

THE GLEANER:

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

Old Series]

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

[COMPRISED 13 VOLUMES.

NEW SERIES, VOL. VIII.]

MIRAMICHI, MONDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1849.

[NUMBER 9.

Agricultural Journal.

From the Canada Wool Grower.

WHAT SHALL BE DONE TO IMPROVE AGRICULTURE?

This is a question of great interest to every practical farmer in our country; and an answer to it, if it can be given, will confer unspeakable benefits to the agricultural interest. The subject is one, I am aware, that opens a wide field for investigation; and I do not propose to give an answer that will cover the whole ground. If I can aid, however, in answering the question, so as to lead farmers who are desirous of information, to make vigorous efforts to advance this all important interest, I shall be satisfied.—Let me then say that the farmer who would improve, must devote himself entirely to his vocation—rising early and taking the morning air, and vigorously devoting his powers to the work before him. In the preparation of his lands for crops, he must not fail to have it in the best possible condition; thoroughly pulverised, so that each kernel of grain may have a genial soil prepared for its reception, from which it may in due time spring forth to gladden the heart of the farmer. Let him not neglect this. The great superiority of the farmers of England and the Continent, consists in their careful attention to the preparation of the ground for their various crops; in many instances, on the Continent particularly, their lands having the appearance of a finely cultivated garden bed.

Another indispensable requisite is, "drain thoroughly" wherever needed.—Not only is it necessary to drain wet and marshy spots of land, but wherever, from the nature of the soil, water stands beneath the surface, so as to prove injurious to the growth of plants, nothing but judicious draining will render it suited to production of crops in all their vigor and healthfulness. Let no farmer then fail to give attention to draining, wherever, either from surface water, or water retained from a retentive subsoil, his land is in a condition unfavorable to the production of a first rate crop. Bear in mind also, that in many instances, grass lands need draining as much as those designed for grain. Often the lands which are appropriated to grazing, are by a superabundance of water, rendered almost useless; the grasses are coarse, inferior in quality, give a bad flavor to cheese and butter, and render it impossible to manufacture either, that will command the best price in market.

Another important matter for the farmer is, the preparation and use of manure. Grain needs feeding as well as the animals; of this there can be no question.—Let then the attention of the farmer be directed to securing from everything that can be collected, an increase to the manure of the farm. Let him bear in mind, that weeds, muck, or the deposits of swamps, are all valuable to be mixed with the straw and litter of the farm; and let him also preserve the liquid manure from his cattle from water; on many crops, the application of this, has produced astonishing results; but it should ever be preserved and mixed with the solid excrements of the animals, and will add greatly to the fertilising qualities of the manure. If necessary, and every good farmer will ascertain this, apply lime to your land where it has been exhausted by your crops; and above all, ascertain the analysis of the grains you cultivate, and when you have ascertained the quantity of fertilising materials that have been taken off with the crop, be sure to return it again in the shape of the proper manures: if you do not do this, your land will become exhausted and your farming unprofitable.—Don't neglect this if you would succeed. Here lies one great difficulty with American farming—a want of knowledge of the materials taken off with the crops, and a neglect to return carefully to the soil, in the way of suitable manures, the fertilising properties required to enable the land to sustain the crops to be grown. Chemistry will tell you what are the con-

stituent properties of your grain: what of your various manures; and when known, every farmer may understandingly manage his farm, and preserve, and even increase, its fertility. This cannot too strongly be urged upon the farmer; and upon a careful and enlightened attention to these suggestions, it cannot I think, be doubted, that improvement, such as would be abundantly satisfactory would be the result.

In connection with the proper maturing of the land, let me call attention to its *cleanly cultivation*. Weeds will grow and if not eradicated, the nutriment which the grain should receive, will be divided between the grain and the weeds. How little attention it would seem, from observing the crops in different portions of our country, is given to this matter.—Many a field of corn can be found, where the weeds are to be seen as far as the field can be observed; and when the corn is harvested, astonishment is manifested because only twenty bushels of corn are obtained to the acre, while a neighbor has secured fifty bushels. The difference has arisen, in part, from the attention given by the latter, to the extermination of every thing that could prejudice his crop. What is true of this crop, is applicable, more or less, to every other; and no farmer can be eventually successful, who does not thoroughly and systematically cleanse his lands. You cannot afford to grow weeds and grain on the same field. The land will not reward you for so doing. It may, indeed, give you an abundant crop of the former, but of the latter the return will be most unsatisfactory.

