

# The Centre Democrat.

BELLEFONTE, PA.

## AGRICULTURAL. NEWS, FACTS AND SUGGESTIONS.

THE TEST OF THE NATIONAL WELFARE IS THE INTELLIGENCE AND PROSPERITY OF THE FARMER.

*Every farmer in his annual experience discovers something of value. Write it and send it to the "Agricultural Editor of the DEMOCRAT, Bellefonte, Penn'a," that other farmers may have the benefit of it. Let communications be timely, and be sure that they are brief and well pointed.*

they have eaten through the hide insert the nozzle of your can in the hole made by the grub; press gently on the bottom to force the oil into the nest. It destroys them at once. Try it. It will not injure your stock or remove the hair. In a very few days the grub turns black, shrinks up and slips out. Wound heals readily; the work is done."

### The Culture and Use of Mangels.

Henry Stewart in Rural New York.

COL. PIOLLET, the veteran farmer of Bradford county, says that he has used land plaster for forty years, and recommends it as a most valuable fertilizer.

At the April meeting of the Lancaster county agricultural society, the question of the profit of cutting fodder for stock was discussed, and the weight of opinion was decidedly in favor of the practice. We know that it pays.

Why is it that while wheat is almost universally drilled in, most, or at least many, farmers continue to sow oats broadcast? With a good drill, and seed thoroughly cleaned from all foul and light stuff, oats can be easily drilled as wheat, and we are sure, from several years' practice, that it is as profitable for the one crop as for the other.

We notice that the Farmer's Club of Elmira, and of Chadd's Ford, Delaware county, this State, have both offered handsome premiums for small corn crops raised by boys under sixteen years of age. We commend these good examples to the officers of our county society, and should they see proper to follow them, the columns of the DEMOCRAT will be cheerfully opened for their use in publishing the offer.

We are more and more convinced of the great value and importance of root crops to every farmer. They are especially valuable for dairy purposes, but all farm stock, not even excepting the pigs and poultry, will come through a long, hard winter all the better for having a plentiful supply of them. Preparations for next winter's feeding should be made now, and we publish in another column of to-day's issue, an excellent article on the subject, written by a gentleman of large experience in raising them.

THE last number of the *Scientific American* contains a number of illustrated articles descriptive of recent inventions of interest to farmers, and among them one describing a new horse collar and harness combined, all made of forged steel plates. It is said to be a complete success, not only preventing galls, but healing old sores, like the well-known zinc pad. We have never seen one, but have no reason to doubt the statements made concerning it.

Puck spells it "Oilymargarine," and illustrates the difference between this concocted nastiness and butter in a very effective way. We are not of those who think that the manufacture or sale of this abomination should be prohibited by statute, any more than should that of hair grease, or neats' foot oil. Those who ask this of our law makers, ask too much. But let all interested ask and demand that no man shall either make, vend or place upon any table, the vile compound, in any quantity, either large or small, unless it is so distinctly labeled and marked that any one may know what he is buying or eating. Then let it go "on its merits." If people want to eat it, we have no objections, but we insist that no one shall be compelled to eat it, by deliberate fraud.

We notice an unusual number of grubs or "marbles" in the backs of neat cattle this spring, and have been much annoyed to find them in large numbers on such of our stock as ran to pasture last summer. Some remedy that would destroy them without injuring the stock would soon rid the country of this nuisance, as the great fly which torments our cattle during the summer, by its sharp prods in depositing the egg which produces this grub, is in turn produced by it, upon its emerging from its nest. Crude coal oil is recommended by a correspondent of the *Farmer's Friend*, as follows: "Take your mowing-machine can and fill it with crude petroleum, and as soon as

ing, the ground needs cultivation before the weeds start; this is the least trouble and it is easier to kill a thousand weeds when they first germinate than one when it is a week or two old; and to keep them from growing, than to destroy them when grown. A week's neglect, once the weeds have started, may increase the labor 50 times and even make it necessary to abandon the crop. This is the point in growing roots. Keep the ground clean, and some sort of a crop is certain; permit weeds to grow, and the chance is great that the crop will be lost.

American farmers can grow roots as well as an English farmer ever could, with their advantageous climate; as good in quality; in fact, better, because more solid and less succulent; as large in size and as heavy in the yield. We can grow mangels anywhere from 24 to 40 pounds' weight, if we wish, and at a cost that renders them the cheapest food we have. Forty tons per acre, equal to 1,200 bushels, are grown by good farmers who understand the needed culture, and any farmer may grow as many, who will follow the right method. Is there any crop that will pay better? Mangels contain over one per cent. of flesh-forming material which is worth 4 cents per pound, and 10 per cent. of carbohydrates worth one cent per pound. This is for the fresh roots having 88 per cent. of water in them. At 143 cents per 100 pounds, equal to 81 cents per bushel, a crop of 40 tons gives a return of \$113.75 per acre. To realize as much from corn one must grow nearly 200 bushels per acre. It requires but little figuring to discover which is the more profitable crop.

