

LITERARY SOCIETY TOPIC.

The membership of the new Literary Society is increasing at a very encouraging rate, and soon the readers of The Farmer's Advocate who are not members of the F. A. & H. J. L. S. will be in the minority and hopelessly unfashionable. The only thing to do is to join our ranks, get a badge, and belong to what you can help make into one of the very best and most far-reaching societies in America.

From the list of excellent subjects which have been suggested by the members for discussion, we have chosen the following which will take the form of a debate:

"Resolved that a High School Education Qualifying for a Teacher's Certificate is of More Advantage to a Farmer than an Education Qualifying him for a Diploma from a Business College."

1. The discussion of this subject will close March 15th.

2. Essays must not contain more than 500 words.

3. Take either side you like. The decision will depend more on the strength of the points than the number who enter.

4. Give full name and address, and nom de plume, if one is desired.

5. State whether, in event of winning a prize, you prefer a book or a society pin.

Some one has asked for information regarding the rules governing debating societies. The best book on how to conduct any society or public meeting will be found to be Bourinot's "Procedure of Public Meetings," which can be obtained through any bookseller.

MATERNAL PRIDE

An explanation of the picture on this page is not necessary: even the title being somewhat superfluous to the careful observer. But a few facts about the artist who painted the picture may be of interest.

Paul Peel was born in London, Ontario in 1860, so that he belongs to us by birth, though in pursuing his studies in his art he spent much time in Philadelphia and London, finally making his home in Paris. His best known work is the painting, "After the Bath" for which he received the Gold Medal at the French Salon in 1890. His sudden death at the age of thirty-two cut off before its prime a life which had promised a brilliant future.

WITH THE FLOWERS.

In this western climate it is often a difficult matter to find plants that will flower satisfactorily and withstand the heavy frosts. Some of the varieties of Iris seem to answer the demands of the western garden fairly well, as their natural home is in the north temperate zone. The best known species are the German Iris, or Fleur-de-lis, and the Iris Florentina. The flowers of these varieties are large and handsome exhibiting beautiful variation and shades of color. They are hardy and form excellent border plants, flowering in May and June. The Iris Arenaria lives well in dry, sandy situations.

These species of Iris are grown from rhizomes which are supplied by the nurseries in the early fall. When these rhizomes are in a growing condition when delivered they should be planted flat and covered to half their diameter in a rich, well drained but not manured soil. A full exposure to the sun is desirable. If, as frequently happens, the rhizomes are dormant and partly dried up when received, care should be taken that they have not much moisture till they start into growth, otherwise they are likely to rot. Most of these Irises in common cultivation increase rapidly,

and should be divided and replanted every two or three years.

Will some of the readers of this column who have had longer experience in flower-growing in the west send in the names of some of the garden plants which they have found hardiest and most ready in flowering in their locality? It would be a kindly deed much appreciated by those who have more recently arrived and who are in doubt as to what their gardens will produce.

FLORA FERNLEAF.

ESSAY ON WHEAT BY AN ALBERTA GIRL.

One of the features of the recent Seed Fair at Edmonton was the essay competition by school children. The winning essay over twenty-four competitors from twelve school districts follows, Miss Jessie Holbrook, Mill Creek S. D. east of Strathcona, being the author.

THE WHEAT PLANT.

Soil.—The kind of soil best adapted to wheat growing is a loam soil. This soil contains a mixture of sand and clay with some humus, that is the decay of leaves, branches, and roots.

The proper preparation of the soil is to plow your land as early in the fall as possible, and harrow once, then harrow again in the spring, and sow your seed.

If wheat is sown on wet soil, it becomes rank, and does not come to maturity; if on dry soil it has a short straw and is of good quality. On firm soil it grows a medium height, with good filled heads, and is of the best quality; on a loose soil it will have a bad, weak stalk, and of a greenish color, and small grain.

The improvement of the fertility of the soil is one of the most important parts of farming. Seed.—The indication of good seed grain is the uniformity in color, size, and shape of the kernels. It must be a large plump seed.

Before seed is sown it ought to be cleaned at least twice by a fanning-mill. If weak seed is sown it will produce a soft straw and is more subject to rust; while a strong grain will produce a large seed, and a good strong straw, that is not subject to rust. Red Fife wheat is the standard variety of wheat for western conditions. It is a good yielder, produces a stiff, strong straw that does not rust, and also a flour of the highest quality. Clean seed will bring forth good, sound seed, and of good vitality, while smutty seed will produce diseased grain. The quantity of wheat sown is from one to two bushels per acre.

Smut.—The principal enemy of wheat is smut. The disease is represented by spores which attack the plant when it is only a few days old, through the spores being attached to the seed. The losses occasioned by smut are that the yield is greatly reduced, the market value lessened, and it is liable to injure the stock if fed to them. Altogether a great loss is incurred. To prevent this disease an inexpensive remedy is used. Make a solution of one pound of blue-stone of copper sulphate, in twenty-four gallons of water, soak the grain in this solution for from twenty minutes to one hour. Then the seed may be dipped in lime water for five minutes. In all cases grain should be sown as soon as it can be dried after treatment. When sown immediately no danger results from the effects of the solution of the germ. If it is allowed to stand for any considerable time after drying, a lot of the grain will not grow; the amount varying with the length of time before sowing, and the strength of the solution.

Harvesting.—The wheat should be cut and stooked, when the stalk is a yellow color, and the kernel hard. If it is harvested too early the grain will be soft and will make an inferior flour. If too late it will lose its color and not make a good flour.

Volume xv of the American Galloway Herd Book has been issued from the offices of the secretary Mr. Chas. Gray Union Stock Yards Chicago. In it are recorded two thousand arrivals, the greater proportion being females. The volume is handsomely illustrated with nine full page halftones of leading prize winners.

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WRITE TO-DAY

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