

FARMER FAITHFUL'S WHEAT FIELD

AND OTHER SKETCHES.



FARMER FAITHFUL sowed two pieces of ground with wheat, one about three or four weeks after the other. It was fine open weather, and, by the time the second piece was sown, the first showed the wheat well out of the ground, strong and healthy. But just after the second sowing the weather changed; November set in cold and raw, and all vegetation was checked. This weather lasted for many weeks, and meanwhile not a blade appeared on the second piece.

It so happened that a public path ran through Farmer Faithful's land. And soon the passers-by began to make their remarks. "Wasn't this bit of ground sown with wheat?" said one; "it ought to be

up by this time." "What sort of seed did you put in, farmer?" asked another. "I think the seed has perished in the ground," remarked a third. "You won't want the threshing machine for that piece," said another, in a joking way. These remarks were made by those who perhaps did not know much about farming. But as time went on, even the knowing ones began to wonder. The wheat had been in the ground, I don't know how many weeks, and still all was as brown as the day it was sown; not a green shoot appeared.

The farmer often came and looked at his field, but seemed nowise troubled about his piece of wheat. He smiled good-humouredly when people remarked