

The Farmer's Advocate

and Home Magazine

PERSEVERE
AND
SUCCEED

ESTABLISHED
1866

REGISTERED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COPYRIGHT ACT OF 1875

Vol. XLVIII.

LONDON, ONTARIO, APRIL 10, 1913.

No. 1072

EDITORIAL.

When making improvements make good ones. This thought, applies especially just now, to fencing, a job at which many farmers will shortly be engaged.

If there happens to be a tile drain or two across your new-seeded alfalfa, clover or fall wheat, take a walk over it now and observe the effect it has had in protecting the roots from heaving.

Nothing bespeaks prosperity on the average farm more than a number of horses, cattle, sheep and pigs, all having wintered in good condition, and ready to go out to grass and continue making money for their owners.

The scarcity of good seed grain as well as of clover and alfalfa, should be a lesson to many to practice seed selection on their own farms during the coming year. Plan to grow a seed plot of the various grains, and if possible produce the clover seed at home.

Be sure and sow enough seed this year to ensure a crop. This should be followed with regard to cereals and clovers alike. Last year was a very hard season to cure seeds, and the percentage germination is likely to be smaller than usual. The only really safe way is to test the seed.

In operating a farm it is well to look ahead, plan to conserve fertility, and work things out to ultimate system and success. But expediency warns against going too far in this direction, sacrificing immediate returns for problematical advantages that may never mature. Here, as in other things, judgment is golden.

Many fences were levelled by recent gales in Ontario. Weigh the matter carefully before replacing all of these. Most farms support too many fences. A needless fence is a bill of expense, and a fertile breeding ground for plant diseases and noxious weeds. Look into the possibilities of a portable fence before erecting some of the inside fences.

The foot of your horse is more or less in the hands of the smith who shoes him. The ideas of a practical horse-shoer in another column should be of value to all owners of horses which are kept shod. In all shoeing give the shoer a chance. Keep the colt's feet right, and keep the shoes on the working horses changed frequently and at regular intervals.

In guarding a tile outlet with crossed wires or some other means calculated to exclude small animals, see that it is not done in such a way as to obstruct the flow of water. Stubble and other litter sometimes finds its way to a new-laid tile through an orifice into which surface water pours. The litter being carried down may be caught by the guard at the mouth of the tile, and may block the passage to such an extent as to cause the water to force through back of the outlet, displacing one or more tile, and cutting a bad ditch.

Chores and Seeding.

The necessary chores are one of the burdens to be borne during the spring seeding. At no other time in the entire year do chores seem to be such a "drag" as in spring. With the increasing scarcity of labor, it is necessary now-days, on most farms, that the men working teams attend to the chores as well. Chore boys are not as plentiful as they once were. If a man works ten hours a day in the field and also has one hour each morning and night and a half hour at noon to put in feeding stock and doing chores other than the tending of his team, it makes the days rather long and strenuous. Seeding must be done as fast as possible as soon as the land is ready to work, consequently as much must be accomplished as possible each day, and the chores are always imperative. Slightly longer days are necessary at this season than at most others, but a real good eight-hour day in the field will accomplish considerable. This means that the teams be kept going fairly steadily, and at a good brisk walk. This length of day permits of more time to do chores. Where this latter work is abundant, teams should stop at five o'clock if the drivers have more chores to do than they can get done in an hour besides attending to their teams. Of course where an extra man is available to care for the stock, teams should put in ten hours in the field, as this would permit of giving the horses a little more time, it not being so necessary to "push" them. Where the teamster must do the chores, working at a slightly increased pace eight or nine hours in the field and doing the greater portion of the chores in the remaining hour or two will generally be found more satisfactory than extremely long days. As most of the seeding and tillage implements are fitted with spring seats the increased pace makes no difference to the teamster, but he should be careful not to overdo his horses at the beginning of seeding or on exceptionally hot and muggy days.

The Barnyard.

There is no better time in the year to demonstrate the advisability of keeping a comparatively clean barnyard than spring. Spring is always accompanied by more or less rain, and the melting snow coupled with this ensures a few weeks of slush around the buildings, and the barnyard very often presents a sorry spectacle. What a difference there is between the yard situated on a dry knoll and the one placed in a veritable lake. This difference is all, of course, due to location, but there are other differences due wholly to management during the winter months. In one yard you will see the manure neatly piled at one side or one end a good distance from the stable doors, and not spread promiscuously all over the yard. In another yard the manure is dumped almost as soon as it is outside the stable door, no particular effort being made to keep the pile compact or tidy, and in others the litter and manure are spread out a few feet deep over the entire yard, and the cattle and other stock are permitted to trample through it and "churn" it up into a mire.

Manure is one of the most important assets of any farm, and represents no small share of the profits of live-stock husbandry, hence is too valuable to be wasted. There is a great loss from many yards at this season from run-off, due to the excessive amount of moisture precipitated or already in the manure from the recently melted

show. Some loss is also due to leaching. It stands to reason that where the manure is spread out over a large area the run-off loss is much greater than where it is kept in a tidy pile several feet deep. A larger exposed surface means the incorporation of more water, which soaks through to the already saturated soil and runs away as surface water. Besides, where manure is kept piled in neat solid piles, the losses due to the work of organisms are not so great, and plant food is not decomposed and distributed through the air to such an extent as where the manure is spread over a large yard only a foot or two in depth.

Aside from the actual plant food loss there is considerable satisfaction in having a dry yard, at least, as dry as it can possibly be made at this season, and a yard through which one can walk without sinking to his knees in water-logged stable manure. A dry barnyard bottom, kept bedded with a little straw or scraped clean, the manure being piled neatly, should be the aim of all.

Apple Grower and Buyer.

There is seldom much wisdom or justice in holding a second party responsible for the unsatisfactory state of one's own condition of business or living. To a greater extent than we realize we are the arbiters of our own fortunes. Rivals, competitors, sharp-witted dealers and others merely represent or personify the obstacles before which our own irresolution, incapacity, lack of business gumption or lack of principle falls down. We really fail, when we do fail, not because of what the other fellow does but because of certain more or less fundamental deficiencies in ourselves. There are minor and temporary exceptions to this rule but it holds pretty true in the main.

These thoughts are immediately suggested by the prevalent disposition of fruit-growers to blame the buyers for the unsatisfactory condition of the apple-marketing situation which, after two or three seasons of comparatively ready sale, developed acutely again last year. As a matter of fact it is not the apple-buyer but the grower who is responsible. To be sure, buyers are not angels. On the average they have no more principle than any other class of the community, but we are not sure that they have less. It is significant that there is scarcely an apple-operator in the country who has got rich out of the business. Many have gone to the wall. The trouble is that the conditions under which Canadian apple-buyers are forced to operate are wasteful and unsatisfactory in the extreme. If growers wish to improve matters they must see to it themselves, first of all by giving good clean fruit, then by picking it promptly and carefully, packing it well, marking it honestly with a studious regard for commercial principle and marketing as near to the consumer as practicable, under their own individual or co-operative brands, for which a reliable reputation must be built up by years of rigorous high-principled work. An implied guarantee of quality and honesty must go with every single box or barrel bearing one's brand. One lapse from the standard may undo the reputation built up by a whole season's work. Unfailing care and principle is demanded, with the same standard of grade maintained each and every year. Scarcely any of our Eastern fruit-growers have learned what commercial principle