

stance, Mr. Cady applied manure in the rows before setting the cuttings, and the effect was very perceptible in the more vigorous growth and larger size of the shoots as compared with those planted in unmanured land. As the result of his experience, Mr. Cady is very sanguine in the belief that for the purposes of fence, wind-break, firewood, and timber, the white willow is invaluable. This opinion seems to be generally entertained by all who have given the plant a fair trial. It is true many have failed from various causes, and these, as might be expected, speak unfavourably of the whole thing, and denounce the "willow lumbag," as they style it. But an example like that of Mr. Cady is worth more than a hundred or a thousand denunciations of this kind. The failures can be accounted for in a variety of ways. Some have been imposed upon and have bought a spurious willow; others have obtained cuttings that had lost their vitality; in the rage of speculation many feeble shoots have been sold; parties have planted without preparing the ground; or, having carelessly stuck their cuttings in the earth, have given them no after culture; or they have allowed cattle and hogs to have access to them, and thereby have lost their trouble. It certainly goes very far toward establishing a good character on behalf of this candidate for public favour, that in the region where it has been longest tried, and where, as we have said, there are hundreds of miles of it growing, the general opinion is that it is an inestimable boon to the agricultural community. In order to avoid extending this article to an unreasonable length, several points bearing upon the adaptation of the white willow to Canada, are treated in our correspondence columns, in reply to queries received on the subject.

Mr. H. D. Emery, one of the editors of the *Prairie Farmer*, accompanied us from Chicago to the willow region, and we owe him our best acknowledgments for many polite attentions and much valuable information. Skilful with the gun as well as the pen, we are also indebted to him for savoury remembrances of that delicious Western luxury—prairie chicken.

## Hops and other Crops in New York State.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER :

SIR.—Having just spent a few days in the hop-growing and dairy districts of Central New York, some brief remarks in relation to these subjects, as the hurry of travelling will admit, may be of some interest to a portion at least of your numerous readers.

The County of Otsego may be regarded as the centre of hop culture in the State of New York, and it appears that this branch of rural industry is becoming extended to several adjoining counties—except perhaps to the south. Some four or five thousand acres in this interesting district, it is estimated, are under the cultivation of hops, a pursuit that puts into circulation a large amount of money and employs many thousands of hands during a portion of the year.

I visited this district in the midst of the picking, and as an old Kentish hop-grower myself, the occasion awakened in my mind many pleasing reminiscences. As a general thing the cultivation, picking and curing of hops in this country are not characterized by that thoroughness and system which distinguish English hop culture, although I saw a number of instances which hardly admitted of improvement. The same objection is urged here which one so frequently hears in the old country, that the cultivation of hops engrosses so much of the farmer's attention, manure, &c., as to work detrimentally on the other crops, and induce him to rely too exclusively on a single article of produce. There is, no doubt, some truth in this, as applying to both sides of the Atlantic, but I have seen both there and here, especially among the best and most successful cultivators, numerous exceptions. There is nothing in hop culture per se any more than in flax or grain growing that necessarily tends to diminish the pro-

ductive forces of the soil. Rotation, cultivation and manuring, in accordance with the teachings of modern science and experience, will, in all cases, keep the farmer from so calamitous a result.

The produce of hops this season will fall much below an average, both as regards quantity and quality. Upon many of the low rich lands, especially in the southern part of the district, the crop is all but a total failure, and some gardens will not be picked at all. I observed a few plantations on higher land that would probably yield from ten to fifteen hundred pounds per acre, apparently of good quality.

The drouth, no doubt, has similarly affected hops as it has other crops, during this extraordinary season, and the unusual wetness and backwardness of the spring, proved very detrimental. But a new enemy to the American hop grower has appeared in the shape of an aphid, whose destructive work is painfully obvious through a large portion of the entire plantation. It has long been held by hop growers on this continent, that the plant is not subjected to the ravages of the fly, which is sometimes so very destructive in England and on the continent of Europe. It would now appear that a similar, if not identically the same species has taken up his abode among us: for I hear several complaints of the same character from Canadian planters, and there can be no doubt that the visitation is of rapid and wide spread distribution. It was observed in a few places in this part last year, for the first time, and it attracted some local attention. I could not learn whether the insect, in its fly state (termed in England the "long wing," and scientifically "aphis humuli") has been fully observed. However, an innumerable number of exceedingly small green lice can be seen both on the leaves of the vine and also in the hop itself, causing the former to become black and filthy, and the latter to rot away, producing what is popularly termed "mouldiness." Whether the latter condition is caused solely by insects, or by atmospheric changes, or both combined, is a problem which further investigation alone can satisfactorily solve. It is to be hoped that the whole question will receive the best attention of scientific entomologists, and I have no doubt but Dr. Fitch, the eminent entomologist of the New York State Agricultural Society, will favour the world with the results of his own views and investigations. I could not learn that the New York planters had applied any specific to this malady; but the syringing of the affected vines with the decoction of tobacco, and dusting them with sulphur, as gardeners do roses, grape vines, &c., might prove beneficial. Some idea may be formed of the intensity of this lice blight from the fact that in badly affected gardens, the surface of the ground around the hills after a shower becomes almost as black as ink.

