

FARMING

Vol. XIII.

JUNE, 1896.

No. 10.

Ontario Crop Report.

The first bulletin of the season on crops has been issued by the Ontario Department of Agriculture. Fall wheat in most places is reported as poor, a great deal of it having been frozen out by ice forming on it. Clover was considerably damaged by freezing out during the winter and spring. The earliness of the growing season is alluded to by all the correspondents, who report it as being from one to three weeks in advance of the average season. Hay is scarce, but there is an abundance of oats on hand.

While live stock have come through the winter thinner than usual, as a rule, still they are in a fair condition of health. Horses have fared best. Cattle, with the exception of a few cases of "umpy jaw," are remarkably free from disease. Sheep are in good health, and there is a good crop of lambs. With the single exception of a few cases of paralysis, swine are freer from disease than usual.

Health on the Farm.

A farmer's life is proverbially a healthy one; but it is evident, in many cases, that the standard of health might easily be improved, were it not for the neglect of certain sanitary conditions. Fresh air and green fields do much to remedy what would in other surroundings, such as in a city, cause severe attacks of certain diseases; but even these aids to health fail occasionally, and the individual has to succumb at length to the insidious foe, disease.

Pure water is one of the most important essentials to good health. None but those who have wandered through other lands, where pure water was a scarce commodity, can realize the blessing enjoyed by the man who has at his door an unstinted supply of good, wholesome water. In this country, as a rule, there is usually no lack of excellent water, which, if preserved free from contamination from surface drainage, sewage, or stable liquids, presents a supply of first-class quality sufficient for all needs. In the care of our wells and springs, however, we oftentimes show a lamentable disregard of the interests of

our health. Too often the well is located near to the stables, or in such a position that the drainage from the stables, both surface and through the ground, finds its way, sooner or later, into the water, and contaminates it. In other instances, frogs, rats, and mice find their way into the wells, and die there, poisoning the water with their putrid bodies. Many cases of sickness can be traced to causes such as these, and it is, therefore, of the highest importance that our wells should receive considerable attention every year.

There are a few important points concerning the supply of well water that should be borne in mind by everyone. In the first place, a well should never be located very close to the stables, manure piles, or cesspools; and, if a well has to be dug near to such, it should always be on a higher elevation than the place where they are, so that there can be no possibility of leakage from the latter to the former. It is wonderful how far drainage will permeate through the soil, and, therefore, every caution should be used to prevent such reaching the well water. In heavy soils the filtration of the drainage through the ground would be slower than in the lighter soils; but, nevertheless, after a time the contamination would take place. It is best, therefore, to take no risks in such matters.

In the second place, it is well to build up the last few feet of the sides of the well on top with a solid wall of brick and mortar, and to take care that the platform over the top fits tight and solid. This will prevent frogs, and, to a large extent, rats and mice, from getting into the well. The wall should also run up a little above the surface of the ground, and be banked up with earth, so as to shed all surface water, and thus prevent all contamination from the surface.

Another very important, but too much neglected, matter is the periodical cleaning of the well. This can best be done when the water is comparatively low, as, for instance, in August. The water should all be pumped out then, and the accumulation of sediment on the bottom scraped out as clean as possible, after which a little fresh lime should be thrown in to purify the water.