We need to grow roots. They exert a beneficial influence upon the soil; not directly, but growing out of the necessities of their culture. The land must be well worked, must be well manured and must be kept free from weeds. A truly honest farmer, I mean one who is honest to himself and his profession and to his farm, should grow roots for this very reason, because the work disciplines him, in fact, will make a good and successful farmer of him.

Let us consider what he must do.

There must be stock of good well-rotted manure prepared. This is indispensable, and the ground should have been well plowed before winter sets in. But the manure must be had, if roots are desired. To grow one acre, then, there should be 25 loads of manure made, turned over three or four times, kept fermenting through the winter and prepared for use early next May. This is disciplinary and useful work; it enriches the farm and the farmer, and the labor will give him higher ideas than are usually held regarding this work of making manure. Instead of being considered as filthy, disagreeable work, the manure heap will be to him a laboratory experiment; carefully prepared; well made; fully performed; and its results watched with great interest. It will bring in the intellect to the aid of the hands and arms, and will set in action a new order of affairs on the farm, as anything will do that is done for a purpose. This is the winter's work. Next comes the seed: six pounds to an acre is the quantity required.

The next consideration is the variety. After growing, the past year, twelve different varieties of mangels and beets, I would select the Kinver Yellow Globe for its soundness, color and yield. Next I would choose Lane's Improved sugar beet, and I would grow half an acre of each, if I had but one acre. I like variety and so do my cows; and if I can induce a cow to eat a few pounds more of sliced roots for her noon-day meal, she will rest the better in the afternoon, and milk the better in the evening for it; and by giving a change week about, with these two roots, the sweetest sugar beets seem to keep up the cow's appetite.

The spring work, next, is to be thought about. If I could procure, or afford to procure a grubber, I would use that to work the fall-plowed ground. This loosens the soil for 10 inches in depth without turning it over, and makes it in the very best condition for growing roots. Not having such an implement, I would cross-plow the ground after spreading the manure, and so mix the soil and manure, and then still further mix it by thorough harrowing. The soil is then marked out in furrows as straight as possible, 27 inches apart. In the mean time the seed is soaking, and as soon as the furrows are made, before the soil has time to dry, the seed is sown by hand in them, and a man or boy following, covers them about two inches deep with a hoe. A distinct mark of each furrow is still left by which it may be seen with ease. Three hundred pounds per acre of Peruvian Guano, blood manure, superphosphate of lime or specially prepared mangel and beet fertilizer are then scattered along the row and a few inches on each side. By soaking a small portion of the seed, the portion that will grow will be ascertained, and this is important, because 50 per cent. of old seed will be dead, and in that case a double allowance will be required. Although a hand seed drill is a convenience, yet I think the greater trouble of hand sowing will be repaid in the more regular and even growth afterwards. After plant-

ing, the ground needs cultivation before the weeds start; this is the least trouble and it is easier to kill a thousand weeds when they first germinate than one when it is a week or two old; and to keep them from growing, than to destroy them when grown. A week's neglect, once the weeds have started, may increase the labor 50 times and even make it necessary to abandon the crop. This is the point in growing roots. Keep the ground clean, and some sort of a crop is certain; permit weeds to grow, and the chance is great that the crop will be lost.

Mistakes are often made by supposing seeds always grow best if the sowing is followed by rain. On the contrary, they more frequently succeed better if sowed after a rain. On a soil already wet enough, the operation should be performed before rain, as it may be too plastic afterwards. But when the earth inclines to be rather dry and crumbles into hard, small lumps, these prevent close contact with the seed, and are in better condition and crumble finer, after being moistened and partly softened by a shower.

### Produce Your Own Supplies.

From the Mirror and Farmer.

