

The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine

PERSEVERE
AND
SUCCEED

ESTABLISHED
1883

REGISTERED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COPYRIGHT ACT OF 1875

Vol. XLVI.

LONDON, ONTARIO, OCTOBER 12, 1911

No. 994

EDITORIAL.

Rotation of crops is absolutely essential to the greatest economy in agricultural production.

What other occupation furnishes so favorable an environment for the life and general health of those who toil as does agriculture?

It is high season the cows were regularly stabled at night, as well as during the wet, chilly days which are liable to occur now any time.

One deep comfort of a cold, rainy autumn night is to know the live stock are enjoying a dry bed under sheltering roofs.

Were half the cost bestowed on needless fences Given to redeem the farmer's fields from weeds, There were a double benefit and a much-improved appearance

On many homesteads.

September registered but one frost in the immediate vicinity of "Weldwood," and that insufficient to hurt the corn seriously, save in a few small patches. Just north and north-east of London, however, the month closed on many whitened fields, some of them still uncut.

Scientific methods are just as applicable to agriculture as to any other calling, and far more so than in most callings. The man who can couple science with his every-day farm work stands to get more out of life, and incidentally larger returns from the farm than he who works in a haphazard, go-as-you-please manner.

No soil, however fertile, is inexhaustible. Deterioration is certain if something is not done to replenish the supply of plant food which is drawn upon by the crops from year to year. The change is often slow, and is generally unnoticed for some time, but eventually it becomes apparent, and the damage is difficult to repair.

According to the Paris correspondent of The Nation (London, Eng.), the food riots in France are in reality a revolt against high protection. How it works out, is illustrated by the case of meat, imports of which are heavily taxed, while producers are bonused to ship it out of the country. But cattle-growers declare they get no benefit from the sop thrown them, as a ring of middlemen have control of the trade, and bleed the public.

For a clean job, a nice field, and the securing of practically all the corn crop, cutting with a broad, heavy, short-handled hoe has every other method beaten to a standstill. An active man, working in straight hill corn, can lay two acres a day, and even more, if it is not too stout. This, in many instances, is cheaper and better than cutting with the corn-binder, though in the subsequent handling and feeding of the stuff much time is saved by having it bound. Where a silo-filling outfit costs ten, twelve or fifteen dollars a day, and individual day laborers two dollars (allowing for board), this difference counts heavily in favor of the corn-binder.

The Care of Farm Implements and Machinery.

Fall is here, and with it the usual damp weather and heavy fall rains. As the season advances, the weather generally grows worse, and any of the farm implements or machinery which are left exposed to it become damaged accordingly. It is believed by many that the action of the weather is more harmful and causes more actual deterioration in value than the work that the machine or implement is required to do. How often, in travelling through the country, one sees under a tree, or pulled into the fence-corner, out of the way, plows, harrows, cultivators, seeders, and even mowers and binders. In fact, the fence-corner seems to be the most common implement shed in general use. This state of affairs is no doubt due largely to carelessness or thoughtlessness. No one who has stopped to think would leave costly implements out in such weather. Consider for a moment the factors which tend to the depreciation of the value of these machines and implements, and factors which are largely under the control of the owner. Exposure to sun and rain has the effect of swelling and warping the wooden portions of the structures out of their original shape, and the rain, penetrating the wood, hastens decay. The metal parts of the machines become oxidized and rusty, and their strength and efficiency is greatly reduced.

Now, this can be largely overcome by a liberal use of paint, and by keeping the machines under cover when not in use. Before storing away in the fall, all parts from which the paint has been removed, either from wear or exposure, should be repainted, and all implements and machines should be put away clean. Soil particles or crop debris clinging to them hastens rusting and decay. When through with an implement for some time, it should always be placed in a shed. There is too great a tendency to leave things where they are used.

In plowing, many careless plowmen leave their plow overnight clogged with sticky earth. Perhaps, by chance, they are called to some other work for a few days, and when they return, the mouldboard and land side of the plow are found to be rusty, and the soil has become dried upon them, is hard to remove, and the plow cleans very unsatisfactorily. This may even occur if left overnight. Where care is taken to polish the mouldboard and to clean the coulter and land side before leaving it, this trouble is avoided. It is a simple matter, and the very simplicity of it seems to work against its general application. Always clean the plow, and never, under any condition, and especially in the fall, leave it in the ground.

Lubricants are also of great use in the care of machinery and implements. Besides lessening friction, they can be used on such surfaces as plow mouldboards when putting them away for the winter to spread over the surface and fill up any crevices; and, by virtue of their oily nature, they prevent the penetration of the atmospheric conditions which are conducive to the action of rust. The lessening of friction is simple; the lubricants spread on the layers in contact form a thin, oily layer on each, and thus it is really the two layers of lubricant material which are in contact, the friction of these layers being much less than that between solids. They also prevent much interlocking by filling up all the unevenness of the solids in contact.

Cleanliness is almost as essential to the period of actual usefulness of implements and machines as

it is to the health and longevity of animal life. Dirt, grit and gummy material are often found in the bearings of machines. They cut through the lubricating oils and increase friction, which is wearing on the machine. Because of this tendency of dirt to get into the bearings, even under the best care, it is necessary occasionally to overhaul the bearings of important machines and carefully clean them. Special attention should be given those parts where the speed is high, because the wearing here is most rapid, and needless friction here also absorbs more of the power. The main considerations, then, in the care of implements and machinery are continual housing when not in use; the liberal use of paint; cleanliness at all times; and the frequent use of lubricants when in use, and sometimes when in the shed. The first mentioned is the most important at this season, and should receive the attention of all owners of implements and machines.

Count the Whole Cost.

To the fact that farming has seldom been conducted on the same strict, account-keeping system as other commercial enterprises, must be largely attributed, no doubt, the unbusinesslike system or lack of system followed in the valuation of farm improvements. This common undervaluation of farm buildings has long been a matter of remark, but has been brought pointedly to our attention of late in connection with local mutual fire-insurance companies. As most of our readers are aware, the law forbids these from insuring in excess of two-thirds value, which is right and proper in the interests of safe business. But in connection with this, the companies adopt a plan of undervaluation, which leaves the proprietor with only a small proportion of his total risk carried. With some companies, the rule is to assess a barn at so much per foot of its perimeter, making allowance for extra height in some cases. This rule appears to be averaged, however, upon the amount of material and labor purchased outright in the construction of an ordinary barn. It usually ignores a large amount of material cut and collected on the place or taken from old structures torn down, and also throws in many days' unskilled labor of man and team hauling material, preparing foundations, and so on. It is common to hear a farmer, on being asked the cost of his silo, barn or house, put it at a very low figure, adding, when questioned, "We had gravel on the place, and didn't count the hauling of it," or, "We used a good deal of material from the old barn," or, "We did a good deal of the work ourselves"—as if their own labor had no value and only hired help was worth anything.

Now, we submit that this is unbusinesslike and erroneous. A dollar's worth of labor is worth a dollar, whether a farmer performs it himself or hires a man by the year to do it, or keeps and provides a team for the purpose, or hires it by the day. He who works for nothing works too cheap. The proper way to value improvements is to put them at what one would be willing to duplicate them for on his own or a neighbor's farm. Every stick of old material should be rated approximately at its intrinsic value, likewise every piece cut from the bush. Every day's labor should be counted at what it is fairly worth, not necessarily at highest contractor's wages, but what it would cost if one had to hire it on his own farm.

Not only would this method of valuation be equitable for purposes of fire insurance, but in all