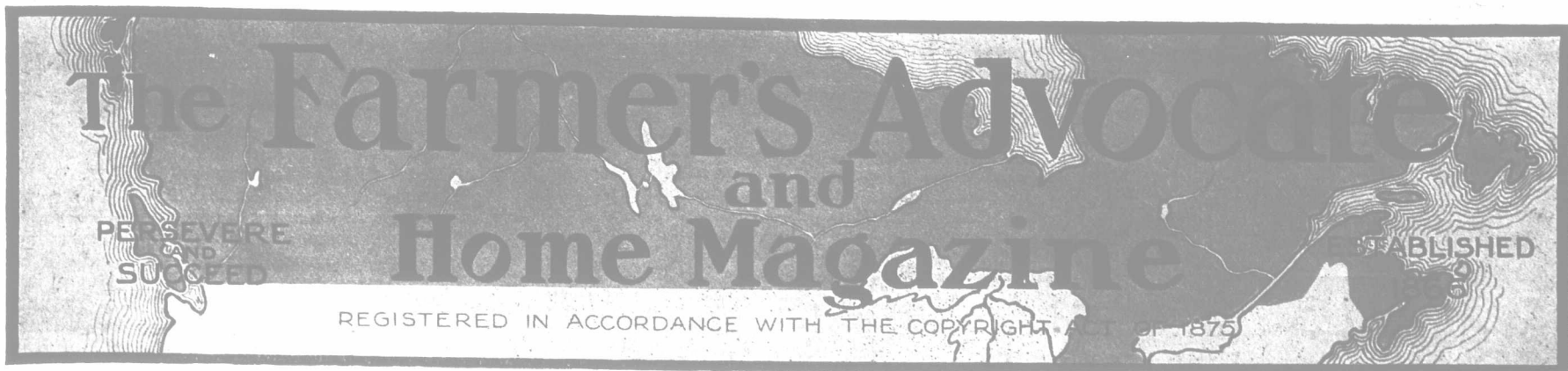




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EDITORIAL.

Of the Scot it is commonly said that he has an inwrought hatred of waste and a love of order. Good characteristics these for the Canadian farmer to make his own.

The side-delivery rake is a splendid implement on a farm, and is almost necessary where the hay loader is used, but it will not take the place of the dump rake, which is needed for the second raking and for gleaming grain stubble, where this is practiced.

There are, no doubt, far more young physicians being turned out from the educational institutions of the country than there are patients for. Wrong direction has been given to the education of many young men, and yet there is nothing more difficult to change than the old systems of education.—[U. S. Secretary Jas. Wilson.

In the published arrangement made for the disposition of the special Federal grant for the advancement of Ontario Agriculture, almost every interest seems to have been fairly well considered. In the final expenditure, however, it occurs to "The Farmer's Advocate" a considerable proportion of the money might well be devoted to some means whereby the serious losses accruing to farmers through the alarming growth of weeds would be more clearly realized, and effective measures taken to rid farms of these pests, and prevent the inroads of others. The skill with which the general plan has been wrought out will suggest naturally that, through several of the educational and other agencies at work a vigorous campaign that will enlist the co-operation of farmers for their own benefit, might likely be evolved. To perceive that there is urgent reason for it, one need but open his eyes on nearly any rural road in the land.

Cost of Making Hay.

"No crop that a farmer produces is made or marred in the curing and harvesting to such an extent as the hay crop," writes a dairyman correspondent whose hay loader and side-delivery rake have not been out of the implement shed for five years, as he does not think the best clover or alfalfa hay can be made without coiling. In this most readers will concur, though there will be many to contend that, in these days of labor shortage, expedition is of supreme importance, often saving hay from injury by rain, dew or over-ripeness. Where, however, there is only a moderate acreage of hay to be made, and a reasonably ample amount of help to care for it, we would strongly counsel the slower method. Haymaking is a less expensive job than most people suppose. At Weldwood, last year, we made about forty-five tons from thirty-two acres, at an average cost of about \$1.25 per ton for labor of men and teams. Every load but three or four was pitched from the coil, and most readers remember what a broiling summer we had. We used the side-delivery rake, and liked to coil from the windrow it left. Last season, with light hay and fast-curing weather, it took the place of the tedder, but we have bought a tedder for 1912.

Weeds.

