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The Importation of Nursery Stock.

In order to meet in some measure the demands of the West to allow the importation of fruit trees from the States to the south of us, which is prohibited by the San José Scale Act, the Dominion Government last spring amended the Act so as to allow the importation for a limited period, under certain restrictions. It has now been arranged that trees may be imported, from October 15th to December 15th, under similar restrictions. For the West, the port of entry is Winnipeg, and here all nursery stock must be put through a process of fumigation. This is done under the direction of the Government, at their expense. Hydrocyanic acid gas is used; it is highly poisonous, and to withstand the fumigation the nursery stock must be well matured; and there may be some difficulty in procuring stock matured—in the southern part of Minnesota, for instance—and have it reach its destination in Manitoba or the Northwest in time to get it in the ground before the frost sets in. It is extremely difficult to understand why such an embargo should have to be placed on the only nursery stock that is at all suitable to the needs of this Western country, especially as it is claimed that no San José scale exists in Minnesota, while we are allowed perfect freedom to import carloads of Ontario nursery stock, that is really of little use to us and where the San José scale is rather prevalent. However, such is the law, and such being the case, it seems a pity that the authorities could not have completed these arrangements earlier in the season, so that due notice could have been given, that those wishing to procure nursery stock could have had a better chance of doing so.

Possible Benefits from the Wet Spell.

Owing to the unprecedented moisture and warmth of September, there has been a greater germination of weed seeds and shelled grain in the stubble fields than we have ever seen before. Oat stubbles, in many cases, grew a second crop, which yielded a fair cut of feed, and all grain fields that were early cut sent up a luxuriant aftergrowth. Summer-fallows, in many cases, became a mat of weeds, that required severe cultivating or plowing to prepare the surface for the drill. In some districts, it was no uncommon sight to see fields yellow with mustard or white with stinkweed as late as the middle of October. This extraordinary germination of seeds that lay on or near the surface will have done more to free that portion of the soil of weeds than weeks of cultivation in ordinary dry summer weather; but when this surface has to be turned down by deep plowing, and a fresh layer left on the surface, which may be full of weed seeds, there is no guarantee of any relief from the weed nuisance next year, and this should be borne in mind when laying plans for next season's cropping.

One of the commonest consolations for the excessive wet during the past harvest is that the moisture will insure next year's crop, but unless intelligent cultivation is given, so as to provide a soil mulch to retain that moisture in the soil for the use of the growing crop, little benefit may be derived, for the conditions may easily be such as to favor rapid evaporation from ill-prepared land. A roughly-plowed, lumpy surface or one fined down and then allowed to crust over assists very greatly in evaporating moisture from the soil. Shallow and frequent surface cultivation with harrow or weeder helps to overcome these conditions, and does no harm, except when soil is liable to drift, in which case its mechanical condition must be attended to by seeding down to grass. Certainly the moisture that has fallen has given the soil a soaking that, under normal conditions, cannot but help next year's crop; it has given all grass lands an added vigor that is sure to tell favorably on them, and it has also been helpful in rotting new land and putting it in first-class shape for next year's seeding.

Steer Feeding.

Is there any money in feeding beef cattle this winter? For the man who has a supply of fodder and facilities for feeding and handling stock without waste of labor, there is no reason why a profit should not be made. But much depends on the facilities a man has for handling the stock with a minimum of labor, for at best there is not room for a large margin of profit. Those who have not got accommodation for handling mature cattle might make good wages by putting in a bunch of calves, for there is an ever-growing demand for good, thrifty, well-grown stockers for the Western ranges, and the American buyers are always ready to pick up good-quality stuff. Calves can be wintered very cheaply, if in warm, dry quarters, on hay, or even good straw if cut and steamed or moistened, and bran and oat, barley or wheat chop sprinkled over it.

Experiments have been conducted at both the Indian Head and Brandon Experimental Farms in feeding straw, wheat, oats and barley, against hay, together, of course, with roots or ensilage and grain. The tests at Indian Head show strongly in favor of wheat straw, and a Brandon test, with wheat and oat straw as the main portion of the ration, showed that a respectable profit can be made in steer feeding without hay at all. In this test six steers were bought at \$3 per cwt. and sold at \$4.85. Food cost \$7.55 each, and they averaged a profit of \$20. Of course, in this case ensilage was fed along with the straw, and equally good results could not be expected without ensilage and roots, but if straw is cut, moistened, the chop mixed with it and then allowed to stand in a pile to warm up a little, good results can be had. A feature that must no longer be lost sight of in the wintering of stock is the value of the manure product. Steers that run in loose boxes can be made to convert a big pile of straw into manure of the very best quality, that can be handled with a minimum of cost for labor. Where so much of our land has lost its humus and dries out and drifts or bakes, manure must become an important factor in restoring such land. Mr. S. Martin, in our issue of July 29th last, page 386, tells briefly how he successfully fed steers and hogs in loose boxes, and if stock-feeding can be done in his district (near Routhwaite), which is generally considered a wheat section, it can be done almost anywhere.

