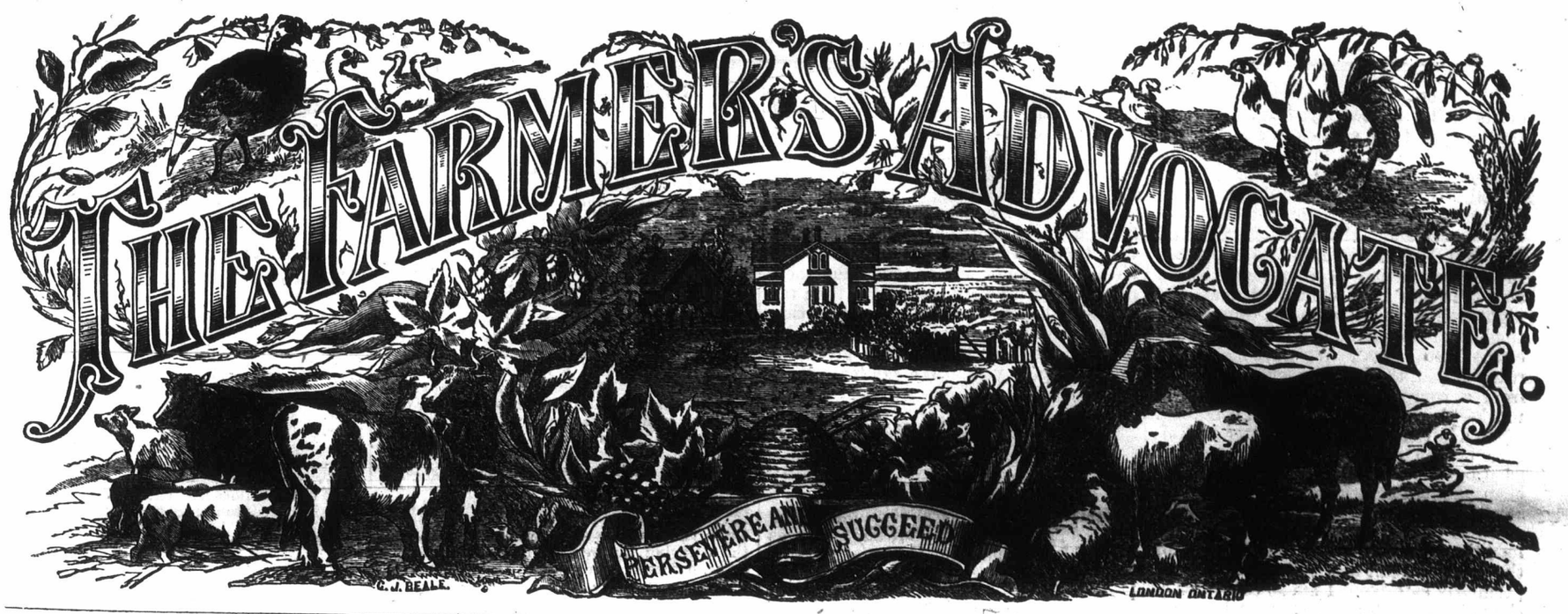

VOL. X. {WILLIAM WELD, Editor & Proprietor.} LONDON, ONT., OCTOBER, 1874. {$1 Per Annum, Postage Prepaid. Office—Dundas-St., Opp. City Hotel.} NO. 10

October on the Farm.

What of October? Any work for the farmer and his laborers? Any pleasures for him to enjoy this month? We need hardly say to those conversant with country life, that this month brings work sufficient for all hands, and that it also is a season of real pleasure. There are crops to be harvested now; the farmer must look that the fruits of his labor during the earlier months of the year are secured before the first storms of winter. The potatoes must now be dug and safely stored, and it is necessary to have the work done in fine weather, if at all possible. Potatoes dug and stored in the cellar and pit when the weather is dry will be better for use and will keep better, with less danger of rotting. The October weather of Canada is, fortunately for us, almost always favorable for this important work, and hence we have less rotted potatoes than there are in more humid climates. Another advantage of digging potatoes when the ground is dry is that it can be done in less time and at less expense. The machines known as potato diggers do the work very expeditiously, but they have not yet come into general use, but some patterns are well liked by those who have procured them. Many plough out their potatoes. Where planted to a considerable extent this may be found necessary, but it is said that a considerable portion of the crop is bruised and otherwise damaged, and that many are left in the ground.

Turnips will continue growing during the month—indeed it has been observed that they grow more during the few weeks of cold weather than in the warmer months, hence they are let grow on till November.

"Keep the plough jogging and you will not want feed for your horses," is an old time proverb of the farmers, and it is still a good advice. Fall ploughing has many advantages. The land that is turned up rough and deep in the fall will be found mellow and in every respect improved in the Spring. Winter is the great cultivator and fertilizer for those who are prepared for his coming.

This month is by foresters considered the best for cutting timber, either for firewood or other purposes. The firewood is said to be better, giving more heat and burning longer, and wood for carpenters uses being more durable.

Every repair to cattle sheds, stables and farm premises generally, should now be done. Convenient and warm houses for stock in winter amply repay the farmer in their good condition and economy in their food; and let not their condition now fall away. Cattle should be in good thriving order when housed for winter. Bare as the pasture may have been, a provident farmer will have other feed to supply the deficiency. There should be green food to mow and feed to them in the yard and stalls.

