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

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ON TURNIP CULTURE.

As new days often bring new thoughts, so man as he advances in knowledge, often becomes too theoretical, and even dangerous to himself and others, unless he be checked by the hand of practice and the test of experiment coming in his rear to probe his whereabouts. It is the current fashion of the day, that every little aspirant to fame, who can smatter out something on agricultural operations, is sure to ape the opinions of his theoretical superiors; no matter whether they be in the right or in the wrong, for in the pendant's opinion, the great ones have spoken it,—who dare challenge?—and in this way of thinking, the little mind in extensive theory thinks its plans and systems of the most perfect kind.

It might be all very well, if theory made always its outbursts of enthusiasm in the right direction; but practice often tells me that it does not; therefore due submission by me to every popular idea cannot be made until I have passed it through the furnace of practice, or that I have seen such like plans practically and successfully applied, through all the varying circumstances of climates, soils, subsoils, and localities, by practical men.

These allusions refer to deep draining and thin sowing; on such matters I have been, like many of my brethren, quietly waiting until the great draining men and thin sowing men have expended the climax of their oratory;—and now I think there are symptoms making a way that will give us a warrant to speak out. I shall here only briefly state, that draining and sowing are things which belong *in toto* to the skill and discrimination of a practical man constantly on the spot; and that his experience can tell him that under different circumstances different plans and systems must be adopted, and that all prescribed formula is constantly at fault to meet the varied circumstances on and under the surface of *terra firma*. On these topics, however, I shall say no more at present, but will make an attempt to assist in another matter, viz. the raising of the turnip crop.

There are such things as self-evident truths, which the most humble intellect readily understands, and I believe without a nay to the contrary. Every agriculturist will freely respond that the turnip crop is indispensable; without, the farming is deficient. It therefore has become an axiom that turnip culture has become the leading feature of British agriculture. It might be considered of an humble individual like me, something like an invasion on the intellectual ground of Englishmen, to give them directions in raising this valuable crop, I shall therefore not taunt you with advice, but will otherwise simply explain my own mode of operation, to which from some cause or other, I have been more than usually successful. Fifty years have now passed over me, and forty of these I have been in some way or other always assisting in raising the turnip crop, so that whatever my skill and knowledge may be I have otherwise had an amount of practice and observation that few men have had.

On farms where no regular rotation of cropping had been established, as was the case of the lands here when I entered on my present management, I then commenced the new series in such a manner with the lands to be brought under orderly tillage, so that the fields and crops can be taken as it were in running numbers, at least in so far as the contiguity of the fields will admit,—this way in shaping the round of rotation is the more beautiful and beneficial way than the two often out of place zig zag rotation,—but in whatever way the farmer may choose his fields to form his regular shift, the turnip crop is the leader, and if this be properly attended to the better will the crops be that follow in its train.

My plan is to plough deeply in the fall of the year for the turnip crop, then plough it in the spring when the weather is dry, not allowing the plough to range deeper

than the autumn furrow, particularly so in heavy clayey lands, then harrowing and grubbing follow each other repeatedly until properly pulverized for the drilling; stones and weeds at the same time I remove.

It will however often occur that there will be several places in the same field, of such a nature that the grubber and harrow cannot do the work effectually; when such things happen the plough must be again applied, and followed by grubbing and harrowing so as to make sure work for a crop.

The ground thus prepared, and the season on, I then go on with opening of the drills considerably in advance of the after operations, but if the weather threatens to set in warm and dry, the better way I find, (for I must be obedient to the weather) is to carry on the opening of the drills only, as the after operations proceed.—This precaution I often find necessary, so as to prevent the land from being too much dried and scorched when in drills; otherwise the seed sown under such circumstances might remain inert until rain might fall before it would vegetate; in such cases I consider the crop placed in jeopardy, therefore I study to avoid the known danger.

When my establishment is complete for carrying on all the operations at once I give the necessary balance of power to each respective place, so that the whole collective force can, without hurry or confusion bring out an effective day's work. The plough, coming behind, covering the dung, is the grand motive power for regulating the distribution of the whole physical force machinery,—for, in this complicated work, more particularly so when all the operations are carried on at once, if time be not kept to a minute everywhere confusion will begin. I make it known to the ploughman the quantity of work he has to bring out in the day, and therefore he measures time and space by the regular step of his horses, so that when the allotted day's work is finished, the time is up.