There are other suggestions which I may give at another time; but let me ask the reader, are not these worthy of your attentive observance if you are a farmer? Would not every farmer be benefitted materially by giving heed to them? Is there a man who will say, it is no consequence whether I attend to these suggestions or not, I can succeed as well as others who have never been so particular in their farming operations. But let me ask you what has become of these farmers? Gone to other regions, after exhausting their soil; their crops so diminished as no longer to pay the expense of cultivation, and will you by pursuing a similar course, render it necessary for you to follow them? I leave the question for you to answer.

THE FARMER'S ODE.

Let Commerce spread her flowing sails
And Trade her path pursue;
Without the farmer what avails,
Or what without him can they do?

Let learned Divines and Lawyers boast,
Let Physic follow in her train,
The Farmer's skill is valued most
In making golden sheaves of Grain.

Let Statesmen rack their brains with care
Some mighty project to fulfil;
The Farmer's wiser projects are
His flocks to feed, his grounds to till.

His orisons at early dawn,
To the Almighty Power he makes,
Then treads the dew-bespangled lawn,
Or pleasure in light labor takes.

He hears the robin's early song,
And rude note of cheerful swains,
While heedful of his crops, along
He travels o'er his own domains.

A stranger he's to fretful care;
No busy scenes perplex his life,
Contented with his homely fare,
His children and a prudent wife.

He labors to improve his soil,
While Ceres shows him her regard,
And blesses all his careful toil,
In fruitful crops for his reward.

No prodigal nor careless waste
On his domain is ever found;
With open hand he yet will haste
To help the poor till they abound.

And now his earthly labor's past,
And old in virtue he has grown,

To crown his well-spent life at last
Kind heaven shall claim him for its
own.

From Miss Leslie's "House Book." DOMESTIC DYES.

RED.

Having boiled in brass or earthen, two gallons of clear, soft water, half a pound of wheat bran, and three ounces of powdered alum; strain it, return it to the kettle, and put in half an ounce of cream of tartar, and half an ounce of cochineal; each tied in a separate thin muslin bag. Boil it about a quarter of an hour. Then dip in the article to be dyed, and proceed in the usual manner.

If you wish a deeper red, use a smaller proportion of water, and more of the cochineal.

YELLOW.

Procure from a drug store, a sufficient quantity of tumeric powder; tie it up in a muslin rag, and boil it in alum water, or in skim milk. Have ready the article to be dyed, (which if not quite new, must be made perfectly clean by washing.)—When the tumeric liquid has arrived at the tinge you wish, take out the bag, put in the article, (which must previously be wet thoroughly,) and give it a boil. Then squeeze it out, and stretch, dry and iron it as quickly as possible.

Tumeric will give a beautiful yellow colour to white silk handkerchiefs, scarfs or ribbons. Also to muslin for curtain linings; and to the thin muslin used for covering gilt frames, lamps, &c., in the summer.

The flowers of the French marigold, picked to pieces, and boiled with a bit of alum, will dye a fine lemon yellow. The article to be dyed must be white, washed very clean, and then steeped in cold water. After the marigold dye has been boiled and strained, put the article in wet, and boil it till well coloured.

Another yellow may be dyed, by tying some saffron in a thin muslin bag, and boiling it in alum water, in an earthen vessel. Then strain it, and when cool, put in the article.

Peach leaves will make a yellow dye, also onion skins.

BLUE.

Boil gently together in clear soft water, a pound of wood, half a pound of indigo, and two ounces of alum. Then strain it, and add an ounce of pyroligneous acid, or vinegar of wood. Take the article to be dyed, (which must be white,) and if dirty wash it well. Then soak it in clean water, wring it very well, and put it wet into the dye. Keep it in till you perceive that it has thoroughly taken the color, stirring it about with a stick. Then dry it, and afterwards wash it out in warm soap suds.