Prepare for Winter.

Now that the hurry-scurry incidental to a long, drawn-out harvest and threshing season is about over, the fag ends of the fodder crop gathered together, and other field work pretty well in hand, preparations for the short days and long nights of winter are in order. One of the things that will commend itself as of first importance to every right-thinking person is the necessity of providing a generous supply of suitable literature for each member of the household. We boast of the intelligence and high moral tone of our people in this Greater Canada, and if we are to make this boast good in the practical upbuilding of this new country, it behooves every one to see to it that the young people—the boys and the girls—are encouraged to read, and to read the right kind of literature. But apart from this, there are many matters that will require immediate attention about almost every household. The work of the women in this country is, generally speaking, most arduous and exacting; help is, in most cases, out of the question; but there are many ways in which a thoughtful man may lighten these household cares, by providing a liberal supply of wood and water convenient for use, by providing the power to run washing-machine and churn. For this, no expensive gasoline engine is necessary; just let the master himself or one of the men furnish the "elbow grease." It is,

however, unnecessary to enumerate further the "little things" that would so greatly help in reducing the burdens of the women folk; every man can see dozens of ways of doing so if he only looks for them. Even a pair of hinges on a cellar door would, in many cases, be an appreciated blessing. About the stables, poultry houses and outbuildings there are many minor things that, without the outlay of money, can be made more convenient, saving steps and economizing time every working day for the next four or five months. We are so apt to get into ruts and continue to go a long way 'round simply because we have got accustomed to doing so, when, with hammer and nails and saw, we could in half an hour make a short cut that would save hours of time. The manufacturer is ever studying to reduce labor and cost of production in every detail, and it is equally essential that the farmer should do the same. The ability to read and think and plan will not grow in a man unless these faculties are exercised, and it is only the man who can think and plan that need look for success on the farm under the conditions of to-day. Read the best literature relating to your own profession; learn what others are doing, and profit by their experience.

Look Out for Ringworm.

After taking the calves in look out very particularly for ringworm, which so often makes its appearance among calves soon after they are stabled in the fall. Ringworm is caused by parasites, which burrow under the skin and cause the bald, scurfy spots, and while it is not fatal in its attacks, it causes a certain amount of irritation and restlessness, which interferes with the thrift of the animal. Treatment is very simple, and should be applied as soon as the disease appears, and repeated every three or four days. Wash the parts with warm water and soft soap, rubbing vigorously to remove the scurf, then apply carbolic acid mixed with four times its bulk of linseed oil; iodine ointment is also effective. The walls and mangers of the stable in which affected animals are kept should be thoroughly disinfected with disinfecting fluids or hot lime wash in order to destroy the spores of the disease, which remain active for a long period.

Quality, Not Pounds.

In an editorial admonishing its readers to caution in the development of their live-stock operations, the *Wallace Farmer* thus sums up its argument:

"The stock business is quite different from raising grain. There are a whole lot of things in it that can be learned, like the precepts of the Good Book, only by doing them; in other words, by actual experience. As the family is likely to increase as fast as the ability to take care of them, clothe and educate them, so a reasonable amount of live stock, properly managed, will increase about as rapidly as the farmer's ability to handle them properly. In other words, the forces of nature that work for multiplication are fully as well developed in man and beast as the forces that make for the development and growth of the increase. The important point for the farmer is to secure good males in every department of his farming operations. Here is where most farmers break down. The profits in live stock are not in the pounds, but in the quality of the pounds, or their selling price on the market; hence, better raise fewer individuals and have them of the best, at least while you are learning the business, and do not make the change from grain-growing to stock-farming too rapidly."

Obituary.

We regret to chronicle the death of Mr. W. T. Muir, which took place at his home, near High Bluff, on Oct. 18th. Mr. Muir was serving his second term as Reeve of the municipality of Portage la Prairie, which attests in some degree the esteem in which he was held. He was a good farmer and a sterling, kindly neighbor. He leaves a wife and young family to mourn his loss. Mr. Muir was an occasional contributor to the *FARMER'S ADVOCATE*.