results we have adverted to would be even more than realised in Canada.

The next subject is agriculture in schools. Those of our readers favourable to this project will oblige us by informing us of their views, at their earliest convenience.

"There is in some parts of the country and in the heads of some a great deal more knowledge than in other parts of the country and in the heads of others; one the first object is to do away with this inequality—to remove those heaps and level the ground just as we do with our fields, so that uniformity of knowledge may be diffused throughout the whole population and all practical farmers may be on a level, and able to compete with one another, each having the same end in view, and the same means of attaining it.

"You know if you send missionaries abroad into heathen countries in order to convert the natives—as in India among the Hindoos, or in Africa among the Hottentots or Caffres—they seldom succeed in making converts of the grown up people, but they get hold of the children and establish schools—and no country has been so successful in this respect as Scotland. They get a great number of the children and inculcate right principles into their minds before prejudice take possession of them; and thus they are enabled to train up a new race of converts. In like manner we hope to improve the agriculture of our country more and more, by getting hold of the young minds, and teaching them principles which their fathers understand with difficulty, and are sometimes unwilling to receive even when they do understand them. This has been done long in Prussia; in every one of the schools of that country agriculture is taught, and books are prepared for the purpose, one of which is put into the hands of every child the instant he leaves the cottage for the school. In Ireland the National Commissioners have introduced the teaching of agriculture into the national school. There are 3000 of these schools, and agriculture is to be taught in every one of them; and schoolmasters are now being