The first aim of every farmer, or at least of every farmer working with small capital, should be to produce upon his own land his own family supplies, and to be able to say in the fall, I have all the bread, all the meat, all the vegetables, and all the fruit I shall use for a year. Having done this he is practically independent and can snap his fingers at prices current and rest secure. It is generally easier for a farmer to do this than to get the money with which to buy even when prices are low, and that prices will be low none of us have, or can have, at any time, a guarantee. By so much as the cost of marketing is, and this is considerable, any article is worth more to use than it is to sell, and consequently farmers can afford to raise for their own use what they cannot afford to raise to sell; and if this were not so most farmers cannot wisely take the risk which is involved in relying upon any one or two crops for the money necessary to buy all they want. There is no risk in a man's cultivating what he and his family will want to eat, but when he devotes himself to one crop, expecting that it will prove a profitable one, he is betting against all sorts of hazards of which he can know nothing, and against which he cannot provide.

### Sowing Vegetable Seeds.

From the Country Gentleman.

It may be well to remind some of our younger readers of the three requisites for starting the seeds of early season vegetables. Let the soil be well pulverized, sufficiently moist, and do not plant too deep. The seeds of such plants as parsnips, peas, lettuce, etc., which are not cut down by frost, may be safely planted as early as the ground is ready. The soil must be well pulverized, and neither in lumps or wet, adhesive mass. This is the first requisite. It must be sufficiently moist, which is nearly always the case early in the Spring without much care. The third point is not to plant too deep. Seeds are sometimes buried beyond the reach of the air, and lie dormant, or rot. Many sorts buried three or four inches under the surface are in no better condition than if thrown away. If only an inch nearly all will grow. Seedsmen are sometimes denounced for selling bad seed, merely because the purchaser has placed them where they cannot germinate. The smaller the seeds, the shallower should be the covering, and the best mode is by sifting fine earth over them. The depth will of course vary, but the best general rule is never to cover them more than five times their diameter in depth—rather less is better. They will come up frequently at a greater depth, but a long time will be required, and the plants for a time will be feeble. A greater depth is admissible in a sandy than in a heavy or clayey soil, and with a dry than in a quite moist soil. A light pressure may be made on the surface after the seeds are planted, and a heavy one, even to the tread of the foot, on a dry soil. Peas will come up from a considerable depth, and will succeed better and bear longer than when planted shallow. If young gardeners will experiment at different depths with various seeds, and with various degrees of compression of the surface, they will soon acquire more of good practical knowledge on the subject than by means of volumes of written directions; and such experiments are very easily made, care being taken to keep a record of all the various plantings to prevent mistakes of memory.

It happens often that heavy soils are kept too wet to work to advantage until the opportunity for sowing early has passed. If the ground has been previously prepared, so that it presents a clean surface, the sowing may be made directly on the top, without disturbing it or making drills, covering the seeds by sifting on them dry and pulverized soil from some dry or sheltered spot (the operator standing on a board), and in this case one-half of the usual depth will answer, as they will obtain a supply of moisture freely from below and a fine covering need not be so thick as a coarse one. In all cases pressing the surface is useful and renders germination more certain by bringing the moist particles in closer contact with the seed—provided it is not sufficient to cause the earth to adhere in a mass and become baked hard when it dries. Careful observation and practice will soon enable any one to know just when the right degrees of pressure is used. Much less is

needed for early sown seeds than for the tenderer kinds a month or two later, when dry and warm weather may have set in.

Mr. C. S. OSGOOD, of Forrestell, Mo., gives some very good advice to western farmers, in *The St. Louis Journal of Agriculture*, in respect to the great waste of manure that is so common out there. He estimates that, while the manure is worth, everything considered, about half the cost of the feed required to produce it, not more than one-tenth of it is saved; and he affirms that the natural result of such improvidence is beginning to appear in the thousands of farms that might as well be abandoned if they cannot be improved. He hopes the time is not far distant when good barns will be built there, as well as now in older States, to shelter animals, feed and mature, all under one roof. To use up the straw, of which every Western farmer is liable to have such a superabundance, he feeds as much as his animals will eat, and allows the manure to accumulate under them for three or four weeks, with enough straw litter to keep them quite dry. The manure is then thrown out into a shed, or carried at once to the field when teaming is easy over the frozen ground; in no case is it piled up in the open yard.

A CORRESPONDENT of the *Rural Messenger* gives the following as a wash for mossy trees; Heat an ounce of sal soda to redness in an iron pot, and dissolve it in one gallon of water and while warm apply it to the trunk. After one application, the moss and old bark will drop off and the trunk will be quite smooth.

CAULIFLOWER is the most delicate and delicious of the cabbage family, and grows and heads best in warm, damp weather, with cold nights. To keep the head from sprouting or spreading, draw the larger leaves over it, and lay a stone on top to keep them in place.

THE stronger and better the quality of the manure put on, the longer it will hold out and the better will one be paid for the labor of preparing and applying.

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