There is with me neither haste nor hurry in such kind of work when a great number of hands is employed; but I study to impress on every mind a steady perseverance to bring out the allotted work taking care that nothing bordering on oppression is exacted. This is my way, and I have never yet made any advance in the right direction when deviating from this principle, except that I found out that it is a barbarous and cruel expedient to expect, either from man or horse, in every day work, the extreme of power. My allowance of farm-yard dung, undulterated, is from 16 to 20 tons, with an allowance of 12 bushels of crushed bones and 1½ cwt. of P. guano. When the farm-yard manure is absent I use 20 bushels of bones and 2 cwt. of guano; when with guano alone 3½ cwt. per statute acre. These proportions will bring out the turnip crop equally on the different manurings, but on lands where guano alone had been used, part of the crop has been consumed on the ground or justice will not have been done to it.

When laying the dung in the drills, I always make choice of a clear sighted man for this particular work. It is laid down in every fifth drill—distance from fall to fall, one turn of the cart wheel, one spoke of which has a straw rope tied round it to indicate the finish of the revolution; the time to stop the cart is when the spoke with the rope comes to the ground. The dung is immediately spread; one man casts the falls roughly but equally into the five drills; five women follow, each to a drill, when they spread the dung evenly in the bottom of the drill, trampling it down as they go along with their feet: after these come the girls dropping the bones and guano on top of the dung: the quantities of these for each acre are measured out, and the quantity for each drill is also meted, so that not only each acre get its due, but every drill or foot of land gets its proper allowance. No machine that I have ever seen can drop bones and guano like the hand, either as to speed, evenness or less expense. I may here state that that boxes with sulphuric acid (or super-

phosphate name it, if you please) is totally out of the question with me, in laying down lands for permanent grass. If this assertion should be doubted, that it is not well founded, I am prepared to defend it. The sowing is the next operation.

It is my plan to sow hot furrow, that is, all the drills closed on the one day must be sown in the evening of that day, close up to the covering plough, when the weather is very hot and much sunshine. I never begin to sow till after 5 o'clock p. m., and in ordinary cases I never begin before three o'clock, unless there appears some signs of rain coming on; then not a moment must be lost; and when the rain does come on, the sowing must stop, so must the covering-in plough also stop, for the land stirred when wet, even though to appearance not very wet, yet it often happens that land begets a sourness when touched in new fallen rain, that it is not easily accounted for, and that it is equally certain that the sowing under such circumstances produces always an unequal braiding, a sight not very pleasant to the anxious agriculturist.

When it happens that the sowing, from these circumstances, has not reached the plough, the unsown drills that had been drenched with rain must be run over with the concave rollers of the sowing machine with some additional weight laid on the frame so as to give the drill a good squeeze: the earth after this will soon be found quite mellow and refreshed by this simple doctoring. In the course of an hour after this preparation the sowing may proceed with safety. These observations may appear too many of too little value for their consideration, but with me the security of the turnip crop is too often involved in them not to be heeded. I may also state that I never allow rolling after the seed. I am an advocate for sowing deeply, almost touching the manure; rest assured the seed gets abundance of cover from the loose earth falling back in the ruts of the coulters; but my principal objection to rolling is the bringing of the sides of the rut together, and then the hollow of shelter for the braiding state is destroyed, and instead of having any shelter by the rolling system, the tender plant has to make its appearance on the highest part of the drill, and is there unprotected from cold drying winds and the scorching rays of the sun; in its weakness struggling for life, is at last attacked by the fly, and in many cases all are but totally destroyed from the bad effects consequent in rolling after sowing.

