

# FARMER'S ADVOCATE

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## THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE & HOME MAGAZINE

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL IN THE DOMINION.

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The FARMER'S ADVOCATE is published on or about the first of each month, is impartial and independent of all cliques or parties, handsomely illustrated with original engravings, and furnishes the most profitable, practical and reliable information for farmers, dairymen, gardeners and stockmen, of any publication in Canada.

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### Our Monthly Prize Essays.

CONDITIONS OF COMPETITION.

- 1.—No award will be made unless one essay at least comes up to the standard for publication.
  - 2.—The essays will be judged by the ideas, arguments, conciseness and conformity with the subject, and not by the grammar, punctuation or spelling.
  - 3.—Should any of the other essays contain valuable matter, not fully covered by the one awarded the first prize, or should any present different views of the same topic, and we consider such views meritorious, we will publish such essays in full, or the writer ten cents per inch (one dollar per column) printed matter for as much of such articles as we publish. By this rule each writer who sends us valuable matter will receive remuneration for his labor, whether he be the winner of the first prize or not.
  - 4.—We invite farmers to write us on any agricultural topic. We are always pleased to receive practical articles. For such as we consider valuable we will pay ten cents per inch (one dollar per column) printed matter. Criticisms of Articles, suggestions How to Improve the Advocate, Descriptions of New Grains, Roots or Vegetables not generally known, Particulars of Experiments Tried, or Improved Methods of Cultivation are each and all welcome. Contributions sent us must not be furnished other papers until after they have appeared in our columns. Rejected matter will be returned on receipt of postage.
- Replies to circulars and letters of enquiry sent from this office will not be paid for as provided by rule 4.
- We will give a prize of \$5 for the best essay which will name and describe the six most promising varieties of potatoes grown in the district in which the writer resides, and the mode of culture which has given the best results. Essay to be in this office not later than 15th Feb., 1892.
- We will give a prize of \$5 for the best essay on corn and corn culture, the writer to name and describe the three most promising sorts grown in the district in which he resides, also the best and most economical mode of cultivation before and after planting. Essay to be in this office not later than 15th February, 1892.

## Editorial.

### Our Next Issue.

In our next issue we will give the history and particulars concerning several of the new grains mentioned in this paper, also letters received from farmers living in various parts of Ontario and Quebec, in which they name the sorts of grain and roots that have succeeded best in their respective neighborhoods; also a very instructive illustrated paper on grasses by Mr. Jas. Fletcher, Entomologist and Botanist of the Dominion Experiment Stations.

The prize essays which should have been published in this issue will appear in the March number, as will also an excellent article on the Patrons of Industry by Uncle Tobias.

### Changing Seed.

At this time of the year we hear a great deal about changing seed. A farmer who has not good seed should procure it. Not half enough attention is paid to this subject, nor is its importance fully realized. A new variety should be well tested by a grower for more than one year before he ventures to sow any but a limited acreage with it. While a new sort may have done well with a neighbor or with a farmer at a distance, that is no guarantee that it will do well with you. Every farmer should try the promising new sorts, but should move cautiously. There is as much difference between poor and good seed grain as between pure-bred and scrub stock. Obtain the catalogues issued by reliable seedsmen; note what they say regarding the varieties; new sorts introduced by them are worthy of a test. All reliable houses thoroughly test each new kind before sending it out. If they did not do so they would soon ruin their business. Their reputation is at stake; they cannot afford to introduce worthless sorts, much less to recommend them.

The selection of seed is very important work. If farmers would carefully select their seed grain, sowing only the best, we would hear little about sorts running out. Of themselves they never "run out," but are "run out" by careless handling. If the sorts you now have are not the best grown in your neighborhood, get the best and most reliable. Notice next year which is your most productive field of each variety. Select portions of the field where the most desirable samples grow; allow these samples to become thoroughly ripe; cut them and put them away by themselves. Next winter, when you have plenty of time, take the sheaves one by one and remove the small and undesirable heads; then, with a flail, thresh the choice specimens; well clean the grain obtained, and retain only the finest berries. In this way you will soon obtain a pedigreed variety that will continue to improve in quality and yield, especially if you keep your land fertile; for, like an animal, you may have your grain ever so well bred. If it is starved it will not improve but "run out."

Mr. Thomas Manderson, the well-known exhibitor of seed grain, has grown and improved a sample of White Fyfe, also Red Fyfe, for the last twelve years. While his neighbors on all sides are searching for new sorts, Mr. Manderson writes:—"My Red and White Fyfe are the best yielding sorts I grow." He tests everything that promises well. The Buckbill barley, tested by the Dominion Experimental Stations, was grown in this way by him for sixteen years, and to-day it is the best barley grown in any part of Canada, being superior to that commonly known as Duckbill, which is a good sort.

Another gentleman in eastern Ontario has carefully grown six-rowed in like manner during the last twenty years, never having changed his seed in that time. His barley crop is always above the average in yield and quality.

One of our correspondents has grown one variety of black side oats for over twenty years. During that time he has carefully selected his seed each year. Last year his crop of thirteen acres averaged a little over eighty bushels, while five acres of English Potato oats, bought for seed and sown in the same field, did not average quite sixty-five bushels per acre.

Cross fertilization and the introduction of new varieties will do much towards increasing the average yield in the Dominion; but careful cultivation of the land and selection of seed will do much more. Many will say the trouble is too great. To some, who do not love their calling, but are simply farmers because circumstances compel them to be, this careful selection may be irksome; to such we say, buy your seed from men who can supply the best, it will amply repay the extra outlay. At this season of the year, in many cases it is impossible to select the grain in the sheaf. If it is all threshed, and your crops were good last year, use a good fanning mill and coarse screens, and from what you have on hand (if you have an abundance and the variety is good), screen out the largest grains for seed and bag carefully what you obtain ready for use when seed time arrives.

We refer our readers to an article written by Mr. John S. Pearce, page 328, September number, 1891.

### Mr. John Ryerson Neff, M. L. A.

The farming interest have not been overlooked in the formation of the Northwest Territorial Cabinet by Premier Haultain. Mr. John Ryerson Neff, M. L. A. for Moosomin, has been chosen as one of the cabinet. This gives general satisfaction, and the farming community are well pleased, as Mr. Neff, besides being a first-class business man, is one of the most extensive and successful farmers of the locality. His varied experiences fit him for the exalted position. If his efforts in the past are a forecast of his future, his part in the administration will be well done.

Prior to settling in the Moosomin District (N. W. T.), Mr. Neff carried on farming and a general store at Troy, County of Wentworth, and St. George, County of Brant.