The Garden and Farm are alike objects of the farmer's care. Farming is but gardening on a larger scale, and our aim should be to have the cultivation of our fields approach that of the garden as near as in our power. Both should be kept free from weeds, well manured, and have in every respect a thorough cultivation. Fruit is to be collected this month, and this should be done carefully, hand-picked and not shaken on the ground. See that in pulling the fruit no injury is done to the trees by breaking branches, thereby lessening the next year's crop. Fruit—apples especially—are becoming a staple product of the country. We may safely say that the apples of Canada cannot be excelled, and we are glad to learn that the demand for fruit trees is continually increasing. There is a demand for all we can raise, and there is no fear that they will become a drug in the market.

Trench as much of your garden as you can. You will find your reward in the case of working it in the Spring, and still more in increased productiveness. We speak from an experience of many years.

Fruit and shade trees may now be planted in well prepared ground, though many appear to think it better to defer planting in this climate till Spring.

In the Flower Garden there is some work for October. Tender bulbs are to be taken out of the ground, and hardy bulbs planted for early flowering. In a word, work judiciously and properly done at this season, will be the saving of much spring labor, and your garden will be the better of it.

Scott Wheat.

We have now disseminated this season a greater number of lots of this wheat than any year previously. It is now four years since we first procured it, we gave you all the information we could about it. The wheat was imported from the States. It was at that time mixed with a few grains of a bearded variety. This slight mixture has not yet been picked out of it by any one that we are aware of. Some of the admirers of the Diehl wheat consider we have said too much in favor of the Scott wheat, and not sufficient about the Diehl. The facts are, there are as large crops of Diehl raised as of the Scott, on good porous or well drained soils, particularly in light soils, on the other hand there has been more Diehl wheat ploughed under from winter killing than any other variety during the past year. The Diehl also rusted worse than the Scott has ever been known to. Again, on nine-tenth of the clay soils the Scott has out yielded the Diehl. Still farther, we sent out hundreds of lots last year, and in no case have we heard of a complaint in regard to it, except from a few that might, or ought, to have known better. The greatest complaint that we have heard is that the Scott wheat shells badly. For our part that is what we consider a good quality. Our farmers here carry too many light-headed loads into their barns that have not shelled in carrying or at any other time. A shelling crop denotes a good one. We know that some of the wheat sent out is not quite as clear or pure as we would wish, but there has not been any injurious weeds in it—we have been careful on that score. We did not raise quarter enough to supply the demand. We believe that all will be pleased with the hardiness of this variety.

Fences or No Fences.

Since our visit to France we have frequently thought of that country, with its dense population, cheap labor and plenty of money, and farms unfenced. The question arises—Is it an improvement over fencing or not? It is claimed that more food for man and beast can be raised without having fences.

In regard to economy of labor in cultivating the land, fences add to the cost. In regard to the appearance of a country in a picturesque point of view, France will not compare favorably with the neat kept hedges in England, but comparing the unfenced land of France with our unsightly snake fences, France, we think, has the advantage. Our fences are fine nursery beds for Canada thistles and other weeds. The expense of keeping up fences on many of our farms amounts to a good rent, and as our timber becomes scarcer it must increase; the expense of raising live hedges on many farms would be more than their present value.

It is our impression that the abolition of fences would tend to advance rather than retrograde from the present system. Soiling of stock would come more into practice; lands intended for permanent pasture would be fences, as in France; portable hurdles or wire fences would be used to fold stock on small pieces of ground, as required by adopting the soiling system. It is astonishing on what a small piece of ground stock can be kept, as compared with pasturing.

In the cultivation of trees, whether for firewood, shelter, wind brakes, fruit or building, it is our impression that more would be planted if stock was confined than if allowed to run. This is a subject that each farmer should consider, and not confine his ideas to just his own farm or locality, but to the country generally. It is our impression that the time is not far distant when fencing will be optional, not compulsory.

Manure.

Manure, cultivation and seed all require the most careful consideration of the tiller of the soil. The quality of the seed to be sown, and whether thin or moderately thick sowing is most productive, are very important questions for him who looks to the produce of his fields for remuneration for his expenditure of money and labor. Nor is the mode of tillage of less importance than the seed; in vain is the best seed selected if the ground be not properly prepared.

The importance of the subject we now take up is shown by the attention paid to it by all agricultural writers, and by the labor and expense the farmer bestows in its acquisition and care. We have this season made a trial of manures of several kinds, and will briefly give our readers the result of our trials. We have not measured the plots of ground or weighed the products, but we observed carefully the growth of the crops produced by the several kinds of manure. We made a trial of cow manure, of cow manure and muck composted, of night soil, of wood ashes, of wood ashes with superphosphates applied afterwards to the drills, and of the offal of the tanneries, all applied to potatoes.

The largest yield has been from the muck and manure compost. The potatoes were very large with scarcely a small one, and a great many to each stalk. The cow manure used without any composting did not produce so heavy a crop, though from it too the yield was good. Wood ashes also produced well, and the potatoes were of a superior quality. With this manure the same result we have always had. The tannery manure we applied liberally, and the yield from it about equal to that from the cow manure, but I expect a more lasting benefit to the soil. It consists of waste hair, salt, lime and fat. The potato which I applied the superphosphate received great benefit from it. They were the latest planted and promise well, and I soon perceived the improvement it produced and this improved appearance has continued all through. With the result of the night soil I was somewhat disappointed; it did not come up to the expectations I had been led formerly to form from it. I used it sparingly, though more heavily than directed by those who had more knowledge of it as a fertilizer than I