There is another evil caused by rolling equally bad. It has always been my care to keep the permanent seat of the plant on a level with the general surface of the ground. Now, were I to roll, I would raise the braiding level something about two or three inches higher than if not rolled. It must then appear pretty clear, that when singling out the plants so as to bring down their seats to the proper level, that I would have to expose the roots to an extent evidently dangerous: this hazardous operation, however must be done, or else the plants must remain far above the proper level, which is equally dangerous in securing the crop, for every turnip grower must have observed how beautiful the plants look, and how well they thrive, when they find a resting place for the tip of their curved leaves, on a level with their seat, in the first few months of their existence. I have only this more to say, that rolling after the seed, in a great measure prevents this beautiful and physical development of the plant.

Singling out.—The distance apart to which plants may be singled must often be regulated by circumstances. I generally have the drills 27 inches in breadth—distance betwixt plants, for Swedes, from 10 to 12 inches; all other kinds from 8 to 10 inches. The Fettercairn Dwarf and Ashcroft Swedes are my favorites; 10 inches apart for the former, and 12 inches apart for the latter, are my common allowances.

Previous to singling out, the one-horse grubber or paring plough is applied in taking the earth from the plants, but not

to go too near them, say, leaving about four inches on each side of the plants untouched: the plants are then singled in the well-known way by alternate pushing and drawing with the hand-hoe. It is in this first operation that the seat of the plant is brought to the proper level; if this is not properly done at first it cannot be easily corrected, for before the second hoeing comes round, the plants will have themselves firmly set, and it is bad work to strip them of earth a second time: the operation when properly performed leaves the plant lying over, which proves that the seat of the plant has been attended to; and if all be done as it ought to be in the first operation, the second hoeing may be done in one half the time, and at one half of the expense, than otherwise would be if ignorance or negligence be in the directing hand.

As soon as the plants have come to their feet, as we say in Scotland, that is, when they have fairly set a growing, the second grubbing commences: the second turn of the hoes follows this, which in most cases is the last of this operation; not so with the grubber, for I grub on deeper and deeper still until the crop shuts it out. Should any stray weeds be seen they are then pulled up by the hand, so that not one is left to mark or mock the land of a sluggard.

Before closing I may mention an experiment I made on the late sowing of Swedes. In 1847, on the last day of June, I sowed the following kinds, on four drills each, viz., East Lothian purple-top, Common green-top, Ashcroft's, Laing's, Skirving's purple-top, and Fettercairn Swedes. The season was one of the best for such a trial, and they all grew rapidly through the first stages; the foliage fully equalled the luxuriance of the earlier sown; the ground was equal in kind and equally treated; but when the bulbing period came on, the loss by the late sowing of swedes was soon made apparent, the only exception was in favor of the Fettercairn, which kind gave about at the rate of 8 tons per acre—fully a fifth more than any of the rest did, while all the other kinds sown in May gave an average of 25 tons per statute acre.

I also, at the time of the late sowing, made up a drill by transplanting, taking the plants from the early sown Fettercairn, which at that time were being singled out. The transplants thrived excellently, giving more than double the crop of those by the late sowing. From this I have learned, that I would rather transplant than run the hazard of sowing so late, if so peculiarly circumstanced that I might be obliged to raise Swedes.

I must now close, as I am afraid your patience has run out in scanning such a concatenation of trifling things; but to me the observation of such trifles is of the greatest importance, and that in my duty attending to them depends the security of the turnip crop.—James Hunter, Glenville, Co. of Cork, May 3, 1849.

From the London Farmer's Herald.

HOUSE-FEEDING.

Some of the benefits arising from having an abundance of green food to house-feed stock are, that the cows are secure from the attack of flies, unoppressed with heat, by which, with regularity in hours of feeding, they give an abundant return in the shape of good and wholesome milk and butter; and by keeping their houses thoroughly clean, an abundant supply of the richest manure is manufactured, by which to keep up the farm in the highest state of fertility.

BALM-OF-GILEAD BUDS, bottled up in New England rum, make the best cure in the world for cuts or wounds. Every family should have a bottle of it. The buds should be gathered in a peculiar state; just when they are well swelled, ready to burst into leaves, and well covered with gum. They last but two or three days in this state. If not convenient to add rum to the buds at the time of picking, put them into a bottle and cork the bottle tightly, and the buds will keep in good condition for a long time.