

THE GLEANER:

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

OLD SERIES]

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

[COMPRISED 13 VOLUMES.]

NEW SERIES, VOL. VII.]

MIRAMICHI, TUESDAY EVENING, MAY 8, 1849.

[NUMBER 28.]

Agricultural Journal.

From the Canada Farmer and Mechanic.

PLOUGHING.

This is the most important branch of farm labor, and to execute it with neatness, and upon correct principles, are points not easily attained, unless the ploughman be early trained to the business. The great point to be aimed at is to turn a well-proportioned furrow, and to have the whole mass cleanly and regularly inverted to a uniform depth and width, and each furrow made to rest upon its fellow in a certain angle of inclination. The angle that present the largest surface of newly turned soil to the action of the atmosphere is doubtless the one that should be preferred, if the character of the implement employed will admit of its being done. That angle being forty-five degrees, will require a furrow to be, as its width is to its depth, in the proportion that nine is to six inches. A furrow by nine-inch furrow, when all things are considered, is the best for spring-work; but it may be increased or diminished in depth, to suit the character and condition of the soil and to adapt it to the particular crop intended to be cultivated.

Straightness of furrow imparts a finish to ploughing, which is not indispensable to give an abundant return in harvest, will be found at least creditable to both the ploughman and proprietor of the farm. In performing this branch of labor, the old maxim should be observed, that "what is worth doing is worth doing well." It is too much the custom of the ploughmen of this country to slight their work, the main object being to go over a great breadth of ground, within a shorter space of time. One good ploughing is better than three done in a slovenly manner. When land is well ploughed, the furrow-laps will be so completely closed, that the inverted grasses and roots of weeds will, in due time, undergo decomposition, by being excluded from the action of the atmosphere; whereas, on the contrary, bad ploughing only invigorates noxious weeds and couch grass to grow; and thus, in due course of time, the crops will be destroyed by them.

As soon as the frost is out of the ground the business of breaking up grass land, or old sward, may be advantageously engaged in. This work can at no period be better done than very early in the spring, as it will require a much less draft or power to execute it, and it may be performed many days before other portions of the farm are ready to be ploughed. Instead of reserving old worn out meadows and pastures for generations, as is still the practice in many cases in England, it is decidedly better to plough them up, and, in their turn, put such land under a course of cropping. Three or four years at the farthest, is as long as land can be occupied with the cultivated grasses, and even so long a period as this is too great for clover. The crops that can with much certainty be sown upon an inverted clover ley, or sward, are oats, peas, Indian corn, and flax. If peas and flax be sown, it will be found, as soon as the crops are removed off the ground, that, with two ploughings, it may be put into as good condition for autumn wheat as if it had been regularly summer-fallowed. The same applies to the Indian corn ground, only with greater force, as the horse-hoedings and ploughings given the land, for the purpose of eradicating the weeds, and imparting a vigorous growth to the corn crop, would abundantly clean and prepare the soil for wheat, so that simply a seed furrow would be all that would be required for the wheat plants, after the removal of the corn. The only objection to this system is the liability of the corn crop being damaged by early autumn frosts. By planting early varieties, this may be obviated, to a great extent; but to get the entire crop off the ground by the 10th September will require excellent management; and, indeed, it cannot be done in the eastern and northern portions of the Province, if the crop be cultivated to a great extent. When all things are considered, a crop of Indian corn and pump-