BLUE COMPOSITION.

This is a compound of indigo and vitriol and can be obtained at the druggist's in a phial. The cost is twelve cents an ounce, and it colors silk a fine blue; but must not be used for cotton. The proportion for a light blue is ten or fifteen drops of this composition, mixed in a quart of warm soft water, and then stirred and strained. If you wish it darker, add more of the blue compound. Immerse it in the article to be dyed, (first wetting it,) and when it has taken well, wring it out and dry it. When quite dry, wash it in cool soap suds and dry it again. This will prevent its being injured by the vitriol.

DARK BLUE.

Boil four ounces of copperas in two gallons of water. Having wetted the article, dip it into the copperas dye while hot. Then rinse it through cold water. Have ready a strong decoction of logwood boiled and strained, and dip the article through that till it has taken a fine dark blue. Dry it, and then wash it in soap suds.

From the Horticulturist.

COVER THE SOIL.

I am a staunch supporter of the theory and practice of covering the soil in which all trees or plants to be submitted to high

culture are cultivated. I have found such decided benefit from the spreading of two or three inches of straw over the surface where apricot trees are planted, that I never think now of allowing an apricot tree to grow in a border fully exposed to the sun.

Dahlia, I found *mulched*, in many parts of England, and if, as the gardeners always told me, the growth and perfection of flowers were promoted by keeping the roots uniformly moist and cool in an English climate, how much more would the profit by it here.

I fully believe in that part of Professor Turner's theory which relates to forming and keeping the head and branches of a tree low, so as to shade and shelter the stem and branches, and even the soil in which the roots grow, from our violent sunshine. When the ground over the roots is open to the broad sunshine, then by all means cover the soil; and if you have not straw, then use litter, spent tan bark, sea-weed, or whatever you can lay your hands on.

From the Working Farmer.

POWER OF THE SOIL TO ABSORB ODORS.

It is well known that onions, if buried in the earth for a few days previous to being cooked, will have lost much of their rank flavor. Wild ducks which are often too fishy in flavor to be good; may be rendered much more palatable by being wrapped in absorbent paper, and buried in the ground for a few hours. Dried codfish loses much of its austerity of flavor (if we may coin a term) by similar treatment. During the plague, in Europe, clothing was often buried for a time to disinfect it. This absorbent property of the soil is due to the presence of carbonaceous matter; for clean, sea-beach sand will produce no such results, while pulverised charcoal will act with much greater energy than common soil. On this principle animal matters coated with unleached ashes, and then buried in pulverulent peat or muck, will not only decompose without giving off offensive odors, but the muck will also, by absorbing the resulting gases arising from decomposition, be rendered highly valuable as a fertiliser. Dr. Dana says that a dead horse, if cut in pieces and treated as above, will render twenty loads of muck, equal in quality to the best stable manure.

FECUNDITY OF INSECTS.

Among the astonishing things which present themselves to the eye of the naturalist is the wonderful fecundity of insects. This is a circumstance which would naturally follow the law by which one animal preys upon another throughout the whole animated creation. In no part of nature is this law more extensive than in the insect world, which suffers immense ravages from this cause. In order to fill the deficiencies thus made, it would seem to be necessary that insects should be exceedingly prolific.—Linnaeus calculates that the carcase of a horse would not be devoured by as much despatch by a lion as by three of the flesh fly denominated *musca Vomitoria*, and their immediate offspring. For one female fly will give birth to 20,000 larvae, each of which will, in a single day, devour sufficient food to acquire an increase of two hundred times its own weight, while only a few days are requisite for the production of a third generation. Prof. Ehrenberg, of Prussia, observed an animaculæ which he calculated to increase in ten days to one million, on the eleventh day to four millions, and on the twelfth day to sixteen millions. In another instance he supposes that a single individual may in four days, become one hundred and seventy billions. The progeny of a single queen bee often amounts to forty thousand, and the queen of the Termites, or white ants, generally lay at an average of sixty eggs per minute, or nearly ninety thousand in the short space of twenty four hours. According to Lw-enhock, two females of lice would, in sixty days, have as many as fifteen thousand descendants.