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Editorial.

Killing Wild Mustard.

In some quarters, a discussion has arisen over an article on killing wild mustard by spraying, contained in a recent issue of the "Farmer's Advocate." In one case, it is claimed that the weed commonly known as mustard, and probably most common in this country, is not charlock (*Brassica senapistrum*), the weed known in Ontario and England as wild mustard, but bird rape (*Brassica campestris*), differing only from the former in that the leaves and stem are smooth, instead of being covered with short hairs or bristles. On this point, we need only ask our readers to examine a plant, if they are unfortunate enough to have any in their locality, and we are sure that the consensus of opinion will correspond with our observation, and that of the Provincial Weed Inspector, Mr. R. G. O'Malley, who claims that Charlock is much more common in Manitoba than the so-called bird rape.

The surprising feature of the discussion is that some writers, who are, doubtless, quite conscious of the fact that weeds are alarmingly prevalent, appear to be anxious to discourage experiments in spraying calculated to give this method of destroying wild mustard a fair trial. A few years ago, a provincial botanist of considerable fame undertook an experiment, using as his spraying machine a hand syringe. Needless to say, the results were not very satisfactory, owing to the fact, no doubt, that a really fine spray, such as is required in effective work, could not be obtained with such an instrument. With this exception, practically no attempt has been made to see what may be done at the wholesale destruction of this most pernicious weed in the Province of Manitoba. In England, Ireland, Scotland, France, Germany, the United States, and other countries, carefully conducted experiments have shown beyond a doubt that a two or three per cent. solution of copper sulphate will destroy this weed, if sprayed at the proper time, and without materially injuring a crop of cereals in which it may be growing.

On another page of this issue will be found the results of experiments along this line, conducted by Prof. Wright, of the West of Scotland Agricultural Society, and, in the May 25th issue of this publication, similar experiments were reported from Cornell Experiment Station, N. Y., all of which went to show that our contention is correct. Even if it were true that our so-called wild mustard is bird rape—a smooth-leaved and smooth-stemmed plant—it will be interesting to notice that the results of Cornell experiments go to show that even common rape is severely injured by spraying with copper sulphate or blue-stone.

As an objection to our recommendation, it has been pointed out that the expense is too great, and that the bluestone would cost about one dollar per acre. In this connection, most critics fail to take into consideration the fact that after mustard is killed it ceases to take water from the soil, and the grain crop is hence enabled to make a greater growth and produce a heavier yield, which more than makes up the cost of spraying. A case of spraying mustard in oats which came under our personal observation a few years ago, illustrated this point very nicely. At cutting-time, the oats on the plot which was sprayed stood, on an average, three inches higher than those under exactly the same conditions, but in which the mustard was allowed to ripen.

With a proper spraying outfit a large acreage may be gone over in a day with two men and a horse. And there are but few farmers in the Red River Valley, where the pest is most troublesome and where water is comparatively plentiful, who would not gladly spend three or four dollars per acre, if necessary, each year to eradicate this pest, provided they had any reasonable assurance that after three or four years it would be practically extinct.

There is, undoubtedly, no surer way of wiping out wild mustard, or, in fact, any other pernicious weed, than by hand pulling, and where it has not become too thick for hand pulling to be done at a reasonably small expense, it is certainly the proper method, but where it is so thick that hand-pulling is out of the question, spraying with blue-stone (copper sulphate) is the most up-to-date method. Nevertheless, far be it from the "Farmer's Advocate" to depreciate good cultivation. This, in a general way, must be the great preventive against weeds, as well as the chief destroyer, but in the case of the weed in question, where it is difficult to get the seeds in the soil to germinate because of their oily nature, and where summer-fallowing appears to lessen its grip but little, there is very sufficient reason in Manitoba for giving methods of eradication by spraying at least a fair trial.

How the Western Representative to the D. S. H. B. A. Should be Elected.

