



Under-Draining. Baffled by a Quicksand.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER:

SIR,—I would inform you that I live by ditching and under-draining in the township of Nissouri. Some years ago I took a small piece of under-draining to do, thinking that it was clay ground; but I struck a small vein of quicksand. Not paying much attention to it, I filled it with stone, but it did not last long before it choked up with sand. I then obtained the draining tiles, and laid them on a plank through the quicksand; but they likewise failed. I resolved to make one effort more; and having obtained suitable lumber, had it jointed, and made a tight pipe, so that it would reach five or six feet both above and below the quicksand. I thought now I had surely mastered the difficulty; but to my surprise it choked up again. I then took up my pipe, and found it filled with sand, hard and tight.

I would be very thankful if you could (through your columns) furnish any information about doing up an under-drain through quicksand, and have it permanent, as it would be a great advantage to myself and also to our Nissouri farmers.

For the information of my brother farmers, I will briefly describe my method of underdraining in clay land. I have a spade that is six inches wide and fifteen inches in length; and with this spade I finish the digging out of my under-drain. I then take small stones, and pick two as shapely ones as I can find, and place them edgewise in my six inch channel, each of them to the outside, and have them meet at the top, and bind them with other small stones, so that it leaves a little archway underneath throughout the whole length. I next fill up my fifteen inches with small stones; I would prefer to have them very small on top, and prefer even gravel if it could be obtained easily. This makes a good, durable under-drain in clay land, (without the draining tile), and I believe it will last for a good many years.

The farmers around here will have their ditches dug eighteen inches wide in the bottom; they will lay a sizable stone on each side of the bottom, and then, what they call a cap, or pretty large stone, across the two, thus leaving a large channel. But I think one large stone is in the way of the water more than a number of small ones. Besides, the narrower the channel, the more pressure it has to keep itself open.

WM. ROOKLEDGE.

NOTE BY ED. C. F.—If any of our readers have been more successful in draining quicksand than our ingenuous correspondent, they would do well to publish their experience.

HOP CUTTINGS.—Will some of our hop growers inform Mr. W. N. Wallace, St. Thomas, C. W., at what price he can procure "hop roots" or cuttings ready to plant?

POSTAGE ON THE CANADA FARMER.—D. J. asks:—"Is it lawful for a Postmaster to charge postage on the CANADA FARMER when mailed to a friend?"

ANS.—The CANADA FARMER is sent free of postage from the publishing office only; if remailed or posted by private hand, it is subject to the usual charge on newspapers of one cent for each copy.

A SUPERFLUOUS REQUEST.—A correspondent who may be a subscriber, but cannot have been a reader of the CANADA FARMER, asks for "information about the hop, soil, cultivation, training, &c. &c." If he had looked into any number of the journal since the beginning of April he would have saved himself the trouble of writing. His more reasonable enquiry respecting cranberry culture we will bear in mind.

A GOOD CLIP.—Mr. D. Messenger, of Browda, writes:—"In your issue of the fifteenth of June I notice the statement, in a paragraph headed "Canadian sheep still ahead," that Mr. Snell clipped from six sheep 103 pounds of wool, and some farmer in Michigan clipped seventy-eight pounds from the same number. Now, the difference is so very great, that I should like to know through your paper if the sheep were washed or not, and if they were rams or ewes, and the age, &c. I myself clipped from five shearing ewes, this year, fifty-two and a half pounds; three clipped ten pounds, and the others eleven and a half pounds, and one ram twenty-two and a half pounds, making a total of seventy-five pounds washed wool from six sheep, which I consider pretty good."

ORIGIN OF PLATT MIDGE-PROOF WHEAT.—The following surmise is addressed to us by "One who visited the Exhibition in 1851":—"In perusing THE CANADA FARMER, I perceive various communications in regard to Platt Midge Proof Wheat. One correspondent states that Mr. Platt imported the wheat from France. Mr. Platt is a person of the strictest veracity, and I am confident he never stated that he imported the wheat from France. Mr. Boulter gives a plain straightforward statement of fact: he states that it was called Amber wheat; it is (Russian or Poland) Amber Flint wheat. Other correspondents, on comparing their wheat find they have a similar kind; the question hence arises, where was the seed procured? I believe I can solve this problem. In the year 1851, at the Exhibition (or World's Fair) in London, the three gentlemen who had charge of the Russian department were particularly courteous to persons from Canada who visited that department; the climate of Russia and Canada being similar in some respects, they kindly gave small samples of the different kinds of grain to persons from Canada who expressed a wish to have some. The Amber Flint wheat was one of the samples. Persons having wheat of that description, if they will trace the source from whence their seed came, I think they will find that it was procured from persons who visited the Exhibition in 1851."

