

FARMING

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FARMING

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TOPICS FOR THE WEEK.

Give Credit to Whom Credit is Due.

We have had occasion heretofore to refer to the practice of many of the local weeklies throughout the country in publishing selections from FARMING without giving us any credit. This practice has been much more noticeable lately. During the past month or two a number of weeklies have come to hand containing important editorial matter and articles written specially for FARMING, published as their own. While we have no objection whatever to the local exchanges using the matter from our columns, it is only fair and just that we should get credit for it. Our natural modesty would have prevented us referring to this matter had we not felt that, in simple justice to ourselves, some reference was necessary. "FARMING" is not a very large word to append to any article taken from its columns, and we trust that in the future credit will be given to whom credit is due.

Check.

The quality in some men known as "check" shows itself in many forms. It has developed in a very concentrated form in the case of the editor of one of our local weekly exchanges. This editor, having an eye to business, has conceived the brilliant idea of making a little pin-money out of the kind courtesies of others. He has published abroad that he will be pleased to supply copies of the more valuable of the exchanges he receives at half price. In this list FARMING is included, as well as a number of other publications of like character. We wonder if this precocious editor has ever stopped to consider that his name can be removed from our exchange list at any moment, when he would have no more copies to supply the individual who agreed to pay fifty cents for a whole year's numbers of FARMING. If FARMING is of so much value, it would be an exceedingly kind act on his part to make a present of it to some of the benighted tillers of the soil in his section of country.

Agricultural News and Comments

Peaches grown in Cape Colony realized 1s. 6d. each last April in the West End London shops, but, at this extravagant price, there was little or nothing in it for the exporter, as all he got for a box containing fifty fruits did not average 5s., which was barely sufficient to pay the freight. The middleman appears to take all the profit.

Fruit and vegetables are extremely cheap in Persia. Enough vegetables can be secured for an ordinary family for 1d. per day, and for an additional penny in the fruit season all the mulberries, apricots, melons, peaches, figs, and grapes wanted. Eggs sell at ten for 1d., chickens 2d. each, meat and bread under 1d. per pound, and all the other articles of food in the same proportion.

As the result of the wet weather of May a very severe attack of rust has developed in England among the wheats. Whether it will permanently injure the crop will depend upon the weather till harvest. If the weather continues wet, the coming wheat crop may be seriously affected. Other wise the English wheat crop will be a very heavy one.

The appearance of a farm if situated on the highway, is vastly improved if the roadsides are mowed a few times during the summer. If the ditches are not too deep this can be easily done with a mower. If they are it will pay to use a scythe pretty freely. It should not be considered a work of charity to mow the roadsides in front of any farm. It will enhance the value of any farm to have it present a neat appearance from the highway.

The total number of sheep in Australia in 1861 was 23,741,706; in 1891, 124,547,937, and in 1896, 110,524,058. The net exports of wool in 1861 were 84,636,200 pounds; in 1891, 707,253,689, and in 1896, 677,408,095. More than one-half of the first-class or merino wool imported into the United States is from Australia. Of the second-class worsted wools, imported, about one-half is from Great Britain and the remainder usually from Canada and South America. The percentage of lambs from ewes in Australia is higher than in America. In the former country the average weight of the fleece has increased from 4 lbs., in 1877, to 6 lbs. 4 ozs., in 1896. The value of Australian exports of wool, as last reported, is about \$100,000,000.

A recent Maine enactment requires that a seed dealer shall provide a guarantee as to the purity of his seed. This, however, only has to do with the purity of the seed and has nothing to do as to whether the seed will germinate or not. If the one is necessary surely the other is also, and the legislation seems to be lacking in that it does not include both.

The farmers of Washington Valley, N J., are reported to be considering the use of wire fencing for telephone wires. The staples holding the wires to the posts will be replaced by insulators, and other wires run from the fences to the houses. An expert electrician will be employed to connect the wires, and it is expected that this may be done at little expense. If preliminary attempts prove successful, this system will be used through the entire farm district.

The Jewish Colonization Association of Paris is considering the appropriation of one million dollars to aid Hebrew farmers from Europe to settle in the Canadian Northwest. Whether this great scheme will be carried out or not will depend upon the report of the Association's confidential agent, who has recently been in the Northwest on a tour of investigation. The plan is to advance a farmer \$500 to start with in the way of stock and buildings; he is to pay interest on this amount at three per cent. for six years and at

the end of this term he is supposed to return the principal to the Association.

The Most Profitable Kind of Farming.

The following extract from a letter received last week from a new subscriber for FARMING opens up a live topic:

We think that agricultural papers have done much for the farmers, but we would like to see more about practical results in methods of money making. The farmers do not get a fair percentage of profit, compared with other lines of business, for the amount of work and capital invested. Tell us how to make more money out of our farms and keep up the land, so that it will get better instead of running out, as a great many farms are now doing.

If the writer of the above had been a reader of FARMING during the past six months we think he would have found considerable information bearing upon the subject of profitable farming and keeping up the fertility of the soil. The discussion upon the subject of intensive farming by Mr. McPherson and Mr. Wallace during the past few weeks bears directly upon keeping up the fertility of the soil and the question of profit. The subject has not, however, been fully exhausted yet, and we would like to hear from farmers who have any practical data bearing upon the question of profitable or intensive farming.

Profit in farming is indeed a live topic. What every farmer is anxious to know is what line or system of farming will return him the most profit. Profit is not governed by the price an article sells for, but by the difference between the cost of production and the selling price. For this reason a farmer may feel that because the product from a certain line of farming has brought a high price, therefore that is a profitable line of farming to follow, when, if the actual cost of producing that product, and the loss of soil fertility, etc., were taken into account, it might be anything else than a profitable line of farming to follow. The problem of which is the most profitable line of farming would be more easily solved if every farmer would keep an accurate account of what it costs to produce the articles he has for sale. He would then know for himself the lines of farming that were profitable and those that were unprofitable, and be able to make his selections accordingly. But is it not a fact that very few, even of our very best farmers, are able to state definitely what it actually costs to produce the products of their farms? Some of them have a vague idea, but to come right down to the actual cost in dollars and cents the data along this line from farmers are very sparse indeed. For accurate data as to the cost of producing farm products we have to depend upon our experimental farms and agricultural colleges. These data are always valuable, but there is often a lot of scepticism among farmers as to whether the same results could be obtained on an average farm under ordinary farm conditions. For this reason, if some of our good farmers would keep a correct account of what it costs to produce the various crops and other products on their farms, a great deal of light would be thrown upon this question of profitable farming. It might be a profitable investment if the Government were to make a small appropriation to induce some of our best farmers to do this, though we think, for his own satisfaction and profit, it would pay every farmer to keep accurate accounts of the cost of producing the products of his farm. If a farmer were to do this for a couple of years the results would be a revelation to him, and would be of immense value in his future farming operations.