

Autumn-Bearing Strawberries.

In the minds of some, doubt still hovers round the practicability of planting autumn-bearing strawberries and we believe from a commercial view-point this indecision is quite warranted. Tests have been conducted at the Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa, with several varieties of autumn-bearing strawberries. Of these Prof. Macoun, Dominion Horticulturist, reports the Progressive to be the best. On the farm at Ottawa the Senator Dunlap of the ordinary kinds of strawberries is looked upon with much favor and it would be reasonable to expect that where the Senator Dunlap does well in other portions of the country the Progressive as an autumn-bearing berry would be successful. This is an early ripening, attractive looking variety of medium size and good quality and has an advantage over some of the other autumn-bearing sorts in that it produces a moderate number of runners whereas most of the other sorts tested have made very few runners. On a small plot the Progressive yielded at a rate of 4,333.7 pounds per acre after July 22 when the regular strawberry season was over and at the rate of 5,649.38 pounds up to the date of the last picking on September 25, or a total of 9,982.45 pounds per acre. By many the autumn-bearing strawberry is considered an impossibility, but tests have shown that for home use where this berry is desirable even when other fruits are abundant the autumn-bearing kinds are practicable.

FARM BULLETIN.

A Day at the O.A.C.

Last week a large number of excursionists visited the Ontario Agricultural College at Guelph and were favorably impressed by the appearance of crops, experimental work, and things in general in connection with that Institution. It was our privilege to make a tour of several of the Departments and especially the experimental plots and animal husbandry work the day before the first excursions were held. Never have we seen the plots look better than they do at present. The Institution is making rapid progress. A new physical building is in course of construction and will be one of the best in America. Other additions to the buildings are contemplated for this season and the Ontario Agricultural College is advancing and keeping pace with modern times.

It is a treat to see the herds and flocks, and, while it is not an easy matter for those in charge to keep together an extra high-class herd or flock of any one breed, it being necessary for class room purposes to have on hand representatives of the many different breeds, a few extra choice specimens of some of the leading breeds may always be found in the stables or in the pastures at Guelph. We were particularly interested in the work with the milking Shorthorns and have no hesitation in saying that one of the best, if not the best individuals of the dual-purpose type of cattle we have ever seen is to be found in the O.A.C. stables. There are more than one, of course, but the big red cow in question is carrying at the present time enough flesh to be placed in the beef class and is milking, several months after calving, 36 pounds per day. During her lactation period of less than one year she milked upwards of 11,000 pounds and carried as much flesh and more than she is now carrying. That is what we call a real dual-purpose cow. In the herd are several good cows of this class but none which equal this individual record. The beef Shorthorns are a good useful lot as are also the Angus and Herefords.

Amongst the dairy breeds two or three interesting points are brought out. Many people believe that it does not pay to keep an old cow and others have no use for a grade. In the O.A.C. herd are two pure-bred Holstein cows, one of which has averaged 10,001 pounds of milk each year for eight years and the other has averaged over 10,000 pounds for six years. The former cow, in her ten-year-old form, last season gave 13,000 pounds of milk, this being the highest record she had made and this year she is beating last year's record, so that a cow should not be discarded because of her age when she will produce as this cow is doing. The cow which has averaged over 10,000 pounds for six years, has, during the last five months and a half, given over 10,000 pounds of milk so she is going to beat all her previous records this year and at the present time is giving over 50 lbs. of milk per day. A few words for the old cow are not out of place.

The grade cow we desire to mention is the best producer that has ever been stabled at the O.A.C. In one month she gave 92.93 pounds of butter-fat and 2,208 pounds of milk. This beats any former record of the Institution. A good grade is not a bad cow to have around.

The experimental plots, now 75 acres in extent, are as interesting as ever and it would take a

week to go over these thoroughly and become familiar with the experiments being carried on. Growers of wheat know that the miller likes a hard wheat. In the past Dawson's Golden Chaff has been the best yielding wheat for the farmer, but millers have complained that it is soft and not suitable for the making of high-class bread. The miller has favored the Turkey Red. These two wheats have been crossed and a better yielding wheat than Dawson's, with more hardiness than the Turkey Red has been produced but so far difficulty has been found in making good bread from it. This gives some idea of what is being carried on, as experiments of this kind are in progress and have been for years to cross different varieties of grain to incorporate the good qualities of each in the hybrid and give Ontario farmers a better variety than they have ever had. Selection has also been carried on very systematically year after year. As a result of this work we only need to mention O.A.C. number 21 barley, O.A.C. number 72 oats, and O.A.C. number 3 oats.

As in former years the alfalfa plots show many interesting features. The Grimm Alfalfa and the Ontario Variegated are proving the most hardy of the lot. Experiments are being carried on by the Plant-breeding Department in an effort to cross Black Medick and Alfalfa, and this hybrid and sweet clover to get an improved type. We might also mention that a new early oat is being developed which it is hoped will prove the best early variety in Ontario. It gives promise of so doing at the present time, out-yielding very much O.A.C. number 3 oats developed from the Daubeney. The new oat is being developed from the Alaska variety.

We were just in time to see the mangels coming up and beginning growth and it was remarked by everyone how much advanced certain plots were over others. Upon inquiry we found that these plots were grown from home-grown seed. The mangel seed produced at the college has a higher germination and sends up a much more vigorous plant and a more rapid grower than imported seed. It is very marked just now on the plots at Guelph. This should be evidence enough, that, where at all possible, the farmer should produce his own seed.

Over in the Poultry Department there are some 3,000 young chickens and possibly 700 or 800 older birds. Here the poultryman can get the best information regarding the different breeds and the difficulties in raising poultry on a large scale. Much experimental work is being done in determining some of the main factors of inheritance in poultry. One thing is demonstrated very well and that is that chickens to do their best, must have comparatively free range on freshly-worked soil. The colony-house system is used on a large scale with the young chicks.

