

Farmer's Department

The Origin of Wheat. It is a fact, not generally known, that the origin of wheat and other cereals is involved in obscurity...

In a late number of the Edinburgh Review, an able paper is devoted to discussing the origin of the cereals, especially of wheat. The writer states that there are two theories upon this subject...

Confirmation of this hypothesis may be adduced the fact that, wherever the early history of the cultivation of a species is known, it is found that man has first applied his use to a plant growing wild about him...

The opponents of the development thereof, however, maintain that the plant on which this experiment was conducted was an accident of nature, or cross, between the regions and the wheat growing in adjacent fields. In favor of this view they adduce the fact that, by such a crossing, artificially conducted, similar results have been produced...

It is probable, therefore, that wheat never existed wild, but has been developed by cultivation from a wild plant. The Edinburgh Review, after reviewing the question in every aspect, comes to this opinion at last, and says nothing can shake its conviction unless wheat should be found really growing wild in some ravine of central Asia.

Items of Interest. The first Threshing Machine, of which we have any account, was invented in Scotland, about the year 1780, or perhaps a little later, by Mr. Michael Menzies. He secured a patent for it...

The last half of the last century was the time when Scotland avowed to the importance of improving her farming. England had set the example. Bakewell was working out his grand results in improving the breeds of cattle and sheep. Capital and wealth had greatly increased. Manufacturers were creating an increased demand for food of every kind. Legislative enactments favored farming. Under these impulses, agriculture made rapid strides. The system of alternate husbandry took the place of the old plan of cropping land with wheat until it was worn out, covered with weeds and abandoned to recover its energy by fallow.

The means by which these causes operated to secure the advancement of the farming interests, were Agricultural Societies, Agricultural Journals, among which the Quarterly Journal of Agriculture still occupies a leading place, the active support given to the cause by many of the intelligent and wealthy gentry and nobility. Similar means are being used in this country; and the success they have enjoyed here warrants their most vigorous prosecution.

The INTER-OCEANIC TELEGRAPH will soon put a line across the globe, and the question will arise, what plant will be done about Sunday? In some parts of the world there will be two or three weeks, and Sundays generally will become confused. If the telegraph offices in all parts of the world close on Sundays, news arrangements will be constantly interrupted and delayed.

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Miscellaneous

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