

# The O. A. C. Review

Published Monthly during the College Year by the Literary Society  
of the Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph.

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Annual subscription 50 cents.

Single copies, 10 cents.

Advertising rates on application.

Ex-students are requested to contribute to our columns.

FEBRUARY, 1899.

### *Training and Feeding the Colt—continued.*

all farm animals is the feeding standard. All farmers, therefore, who wish to feed successfully and economically, should secure a copy of "The Computation of Rations for Farm Animals" by H. P. Armsby, of the Pennsylvania State College, Experimental station.

## The Apple.

The original apple is not definitely known, but it was certainly a very small and inferior, crabbed fruit, borne mostly in clusters. When we first find it described by historians, it was still of small value. Pliny said that some kinds were so sour as to take the edge off a knife. But better and better seedlings continued to come up about habitations, until, when printed descriptions of fruits began to be made, three or four hundred years ago, there were many named kinds in existence. The size had vastly improved, and with this increase came the reduction of the number of fruits in the cluster; so that, at the present time, whilst apple flowers are borne in clusters, the fruits are generally borne singly. That is, most of the flowers fail to set fruit and they complete their mission when they have shed their pollen for the benefit of the one which persists.

The American colonists brought with them the staple varieties of the mother countries. But the needs of the new country were unlike those of the old, and the tastes and fashions of the people were changing. So, as seedlings came up

about the buildings and along the fences, where the seeds had been scattered, the ones which promised to satisfy the new needs best were saved, and many of the old varieties were allowed to pass away. In 1817, the date of the first American fruit-book, over sixty per cent. of the varieties particularly recommended for cultivation in this country were of American origin. In 1845, nearly two hundred varieties of apples were described as having been fruited in this country, of which over half were of American origin. Between these dates, introductions of foreign varieties had been freely made, so that the percentage of domestic varieties had fallen. But the next thirty years saw a great change. Of 1823 varieties described in 1872, nearly or quite seventy per cent. were American, and a still greater proportion of the most prized kinds were of domestic origin. In the older states, the apple had now become so thoroughly accustomed to its environment, and tastes of the people were so well supplied, that there was no longer much need for the introduction of foreign kinds. It was not so in the Northwest. There the apples of the eastern states did not thrive. The climate was too cold and too dry. Attention was turned to other countries with similar and rigorous climate. In 1870, the Department of Agriculture at Washington imported clones of many varieties of apples from Russia; but these did not satisfy many fruit-growers of the northern states. It was then conceived that the great interior plain of Russia should yield apples adapted to the upper Mississippi valley, whilst those already imported had come from seaboard territory. Accordingly, early in the eighties, Charles Gibb, of the province of Quebec, and Professor Budd, of Iowa, went to Russia to introduce the promising fruits of the central plain. The result has been a most interesting one to a pacific looker-on. There are ardent advocates of the Russian varieties, and there are others who see nothing good in them. There are those who believe that all progress must come by securing seedlings from the hardiest varieties of the eastern states; there are others who would derive everything from the Siberian crabs, and still others who believe that the final result lies in improving the native crabs. There is no end of discussion and cross-purposes.