The stock of good yearling hops, I am given to understand, is very small, and as the new crop must prove exceedingly short, the growers are looking forward to high prices, which, at present, can only be loosely estimated. I saw two bales, scarcely ripe, and otherwise of inferior quality, that had been sold for 40 cents per pound, but growers are talking of 50 cents and upwards for an article of good quality. As the English market is now open to the world free of duty, and the crop there and elsewhere in Europe is considered scarcely an average, well grown and managed hops will in all probability command a high price. This branch of agricultural industry is gradually extending in Canada, and there can be little doubt that in judicious hands, on suitable soils, it will prove profitable. I may refer to this subject again in the pages of THE FARMER, in a more detailed and practical manner.

I have now gone over a considerable portion of the State of New York, in it is true, rather a hasty way. Traces of progress are, in most places, obvious even to the most casual observer, whether one looks at implements and the practice of tillage, or to live stock and cereal produce. I have seen many farms that would have been no discredit even to the better cultivated portions of Great Britain, indicating in their owners, industry under the guidance of ability and sound judgment. In less favorable situations, or poorer soils, and, consequently, as a general thing, a more needy and less efficient class of cultivators, the rate of progress is slower, and more knowledge and capital are required to bring the arts of culture up to the required standard. The connection between the soil and the geological formations on which it rests, and from the rocks of which it was originally derived, is frequently most obviously marked, and the agricultural character and practices accordingly varied. The drouth has been similar in this part to what we have experienced in Canada. Wheat appears not to be extensively cultivated, but the yield is said to be fair, and the quality good. Little or nothing is heard

about the midge. Spring crops have generally been short—peas are but little cultivated, and barley not extensively. I was told by a Utica brewer that Canadian barley was much esteemed for its malting qualities. The breadth of turnips, mangolds, &c., I found less than might be expected; the severe drouth will, in a measure, account for this. I am just returned from a journey of about a hundred miles in Long Island, which varies extremely in the character of its soils and the state of cultivation, the contrast being most striking between the luxuriant and beautiful nursery grounds of Flushing and the arid monotony of the great central plain. In the latter, however, man's skill and industry are beginning to effect a wondrous change. The Long Island Railway has brought these hitherto barren lands within two or three hours of New York, where there is a constant demand at remunerating prices, for vegetables, &c.; and from which immense quantities of manure are readily transported by sloop or rail. The consequence is that these scrubby oak plains are rapidly being transformed into productive farms and gardens. These wild lands sell at from ten to twenty dollars an acre, and on the Atlantic coast and bays large quantities of fish and seaweed are collected and used for manure. The continuity of New York will render the reclamation of these sterile lands, if conducted with judgment and prudence, ultimately profitable. Most kinds of fruit do well here, and I never ate but few apples, peaches and peaches, of the choicest kinds, than from a garden prepared from this wilderness only seven or eight years ago.

I have had much pleasing intercourse with farmers and others interested in agricultural pursuits. The interest generally felt in all matters of this sort is truly encouraging. I had an hour with Mr. Harris, of the *Genesee Farmer*, at Rochester, who has recently gone rather extensively into practical farming near that city. I had also the advantage and pleasure of spending the greater part of a day with Mr. Willard, of Little Falls, the well known writer on rural matters, from whom I derived no small amount of information relative to hop growing, dairying, &c. At Albany I felt somewhat disappointed in not meeting Mr. Johnson, the well-known and esteemed Secretary of the New York State Agricultural Society, who was gone to Rochester on matters relating to the approaching Exhibition. After examining the Agricultural Museum connected with Mr. Johnson's department—of which more by-and-by—I had the pleasure of spending a very agreeable hour with Mr. Luther Tucker and son, the enterprising publishers of the *Country Gentleman*, *Cultivator Annual Register of Rural Affairs*, &c. These works the Messrs. Tucker edit with care and ability, and they are too well known and appreciated to need any eulogium from me. Mr. Tucker sen., commenced the *Genesee Farmer* many years ago, and I felt a peculiar pleasure in having personal intercourse with this much respected veteran of American agriculture. I met at this office Mr. Cornell, of Tomkins County, an ex-President of the N. Y. State Agricultural Society, and a munificent promoter of agriculture. It was gratifying to hear that amidst great national difficulties, the prospects of the approaching Exhibition at Rochester are bright and encouraging. One of Fowler's celebrated steam ploughs, with apparatus complete, has been purchased by the Society, and it is, arrives in time, will be put into operation at the State Fair. This is by way of experiment, and should it prove successful, American mechanics will, no doubt, soon manufacture implements improved and adapted to the special wants of this country. I must defer any remarks on dairying and cheese factories to a future occasion.

Yours, &c.

New York, Sep. 7, 1864. GEO. BUCKLAND.

THE LARGE SORGHUM PLANTATIONS.—While we regret to state that from information that comes to us we are forced to greatly reduce our estimates upon the amount of sorghum growing in the Western States, we are glad to learn that the crop very generally looks well. In Ingham county, in the vicinity of Bulkeley, some 300 or 400 acres are growing under the superintendence of Messrs. Manly & ——. It promises very finely indeed. A better and more uniform growth of stalk was never seen. There are lots of from 40 to 200 acres at other points in Ingham and Champaign counties, all looking well. At St. Johns is the well known plantation of 300 acres belonging to A. W. Nason, which is reported as the finest field of cane in the West. At LaSalle, Mr. Hadley has about 50 acres. The Daveport (Iowa) Company have nearly 500 acres, with a fine promise of a profitable yield. At all these points ample machinery has been put up to work the large crops to the best advantage. Planters will begin work earlier than usual, and in all probability escape the fall frosts entirely. Smaller planters should have their machinery in ample season to save the whole crop.—*Prairie Farmer*.