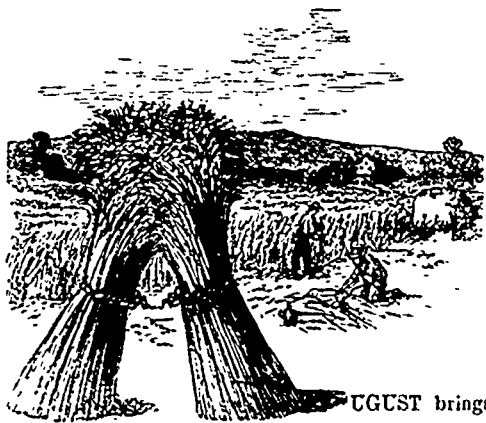


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The Month.



AUGUST brings wane to the summer, and abatement to the heat. These are welcome and pleasant reflections always as July draws to a close, but they are especially so this year. The July of 1868 will be long remembered as unusually hot. For the first fortnight in the month, the thermometer hovered among the nineties in the shade, while drought accompanied the heat, and heightened its apparent intensity. No summer for thirty years past has equalled the present for great and long-continued heat. There have been single days as hot as any during the past month in former years, perhaps hotter, but a whole fortnight of such incessant heat is unprecedented. The mean temperature for the first half of the month, as noted at the Toronto Observatory, was 77° 3', upwards of seven degrees higher than the usual average, as given in our July article on "THE MONTH." The highest point of heat reached at the Observatory was 95° 4', but as all local influences are carefully avoided there, so as to get the actual condition of the atmosphere, it is not surprising that on the shady side of city streets, with confined air, and radiation of the sun's rays from contiguous buildings, the mercury should have risen several degrees higher. Under these less favourable circumstances there have been days when the thermometer marked from 90 to 100 degrees, and even higher. This unusual heat has prevailed not only throughout the Dominion of Canada, but all over the continent, not even excepting many of the cities on the Atlantic coast, where sea-breezes generally alleviate the miseries of the dog-days. As a consequence, the papers have chronicled a great number of deaths from sun-stroke, while many more have doubtless been caused in some way or other by the great heat. These cases have mainly occurred in cities, and a large proportion of the victims have either been persons of intemperate habits, or have brought on the fatal result by thoughtless exposure, excessive exertion, or too free use of iced drinks. People cannot

be too careful during such a condition of the weather. Extreme heat can no more be trifled with than extreme cold. We have met with scarce any instances of sun-stroke or other casualties among the farming community, although it must have been a very trying time, coming, as it has done, at the season of hay-making. Farmers being in general persons of temperate habits, and to a considerable extent accustomed to work in the heat, may account for this circumstance. July has told not only upon human health and life, but upon the crops. Up to the beginning of last month, the season was indeed a model one, giving, as we remarked in our issue of July 1, no conceivable ground of complaint even to chronic grumblers. But the scene has vastly changed within one short month. Wide, and we fear irreparable, damage has been done by the heat and drought.

Leaving now these features that have been special and unusual, we proceed to note the general characteristics and duties of the present month, and as we have been wont to do so far through the year, we transcribe from the "Year Book of British North America" the mean temperatures for August at leading points in the Dominion of Canada.

Stratford	59° 15'
Hamilton	62° 57'
Barrie	58° 31'
Toronto	66° 56'
Belleville	61° 73'
Montreal	69° 13'
Quebec	64° 09'
St. John, N.B.	59° 16'
Halifax	62° 09'

From the above it appears that Hamilton has an average of nearly two degrees greater heat than Toronto the present month, while Quebec is about four degrees, and Halifax between one and two degrees hotter than either Toronto or Montreal.

August work on the farm may be summed up in two words. "Harvest continued." By the beginning of this month, indeed, where the weather has been favourable, and farmers have been daily prompt and pushing, the greater portion of the hay and grain crops will have been secured. Oats will yet be to cut, and this ought to be done before the grain ripens, in order to improve the quality of the straw and prevent the grain from shelling out. When harvest operations are fairly concluded, the tools should be well housed and taken care of, especially the reaping machines, which are costly, and from their construction must suffer greatly from exposure to wind and weather. It is painful to observe what carelessness and neglect are practised in this direction. Farmers who have had a hard struggle to pay for expensive implements, bestow no thought or attention upon them, leaving them perhaps in the open fields, or giving them some partial shelter which is little better than none. This ought not to be. Tools and implements well housed not only last longer, but do better and easier work while they last than

those which are subjected to neglect. Root crops will now be so far advanced as to need no more hoeing. Even yet vacant places in the turnip field may be filled by sowing white turnips. They will of course attain no great size, but half a turnip, like half a loaf, is better than none. Those who have not lost faith in fall wheat will improve every opportunity for preparing land intended for that crop. A narrow field along the edge of the woods is the best locality that can be chosen, as there the wheat is less likely to be winter killed. It is a thousand pities every farm in Canada has not its belts and strips of trees to afford a degree of protection. The country is too bare. Drought in summer, and alternations of freezing and thawing in winter, are the fruits of wholesale clearance. The best seed wheat should be secured, and care taken to get it thoroughly clean. Why should the land be stocked with chess and foul weeds, when a little care and precaution will prevent it? Now is the time that most weeds ripen and scatter their seeds; therefore to destroy them at this period will prevent future increase. It must be destruction, however. To cut them up, is often but a half-way measure, from their being left to lie and perfect their seeds upon the ground. To make heaps of them and burn them is an excellent plan. This month is a good time, if there is leisure for it, to underdrain low-lying lands, to dig swamp muck, and expose it to dry, or to perform any operations upon parts of the farm that are wet in the spring and fall. During this month the sheep gad-fly, which causes the trouble in flocks known as grub in the head, hovers about the heads of its victims in order to deposit its eggs about the nostrils. Smearing the sheep's noses with tar, and giving them access to ploughed ground, are recommended as preventives. The garden and orchard will now begin to yield their increase, and the pleasant task of gathering and storing the fruits of the season will commence. Insect troublers may be checked in their depredations by keeping a sharp look out for them, especially the borer, which lays its eggs about this time. The grub quickly hatches and makes its way into the tree. A wire probe is the thing with which to hunt and destroy this pest. A coating of soft soap at the base of the tree is said to be a safeguard against its depredations. Except in localities where buckwheat abounds, honey-gathering will be pretty much over this month. There is yet opportunity to do something in the way of Italianizing, equalizing, and regulating stocks; operations which must be attended to, if at all, during the summer time. Bees cannot be handled to much advantage when chilly weather comes on, and after the working season is over it is well to disturb them as little as possible.

Stock of all kinds, let it be remembered, will need to be well looked after at this season of scanty pastures and failing springs. It is always poor economy to allow animals to fall off in condition.