These are only a few of the things to be seen at the O.A.C. Each of the many Departments has features to interest the visitor at this season. The Horticultural Department, the Biological Department, the Chemistry Department, the Dairy Department, and the Mechanical Department should be visited by all farmers who can get away to spend a day or two at the college. The worst feature of excursions is that those who take advantage of them have too little time to stay and the trip is so hurried that only a very superficial knowledge is gained of the work being carried on.

Farm Notes

By Peter McArthur.

If the blackbird had intelligence equal to its persistence it would be the wisest bird in the world. But it knows nothing and it refuses to learn. You would think that when a bird had its tail feathers plucked out by a rifle bullet it would have sense enough to take the hint that it was not wanted in the cornfield. Besides killing quite a few of the pests that are disputing my cornfield with me I have nicked several but they are not a bit discouraged. In spite of ragged plumage they come right back and they do not seem to be a bit more careful about keeping out of range. If I had a shot-gun I could have bagged the whole lot before this for they flutter right over me when shifting from one end of the field to the other. When I disturb their feeding at one end of the field they simply fly over me to the other end and resume their work of pulling up the young corn. That is the time when I could get them with a scatter gun but a thirty-two calibre rifle is the only lethal weapon on the place and I have to go after them with that. When they alight in a convenient tree or on top of a fence I usually get them but I make a large percentage of misses when I try for them on the ground. When on the ground they are usually walking and bobbing around enough to get them out of the way. It may seem cruel to talk of shooting dear little birds in this way but the dear little black-birds are an unmitigated pest. They may get a few grubs and cut-worms while the land is being worked in the spring but the damage they do to the corn more than counterbalances any good they do. And besides they

rob the nests of other birds whenever they get a chance. I have no compunctions about destroying them.

This year we have a novelty on the place in the form of a snow-white calf. This season the red cow, "Fenceviewer I," broke her record of bearing red heifer calves by presenting us a snow-white male. He is large and lazy and has as much appetite as any two of the other calves. I do not think I ever saw a creature so dazzlingly white. Except for a few hairs at the tips of his ears he is unspotted and you can see him a mile off. Though his mother simply adores him he is without a trace of filial affection. She stands by the fence of the meadow where he enjoys good pasture with the other calves, but no matter how loudly or pathetically she bawls he never wiggles an ear. Although they were separated within a couple of hours after his birth she does not seem to forget him the way she did her previous calves. I remember that two years ago I found her deliberately trying to put a horn through her own calf when she came across it tied up in the stable when it was only a couple of weeks old. The white calf is now almost that age and she is as noisy about it now as she was at the beginning. Moreover, she has shown her competence and ingenuity in trying to get to her ungrateful offspring. On two different occasions she has opened the gate to the meadow with her horns though it is fastened with a hook and staple. As she let the rest of the cattle into the meadow at the same time she had to be discouraged by wiring the gate into place but almost every morning we find the hook thrown out of the staple. If it were not for the twisted wire she would succeed in reaching her calf every night.

It seems that having a cow that eats rubber balls and similar junk is no joke after all. Arthur Welstead, of Lincoln County, Ontario, writes advising me to fit "Beans" for the butcher's block. It appears that he had a cow "with a taste for old bones, shoes, clothes," etc. For a couple of years it seemed to do her no harm. She gave as much milk as was expected of her—but one day she up and died. A veterinarian happened to be at the farm at the time so they conducted a post mortem. Mr. Welstead writes: "On cutting through the heart from the large end we found everything in good shape, quite natural, but on stripping the small end the knife struck something gritty, which turned out to be a piece of No. 12 wire about three inches long and slightly curved. On cutting farther back to the stomach we found that the wire had left a channel large enough to put one's little finger in, which was perfectly healed up and lined like the stomach. In this channel was the greatest collection of articles one ever saw, small staples, shingle nails, gravel, shoe nails, three-inch nails, and more rubbish than I could write on an envelope. The opinion of the 'vet' was that this piece of wire had been months making its way to the heart, which encouraged it by its motion. It had penetrated the heart sac which had grown fast to the heart and had calloused the end of the heart without any bad effect, but just as soon as it ruptured a blood vessel in the heart the cow dropped dead. I hope this fate does not await your cow but I am not going to keep cows that are determined to eat such stuff when we try hard to satisfy them with good, wholesome food." Mr. Welstead's letter worries me for only a day or so ago I extracted a couple of yards of line out of "Beans." She had swallowed it down to the buckle on the end and would no doubt have managed to put that down if I had not come along. She is in good order, almost too fat for a milk cow, and has the best of pasture, so there is no excuse for her abnormal hunger. I have sent her milk to be tested and unless she has an especial record for butter-fat I shall be inclined to take Mr. Welstead's advice.

In looking through the orchard I found one tree that escaped the frost and promises a good yield of apples. All the trees around it had the young fruit frozen and the only difference I could observe that might account for this tree's escape, was that the ground under it was covered with straw. There had been a small stack of oat sheaves near the tree, that had been used to feed the hens, and the scratched straw was several inches thick under the tree. I cannot figure out how that would save the tree from frost, but I cannot see anything else that could possibly have protected it. Still, it is possible that the nature and experience of the tree had something to do with its immunity. It is the one remaining tree of the original pioneer orchard that was on the farm. It has seen over eighty winters, and has probably become accustomed to them. I have been told that the apple it bears is the "Janetting," though when I knew it first we called it "The Graft" or "The Rib" apple. It was called "The Graft" to distinguish it from the natural fruits in the old orchard. It had been bought from an agent and was doubtless an approved variety