

THE
FARMER'S ADVOCATE.

"PERSEVERE AND SUCCEED."

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Essays Written for "The Farmers' Advocate."

In offering prizes for essays from farmers on agricultural subjects, we aim at more than one good to be derived from them. Our desire has been to present to our readers the knowledge of practical farmers, rather than the deductions of mere scientists; not that we undervalue the contributions of learned men to the science of agriculture, but the lessons that make deeper impressions are those gathered from experience. We speak as practical men to practical men—as farmers to farmers.

We hold out inducements also that farmers may be brought to think and judge for themselves more than many are in the habit of doing. The wisdom acquired from our own careful observation is seldom appreciated at its true value.

We hope that the consideration of a topic brought before our readers in an essay shall not end with its publication, but that others versed in the subject may in the *ADVOCATE* give their opinions, whether in favor of the opinions advanced or in opposition to them.

We will briefly review the essays monthly published in our columns:

Fence or no Fence.—This question now occupies no little of the attention of agricultural writers. There can be no second opinion as to the great expense incurred by them. The cost of a fence—making and repairing—is no small item in the farm ledger. The area of ground occupied by fences is another item of loss—much greater than appears at first sight—to those to whom they have almost been taken as a necessary part of farming. And another item, not the least as many farms are managed, is that the strip under and beside the fences is a nursery for weeds and a breeding-place and covert for insects. From this uncultivated strip they are spread in every direction over the fields, and too often a farmer, while he labors with cultivator and hoe to exterminate weeds that are robbing his crops of their food, neglects those that are sowing broadcast their seeds from neglected strips and corners.

While fully aware of the losses thus occurring from the use of fences, we would not do away with them wholly. Remove all fences not absolutely necessary. This will lessen the cost they entail upon us, and keep mowed the grass and weeds from every waste strip and corner, that they be no longer nurseries for weeds and coverts for insects. Divide your arable land into fields of the same number that you design the term of your system of agriculture to be. If a five-year or a six-year rotation, divide the land accordingly. If you have, after deducting woodland, &c., 75 acres arable, and you desire to pursue a six-year system of rotation, you will have 6 plots of 12½ acres each—one for root crops, two for grain, one for green crops for soiling, and two for pasture; or you may pursue another system as best suited to your farm.

We have from time to time pointed out in the *ADVOCATE* the advantages of soiling. From our own experience we can bear testimony to its great profits. Yet we would always have some pasture and. The stock will be in better health if pastured some hours every day, and the butter and cheese will be of a better quality than if fed altogether in the barn or yard. One-sixth of the farm

might in many cases be enough for pasture, and then two-sixths might be for soiling and hay.

Finally we would say, keep up no unnecessary fences; reduce the losses attending them as much as possible. Destroy all weeds, not only among the crops, but in all waste places. Public property, also, "the Queen's highway," is often the greatest nursery for weeds, the pest of the neighborhood. This should not be so. Wage unceasing war with your great enemies, the weeds. —S.

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Orchard Grass.

In the January issue, you have a full description of this valuable grass. We now give you the accompanying cut as a representation of it. It requires



to be sown as timothy. It matures the second year, but remains as a permanent grass. It grows in strong tufts, and stands better in drouth than any other grass; it grows earlier in the spring, and makes a more rapid growth after being cut. The fact that our best farmers who have once tried it, are sowing it more extensively, speaks as highly in its favor as any remarks we can make. It is but recently introduced in America, and is not yet in general cultivation, but is gaining fast in favor.

It has been cultivated for many years in Europe, and is much prized there, and known under the name of Cocksfoot. When sown alone, it requires about two bushels of seed per acre; the seed is

light, weighing but 14 lbs. per bushel. It would be well for farmers to try a little of it at first; larger supplies can be procured when you find out its value.

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Seeds.

WHEAT.—There is a great complaint from many parts of the Dominion that spring wheat is not promising remuneration. We well knew that this is too true. Attempts are being made by many to introduce and find out more valuable varieties. For our part we have, at far greater expense than heretofore, tried to procure some variety that might answer better than the varieties we have in cultivation. We sent one person to the Eastern States to enquire about some there; we sent another person to the eastern part of Canada, where we heard of a variety that was succeeding; we went to Michigan ourselves to gain information on spring wheat there—but up to the present we have found nothing that we can as safely recommend as the Red Fern wheat. Last year we sent out Stone's white wheat to try, but, with only two exceptions, it has proved a total failure. Two of our subscribers have raised some, and will sow it, and believe they can raise it to good results. Perhaps, in a few years, that wheat which nearly all have abandoned as useless may bring a fortune to one or two persons that may acclimate it. Of course there is labor, and risk to run. The farrow wheat we sent out last year has, in most cases, given good satisfaction. The milling quality is condemned by some, but the extra yield has made up for any deficiency in price. This season we introduce to you the Red Fern wheat. This wheat has been raised from one plant that had three heads. It was found some years ago on a field of Fife wheat. It grew so much better, and filled better, than the Fife wheat, that the three heads were preserved and sown, and the produce re-sown. There is as yet but very little of it, and what makes it rather bad is that the grain was found in a locality where Canada thistles abound. It has been allowed to become mixed with oats and barley, and other foul seeds, so that it requires a vast amount of labor to make it fit for seed. However, we have, at a very heavy expense, purchased, and by dint of cleaning and re-cleaning, and picking, shall now introduce this to you. In doing so, we feel confident that we send to you a spring wheat that will give you greater satisfaction than any other in the country. It has been tried by persons that test seeds for us. The heads are long, some of which measure six inches in length. It is bearded like the Rio Grande. The grains are much shorter, plumper, and of the best milling quality. The straw is stiff, will stand better than any other variety, and is less liable to rust; in fact, it may be claimed rust proof. It has grown well on light soils, while on heavy and rich soil no spring wheat will equal it, as it will stand better, resist the rust more, yield better, and make a first-class quality of spring wheat. We advise every one of you to try a little; it will soon increase. This has now been tried by five of our reliable subscribers. Thus we are prepared to stake our reputation in introducing this to you; in fact, we will warrant it to give general satisfaction. There may be more wheat of the same kind, for all we know, in some of the States, or even in Canada, but we cannot find out