Among other needed reforms in the Dominion Shorthorn Breeders' Association, is increased representation on the directorate and executive for the members of the Association residing outside of Ontario, and the important thing is that such additional representation should be chosen by the people most interested, not by the meeting in Toronto. The election of Western representatives (and, for that matter, Eastern also) could be made at the various annual meetings of provincial associations at Calgary and Winnipeg, and those held in Eastern Canada. We would suggest that a post-card vote be taken by the secretaries, Messrs. Greig and Peterson, from those members of the D. S. B. A. unable to attend the provincial meeting, and submitted to the scrutineers, along with the other votes cast by those present. Such a method would be the only fair one, and no member could then complain that he or she had no voice in the election of representatives, who should have some say in the running of the Dominion Shorthorn Breeders' Association.

Poultry Dressing and Fattening Demonstrations.

The Dominion Department of Agriculture has been doing a great work in the improvement of the quality of hog products, the cheese and fruit of Canada, and has within a recent period undertaken to improve the seed grain used and the quality of the poultry marketed. The bulk of the work along these lines has been confined to Eastern Canada, where the Department has exerted its energies hitherto, but it has been announced that poultry-fattening stations are soon to be operated in the West. In the meantime, would it not be well for the Commissioner of Agriculture and Dairy-farming to send a poultry expert with a few crates and utensils, as recommended by his branch, to give demonstrations, and, possibly, an occasional lecture on the fattening of poultry, and also on the dressing of such for market. We believe some such demonstrations, to take an hour or two in the morning, at one or more of the big shows

would be an attraction, and would be working along the practical and therefore popular line now being attended to by means of buttermaking and stock-judging competitions.

Join the Live-stock Associations.

If you are interested in any breed of live stock it will pay you to join the association of men banded together to look after the interests of the breeds you prefer. The fee is merely a nominal one, and no measure of the benefits to be derived from such association. The secretary of the Associations, Geo. H. Greig, will have a commodious tent near the judging pavilion at the Dominion Exposition, in which will be found Henry Wade, registrar of pure-breeds, from Toronto, and A. P. Westervelt, the Ontario secretary of that Province's live-stock associations. The time will be opportune to take out a membership in the Dominion Shorthorn Breeders' Association at a cost of \$2.00, and thus become entitled to registration at the member's rate, and a copy of the herdbook for the year. By being a member, one saves, on the registration of a very few head, the cost of membership.

The most important association for each man is his own provincial association, charged with the important interests of live-stock men in each Province. Strong associations mean reasonable transportation rates, better marketing facilities, increased opportunities for education in live stock, better prizes at and more attention by the managers of the fairs, improvement in the live stock of the country, and more honesty in the breeding and selling of pure-bred stock.

Country Roads and Ditches.

Roadmaking by statute labor has, any person will admit, been a failure, not because the men doing the work were incapable of doing better, but because the theory or idea holds good that roadwork is a chore, without any prospective return, but done in order to fulfil the law, and it is the same standard of morality which prevails in the doing of roadwork which permits a man to beat a railroad or any other big concern.

The statute labor system, then, is not only productive of inferior roads, but is also a stimulus to doing inferior work—skimping, in fact—which is, after all, a rapid decline from the dictum, "whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." Briefly, then, roadwork under the statute-labor system is wrong in practice, and vicious in theory. The earth (or dirt) road is undoubtedly the one the prairie traveller will have to depend upon, hence the improvement (although, in the nature of things, the opposite of permanent) is worth thinking about. The great idea at the bottom of all roadmaking is to keep any water off which would tend to soften the road or cause it to tramp or cut up. Therefore, ditches are of no use, unless such collect the water off the road and take it far enough away that it will not soak into the roadbed. Far too many ditches, instead of being water conduits or gutters, are a sort of pervious open cistern, in which the water only gets away by two methods—evaporation and soakage, and in both cases very slowly. As a general rule, it would be far better to leave the roadside without ditches. Before any ditches are made, levels should be taken so that the correct fall for the drainage water may be got.

A frequent harrowing of the road crown would also be of much benefit, and would largely prevent the wearing of the road into holes. The question of culverts is one rarely studied