

The Farmers Department.

The Culture of the Turnip. By almost universal approval the seed-drill is now used for planting; for, although at one time there were advocates for sowing the seed broadcast, yet it was a system which so thoroughly interfered with the cultivation of the land, that it has been gradually superseded. The width between the rows varies considerably—say from 18 to 28 inches. The more usual width for swedes, and that which appears to yield the heaviest crops, ranges from 24 to 27 inches; but in this respect, no absolute rule can be laid down, as the width must be influenced by the quality of the land and the time of sowing. It is desirable on the lighter description of soils, to drill at a moderate width—say 24 inches—and to allow the roots to remain closer in the rows than on the heavier soils, as it is found a deal better to secure the weight of crop by moderate-sized but more numerous nutritive roots; for, although upon strong soils large roots can be produced of the best quality, still, upon the lighter soils, there is seldom sufficient strength to produce roots of equal value as for food. Another reason which might be advanced for the greater width of the drills on the heavier class of soils is, the increased difficulty in cleaning such land, and the general use of the horse hoe. The depth at which the seed is buried should be carefully watched, for, if it gets covered too deeply much of the seed is lost; it is quite sufficient for the process of vegetation if the seed be covered in the lightest manner possible, and hence the great importance of having the surface of the land in fine condition. There is considerable difference of opinion as to the best time for sowing turnips and swedes; each district has its reputed best days for sowing, and, as a rule, the experience of each locality may be accepted as the safest guide. It is certain that peculiarities in the soil and climate exert a powerful influence upon these crops. The chief object to be attained is to get the crop as forward as possible without allowing it to become so advanced that the late autumn growth shall be prematurely checked. We have already noticed how important it is for the soil to be reduced to a very fine condition before the sowing of the seed; but there is another point to which it is advisable to draw attention, for the moisture of the soil has a very powerful influence on the early growth of the plant as well as upon its continuous development. In ordinary seasons the usual method of sowing the seed, as soon as the tillage operations are completed, and when the seasons are unusually dry, there is a great advantage gained by modifying this mode of procedure, and it is a practice which has been extensively adopted on many of our best managed light-land farms. The land having been ridged and rolled, the manure is spread over the surface and the ridges are then split back again and rolled ready for receiving the seed, but, instead of sowing the seed immediately, as is the general custom, it is delayed for twelve or fourteen days. There are one or two reasons for this practice which are worthy of notice. The chief inducement is to give time, so as to enable the natural moisture of the land to rise into the recently-worked soil. If you examine shortly after it has been worked in dry weather, you find a moist layer of earth on the surface of the ridge which covers up a dry layer beneath. When the seed is sown upon such a ridge the moisture of the upper soil causes the seed to sprout; and, as its roots pierce into the ground beneath they enter a drier soil, from which they can procure no moisture, and therefore no nourishment. This causes a check in the growth just when the turnip beetle is busy at work; and, unless there should happen to be a fall of rain, the crop is sacrificed, or, at any rate, seriously injured. But when the ridges have been ready for sowing twelve or fourteen days, generally the moisture of the soil will have risen to the ridge, and no such check can arise, but if the land should be too dry for the seed to sprout there it waits for rain, and when the supply comes, it grows as if it were in a hot-bed. Under such circumstances it is a matter of no importance how dry the surface may be at sowing. Should the surface soil be moist enough to make the seed sprout, its roots find an increasing supply of moisture the deeper they go. We have known a similar system most successfully carried out when the turnips were going to be sown on the flat; and the secret of its success is, that the seed cannot grow before the soil beneath it is ready to secure it from any check in its early growth. There is, however, another inducement for adopting this practice. It often happens that, two or three weeks before the time for sowing, the weather is dry and admirably suited for finishing the land for the seed; but hesitation is felt about doing it, because the more usual custom is to sow the seed as soon as the work is done. On these light farms it has been proved that advantage may be taken of such favorable weather, and the preparatory tillage being completed, the land may be allowed to rest until the days fixed for the sowing.—Vicia Herald.

Educational Department.

THOUGHTS ON TEACHING. Fault-finding should be seldom or never practiced. It has the most pernicious effect upon the minds of children; only tending to discourage them, and rendering their tempers sour and morose. Try to find something which you can consistently and conscientiously commend, and you will find it has a far more cheering result. When fault-finding must be done at all, let it be done in the kindest and most considerate manner. Of the two extremes, I would prefer not to find any fault whatever, than to do so continually. Many children have been entirely ruined, by a course of persistent fault-finding, on the part of teacher or parent. Another evil habit which teachers are apt to contract, is that of having many rules. They, very frequently, weary the patience of the pupil, while they shackle the teacher with unnecessary trammels. He is often obliged to break some of them, thereby placing himself in an awkward and uncomfortable position, which will weaken his authority considerably, if not destroy it altogether. Have but few rules, and let them be as brief and comprehensive as possible. Situated as a teacher is, he becomes in himself a centre of influence. How careful, then should each teacher be, that his example be exerted for good upon all who come within the circle of his influence. Pupils generally look up to their teacher, and all their words and thoughts imperceptibly take color from him. To wield this influence successfully, the teacher should have, first, good sound moral principles. He should inculcate both by precept and example, love and obedience towards God, and under him towards parents, magistrates and all who have authority; also abhorrence of all profane and indecent language, lying, stealing and all other vices and respect and reverence for all things holy and sacred. Next, the teacher should cultivate a cheerful, amiable and obliging disposition. It will go far towards producing the like qualities in his pupils. Respect and attention to the aged; kindness and forbearance towards one another, should be especially dwelt upon. The personal manners of pupils should also receive a full share of attention. The teacher should by all means, endeavor to correct all improprieties of manner in walking, standing or sitting. Cleanliness of person and dress is indispensable to secure self-respect and the respect of others. There is more gained by attention to these little matters, than most persons are aware of. It is these little things that make up the sum of life.—Mercer's Journal.

What the Common Schools are Doing. We consider that Pennsylvania and every other State, where a system of free education has been in operation, is now fairly beginning to reap the benefits of educating the masses. When it was announced that peace was at hand, the croakers began to forbode as to the evil effects which would follow the the muster-out of large armies. Our own masses were estimated by a rule which applies only to the ignorant. Hence it was asserted that the disbanding of large forces would fill certain sections of the country with lawless hordes of marauders, and that these men, disbanding labor, would organize for rapine and plunder. But just at this point, we may truthfully assert that we are reaping the benefits of our system of common school education. The men who composed the armies which fought the battles of the Government are intelligent, industrious and thrifty citizens. Every soldier in the ranks of the Union fought for a principle, on the success of which rests his hopes of domestic and political prosperity. Hence the transition from peace to war and from war to peace is the same to the educated freeman. It is but an appeal to patriotism to make a soldier of an American Citizen, while an order from the Government changes the soldier to the citizen. Education, as we have already said, has done this—the education of the common school, which elevates the masses of this country above and beyond those of any other land in the world. And thus our soldiers of yesterday—the men who only a few days since, it required the sternest rigors of discipline to hold in check—will to-morrow become industrious and peaceable citizens, adding by their productions to the wealth of a Government which they have forever made imperishable by the impetuosity of their valor.—Harrisburg Telegraph.

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