Weeds, weeds, weeds to no end! This weed question is serious, and getting more so. A short rotation of crops helps greatly in the battle, but even where this is adopted, one has his hands full for a time in dealing with a dirty farm. Thistles fight with the spring grain. Twitch-grass, blue grass, bindweed, perennial sow thistle and the like make extra work, even in the hoe crops. Docks rear their unsightly heads aloft in the meadows, yellow mustard hides the grain in thousands of fields, and even dandelions do serious mischief, overrunning pastures. These, with hundreds of others, claim urgent attention during the growing season, when the corn and roots, and presently the hay, ought to monopolize one's thought and labor. What can be done about it all? We hardly know. Help is so scarce the majority of farmers cannot hire a man by the day for such work. Mainly, it must be done by men regularly employed on a monthly or yearly engagement.

Other than this, we can only offer a few somewhat hackneyed suggestions:

Sow only clean seed. One will get weeds enough with the best. It is well to send a sample of any small seeds about to be purchased, concerning which one may have any doubt, to the Seed Branch, Ottawa, for free examination and report.

Follow a short rotation in which manure is applied only on sod or before a hoed crop. The cultivation given the hoed crop will destroy many dangerous germinating weed seeds.

Plant large areas of corn in hills, and cultivate thoroughly with the two-horse riding cultivator, equipped with wide points. Watch for strange plants in the new seeding, and get them identified.

Clean out superfluous fence bottoms and other waste areas.

Spray mustard in the grain with copper sulphate, 10 or 11 pounds to the 40-gallon barrel.

Top thistles in the grain with a scythe just before the grain heads.

Mow the meadows early.

In all tillage operations, do thorough work, never leaving headlands or corners unfinished. Good old-fashioned, thorough tillage will go a long way to subdue weeds.

Lastly, brethren, persevere resolutely, determined to prevail, fighting the battle of courage and of faith.

Combine Perseverance with Enterprize.

Steadfast adherence to bed-rock facts and principles is necessary to sustained progress in farming. So many people are discouraged with a new crop or a new idea by adverse results of a season or two. Come a wet, cold summer, and enthusiasm for the corn crop is dampened. A hard winter turns many back from alfalfa-growing, while a few dry summers discourage thousands from extensive sowing of clover. Yet, there is nothing more certain than the endless variety of seasons. One form of adversity is sooner or later followed by another form, and the drifter usually turns from a certain crop about the year it is likely to prove profitable. One should maintain a broad outlook over the field of his occupation, ever alert for progress, but solid as the rock of Gibraltar in holding steadfast to the well-proven and the good.

Western Crop Outlook.

In a careful resume of the crop prospects in the Western Provinces for this season, which is rather later than last, "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Journal," of Winnipeg, says: "It is most unlikely that the season of 1912 will prove so unfavorable to grain-growing as last year, yet there are so many factors all tending to lower the yield or destroy entirely the crop that must be reckoned between now and harvest that it is entirely impossible to estimate the probable yield on any farm at the present time. Rain and cold weather, frost, hail, wind storms, drouth and hot winds are factors that may appear locally, or generally, and some of these will undoubtedly affect a greater or lesser number of farms this year, to the deterioration, or complete destruction, of the crop. This view of the present crop situation is taken, not from a pessimistic standpoint, but to draw attention to the uncertainty of final yield on any one farm, and the fact that even a definite estimate of the value of the crop cannot be taken until harvest is well under way. For this reason, farmers, especially those who have no other revenue than from their grain, should be slow in securing credit on the prospects of the present crop. Credit must be secured in many cases for the carrying on of necessary farm work and for the maintenance of the farm, but a lack of foresight is shown, however, where credit is stretched to the uttermost to purchase expensive machinery and unnecessary farm appliances, with nothing to meet such credit when due, but the present prospects of an average crop."

Have a Weed Bee.

One of the most alarming consequences of the shortage of men on the farm is seen in the spread of weeds. Not to mention pests generally regarded as more noxious, the unusual spread in many meadows is reported this season of curled dock (*rumex crispus*), sometimes called sour or yellow dock. After a heavy rain, it is most easily pulled. If allowed to ripen, it is carried in the hay to the barns, and the seed returns to the fields subsequently with the manure, thus laying the beginnings of another crop. By pulling, spudding or cutting, all such pests should be prevented from going to seed in the grain fields, meadows or pastures. If no other better plan of coping with this growing evil presents itself, why not try a co-operative weed bee? Hire all the boys in the neighborhood, and give an ice-cream social to conclude the proceedings of the afternoon.

Never do we remember seeing clover make more rapid and satisfactory growth than it has done this year, where there was anything at all in the spring. Some splendid fields are to be seen in bloom. Alfalfa, on the other hand, has not done so well. In many districts it was extensively killed out last winter, and even where it survived till spring, the long period of cold, wet weather has told against it, apparently conducing to the common alfalfa blight. This may not appear to any extent in the second cutting.

There are two ways in which persons become successful farmers—by imitation and by instruction, written or oral. Those who are wise will avail themselves of both.