kins, planted upon a newly broken up old sward, will pay better than any other crop with which such land can be cultivated; and the following year it may be sown with spring wheat. If spring wheat should be precarious, peas, barley, or flax may be made to succeed the corn, for the purpose of preparing the ground for autumn wheat. The greatest objection to peas on such land is, that in very favorable seasons for vegetation, the growth of straw will be so abundant as to lessen the yield of grain. This, however, may be avoided, by sowing some one of the dwarf varieties, which are only adapted for the richest description of soils, in which case nearly double the quantity of seed will be required, to what is necessary if the long-hauled varieties are sown. On soils that are too rich for most other crops, the dwarf pea may be grown with the greatest certainty of success. By sowing on such land from three and a half to four bushels of seed per acre, a yield of from forty to sixty bushels may be confidently relied upon. In breaking up stubble land, in the spring, it is well to bring up to the surface some new soil, or, in other words, it may with advantage be ploughed a little deeper than it ever was before. On very adhesive, clay soils, and where the subsoil is composed principally of sand, deep ploughing is not advisable, for it is worse than useless to bring to the surface a soil that contains no fertilizing properties, to be mixed with the active soil. Where the subsoil is composed of a permeable clay, and where there is also a large quantity of lime and potash mixed with the subsoil, within reach of the common plough, from two to three inches of the new soil, mixed with the old worn out surface soil, will improve its texture, and impart a degree of fertility that cannot by any other process be so easily obtained. The proper principle to govern the ploughing of most soils is, to yearly deepen them with the plough until they have reached the greatest depth that can be attained by the common plough, without destroying the appearance and efficiency of the work. This can scarcely be more than ten inches, for the width must always exceed the depth of the furrow at least fifteen percent. The average depth of furrow in this country does not exceed six inches, and a very large breadth of land has never been ploughed beyond five inches in depth. Year after year a few inches of surface soil, being turned up to the parching influence of the sun, and sown broadcast with the cereal grains, without any regard to its fitness or adaptation for the particular crop of grain sown, may satisfy those who know but little of the principles of vegetable physiology and the habits of plants; but those who cultivate old mother earth with a view of obtaining a profitable return for the capital and labor invested, will scarcely be satisfied with the stunted and half starved crops that such shallow ploughing is calculated to produce. The soil should be deepened, and on many accounts, but the principal reasons for doing so are, that it is a means of mixing with the partially exhausted surface soil a liberal store of food for the plants, thereby bringing within reach of the roots those properties in the subsoil that were previously exhausted from the surface soil, by frequently cropping it with the cereal grains; that it prevents damage to the crops from draught, in those seasons when rains seldom occur; that it causes a stronger growth of straw, and thus the crops are not so much liable to mildew and rust; and that it imparts a mechanical influence upon soils, through which those that are naturally light and porous, and that are altogether unadapted for the profitable growth of wheat, may be made to yield, in many instances, the heaviest crops, for a succession of years, without perceptible diminution.

THE PEA CROP.

This may be viewed in many points as a very important crop to the Canadian Farmer. Its main value consists in its being best adapted of any of the coarse grains for making Pork; and also, as an article of export. It is most productive on rich clay soils but may be grown with profit on almost every variety of soil, ex-

cepting those in which sand forms the principal ingredient. An average crop of Peas may be rated at thirty bushels per acre; but on rich clay soils forty bushels may with confidence be reckoned upon. To obtain as large a yield as the latter will, of course, require clean cultivation, and the ground must be in the highest state of productiveness. Pease should be sown early, so that the ground may be covered before the hot weather in summer sets in; and, besides, a much greater quantity of seed should be used than what is generally done by the farmers of Canada. It will be found that three bushels per acre of seed, and early sowing, will in most cases secure a full and abundant growth of haulm, unless the land be in very poor cultivation. If the latter be the case, as soon as the plants gets two or three inches above the surface of the ground, a top dressing of gypsum, at the rate of one bushel per acre, (or, four bushels of unleached house ashes will answer the same purpose,) applied broadcast, will assist the growth of straw very powerfully, and will in most cases, be the means of adding at least twenty per cent. to the yield of marketable Peas. In cultivating the Pea crop, it is important that the growth of haulm (i. e. straw) should be so abundant as to smother all weeds and wild grasses. This is more particularly the case where it is intended to be a preparative crop for fall Wheat, which should invariably be the case in those districts where the latter crop can be grown with certainty and profit. It is rather difficult to cover seed peas with the common harrows; and a nine-tooth Cultivator will be found an efficient implement for that purpose. But a still better plan is to nicely rib the land with a ribbing plough, each rib or furrow being from ten to twelve inches assunder; and by sowing the seed broadcast, and harrowing the land twice, lengthwise of the furrow, the seed will be thoroughly covered, and the plants will come up in rows as regularly as if a drilling machine had been employed. If weeds or grass should spring up between the rows, in the early part of the month of June, the crop may be horse-hoed once or twice—by means of which the mechanical texture of the soil will be materially improved for the crop of Wheat intended to succeed it; and, besides, it will be the means of increasing the yield at least twenty per cent.