The Canada Farmer.

TORONTO, CANADA, JULY 15, 1867.

Harvest Prospects.

SINCE our last issue dry weather has for the most part prevailed. An unusually wet spring is in this climate very apt to be followed by a corresponding amount of long-continued and very trying drought; and the present season has proved no exception to this very general rule. As a consequence, we hear in several quarters of some short crops, more particularly in the late-sown spring varieties, especially barley, which, from all accounts, has suffered most. Spring wheat also, a crop with superficial roots, was in some places beginning to show the need of moisture. From many other localities, however, we still continue to receive very favourable reports, both in the public press and by private communications. Refreshing showers have visited many sections of the country, and there is every prospect of their recurrence in frequency and amount sufficient to mature the more important crops. Our exchanges from all parts of Canada speak in hopeful terms; and in the neighbouring States, where rain in superabundance rather than drought seems mostly to have prevailed, the accounts are almost unanimous of the encouraging prospects of the coming harvest. Our liability to drought is a difficulty which, if we cannot obviate, we may very materially mitigate; and the experience of the present and many past summers should teach us the great importance of deep culture. By attention to two very much neglected elements of good farming, under-draining and deep cultivation, we should escape to a great extent the opposite evils of too much and too little moisture in the soil. The first

operation would quickly remove the superfluous fluid, and render the ground at once warmer and in a fitter state for agricultural operations, while by the latter we secure a deep bed of loose aerated earth, which would not too quickly part with the requisite amount of moisture by evaporation.

State Entomologist in Illinois.

SOME months ago a bill was passed in the Legislature of Illinois, authorizing the appointment of a State Entomologist, with a salary of two thousand dollars per annum. We are much pleased to learn that the appointment has been conferred upon Mr. Benj. D. Walsh, of Rock Island, Ill., the talented Editor of the *Practical Entomologist*, which is published at Philadelphia, by the Entomological Society of America. Few men could be found in the whole of America better qualified than Mr. Walsh for the performance of the duties of his new office; we heartily congratulate the State upon the excellent choice that has been made. We have no doubt that the investigations that Mr. Walsh has been so long conducting, from the pure love of the science of Entomology, will now be carried on to a still greater extent, and prove of immense advantage not only to the farmers and gardeners of his own State, but to those of the whole of this Northern portion of America. Several States have now their Entomologist as well as Geologist, the investigations of the former being found to conduce as much to the welfare of the community as those of the latter, though conducted in quite a different department of natural science. It is much to be desired that this country should follow the example set it "on the other side," in New York, Illinois, etc., and employ competent persons to investigate the habits, injuries, benefits, and in short the whole economy of the insects with which this country abounds. Much, indeed, might be done by the Entomological Society of Canada, had it only the means of publishing and diffusing the information continually being acquired by its members, but which at present, from the want of funds, is confined to its own immediate society.

The United States Wool Clip.

WE find some difference of opinion among our American exchanges in reference to the extent of the wool crop in their country the present year. The *Ohio Farmer* does not think the yield will equal that of last year. The reasons assigned for this opinion are: 1. That the sheep in that State have not increased to any considerable extent. 2. That the season has proved unfavourable for as heavy fleeces, per capita, as usual. 3. That in the Western Reserve many farmers have changed from wool growing to dairying. 4. That large sales have been made to the butchers, owing to the high price of mutton. 5. That there has been much loss among lambs. The journal above-named neither expects any material advance nor decline in the price of wool.

The correspondence of the *Prairie Farmer* indicates a large production of wool in that State, and holders are advised to accept the first good cash offers. "Wool grower," an intelligent writer in that journal, thinks farmers will find it to their interest to sell at their barns whenever buyers apply with money in hand, instead of running the risks of delays and losses from the tardy operations of commission merchants and possible dull markets.

The *Country Gentleman* thinks farmers should not be too ready to accept low offers based on large estimates of production, but should wait a little until the facts are more definitely known, and the market has had time to reach a settled condition. This appears to be wise advice, and it is appropriate for us as well as our American neighbours. It is confirmatory of the opinions and counsels expressed in our last issue.