Pea straw, if the crop is harvested a few days before it is ripe, is equal to hay for sheep and colts. There is no cheaper means of fattening sheep in autumn and winter than to feed them on unthrashed peas, which have been cut a few days before the crop was ripe, and carefully cured—preserving it possible, the bright green colour natural to the pea haulm cut and cured at a period when about two thirds of the peas have changed their color to a light yellow. The quantity of mutton which can be made from the produce of a ten-acre-field of peas, cut, cured, and fed in the manner described, would astonish the person who has not given the matter a careful consideration. The day is not far distant when the Farmers of this country will ridicule the idea of naked summer fallows for Fall Wheat! when, by sowing peas, and some other crops which we shall hereafter mention, they can make the products of their crops pay the expense of managing, and also those of the wheat crop. Peas of a good quality and of choice varieties will always bring a highly remunerating price for export; and when once the character of Canadian peas becomes raised to this proper standard, it will be difficult to supply the demand. The Pea crop draws its food largely from the atmosphere; and, besides it leaves the ground in better condition than it was at the time when the seed was sown; and for these, as well as the other reasons pointed out, it should occupy a much more important rank than it does among the crops grown by the Canadian Farmers.

TRUTH is a thrifty evergreen; and, when once thoroughly rooted, it covers the ground so that error can scarce find root.

PRACTICAL HINTS TO AMATEURS.

BY AN "OLD DIGGER."

You may transplant, all winter, when the ground is not frozen—only take care not to expose the roots to frost while not covered with soil. In winter planting, it is best to pile up a mound of earth 6 or 8 inches round the trunk of the tree.—This keeps it steady, and protects it, partially, against severe frost.

When a tree brought from a distance has been a long while out of the ground, and looks quite dried up, don't plunge into a tub of water; that would be well nigh as fatal as giving a gallon of a single drink, to a man nearly dead of thirst.—Moisten the roots, and after shortening the branches severely, bury the whole tree in the ground for three or four days.

When you prune a small branch of a tree, always see that a bud is left opposite the cut; this will help it to heal over quickly; and you will assist the matter still more, by making the cut always a sloping one.

Don't let insects of various kinds overrun your orchard or garden, and then lazily fold your arms and say, "it's no use, this trying to raise things, now that so many vermin are about." Spend three days, industriously, in the early stage of the matter, in putting down the rascals, and then look round you and see if a little industry is not better than grumbling.

If you want early vegetables, set yourself in winter, about making some boxes to protect them. A few cheap boxes; a foot square, with a pane of glass in the top, to put over tender things at night, will cost you but a trifle, and will give you ten days start of the open ground.

To have good currants, gooseberries, or raspberries, the old plants should be dug up at the end of three or four good crops, and their places supplied by young ones. If you plant a few cuttings of the two former, as you should do every spring you will always have a supply of fresh plants ready at all times; always cut out all the eyes (buds) of a cutting on that part which goes in the ground—otherwise you will be troubled by their coming up, year after year, in the form of suckers.

If you have a tree that grows "apace," but won't bear, dig a trench round it, and cut off a third of the roots. This will check its growth, and set it about making fruit-buds.

If you don't love flowers yourself, don't quarrel with them who do. It is a defect in your nature which you ought to be sorry for, rather than abuse those who are more gifted. Of what possible "use" is the rain-bow, we should like to know? And yet a wiser than you did not think the earth complete without it.

Do not grudge the cost and labour necessary to plant a few of the best shade trees round your house; and if you have any doubts what to plant, stick in an elm.—There are few trees in the world finer than a fine sweeping elm; and two or three of them will give even a common looking dwelling a look of dignity. If you plant fruit trees for shade, they are likely to be broken to pieces for the fruit, and they grow unsightly by the time that forest trees grow spreading and umbrageous.

There are very few men whose friends build so fair a monument to their memory as they can raise with their own hands, by planting an elm or maple where it can grow for a century, to be an ornament to the country.—[Horticulturalist.]

From an English Paper.

EASY METHOD OF BREAKING GLASS IN ANY REQUIRED DIRECTION.

Dip a piece of worsted thread in the spirits of Turpentine, wrap it round the glass in the direction that you require it to be broken, and then set fire to the thread; or apply a red hot iron round the glass, and it does not immediately crack, throw cold water on it while the wire remains hot. Glass that is broken by this means may often be fashioned and rendered useful for a variety of purposes.