

CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. MacPherson's Proposal
Commended

To the Editor of FARMING:

On leaving Toronto, July 6th, I left word for my FARMING to be forwarded to me at this address until Sept. 1st, but through some mistake the paper of July 11th has not been sent to me, although the last number, July 18th, has come to me all right. I may say that I enjoy reading your paper so much that I do not wish to miss one number. I am not a farmer but take a keen interest in agricultural matters, and I always find something in FARMING that suits my taste.

The paper is taken by the gentleman in whose house I am now stopping, Mr. Thomas Tremeer, the owner of large and valuable fruit farms in this county. In this way I have had the reading of the article from the pen of Mr. D. M. MacPherson entitled "The Basic Principles of Successful Farming." I am always especially interested in all Mr. MacPherson has hitherto written, and am always pleased to read any article he writes. The competition which he proposes between Prof. Robertson, Dr. Saunders, and himself should, if entered upon, be of great benefit to the agricultural interests of Canada. I sincerely hope it will be agreed upon.

Will you kindly send me *two* numbers of FARMING for July 11th, as I wish to hand one to a friend?

ALEX. COWAN.

"The Crest," Randolph, Ont., July 20th, 1899.

More About the Farm Fence

To the Editor of FARMING:

I have just read an editorial in FARMING in which you ask for views on wire fencing, and as I have had some experience in both rail and wire fencing I thought I would give you my views as to both. In the first place rail fences have been and are mostly used in this vicinity or locality, but as timber is getting very scarce farmers are turning their attention to wire. Up to recently, however, the wire fences of different kinds have not given satisfaction.

Some very good wire fences are now being put up. One of the best, in fact I consider it the best, is the Frost wedge lock spiral steel wire fence. Owing to its extreme strength, and also its being thoroughly stayed and locked, each stay acts as a small post, which will naturally keep it from sagging. Besides, each wire, being stretched separately, will certainly make it much stiffer and less liable to sag than any woven wire fence could possibly be. Then, again, where other wire fences are stretched in the same way as the Frost spiral steel wire fence is, only in place of the Frost stay and lock only use a small wire woven in and around the lateral wires they cannot be compared to the Frost stay and wedge lock spring or spiral wire fence.

I think wire fencing an improvement along the roads where it is on both sides. I cannot see how it can form drifts any more than in the centre of the field. As to farmers herding their stock, I think if that were done here it would only be a very short time before the fields along the roads would look no better than the roads do now.

Glenwilliams, Ont., July 24, 1899.

JOHN HUNT.

Our Fence Laws

To the Editor of FARMING:

I have read and studied carefully the correspondence published in FARMING in respect to fencing. I was much pleased with your article on the subject in the issue of the 18th inst., in which you suggest further discussion on this subject. It seems to me that most of the correspondents have not taken into consideration the three most important points of the whole matter.

1st. What is the law as to fencing at present? I understand it to be that a man must take care of his own cattle,

and can be sued for any damage done by them to his neighbor's crops, notwithstanding all the by laws of both township and county councils.

2nd. Where is the justice or fair play in a law or custom that compels a man who has no cattle to fence his whole farm to keep his neighbor's cattle off of it?

3rd. Would it not be much less expensive for every farmer to put up and keep such fences as he requires for his own cattle than to fence his whole farm to keep out his neighbor's cattle?

This would do away with all road fences except where required for a pasture fence, and would remove one of the greatest causes of bad roads in winter time.

If any of your readers think that we could not get along without road fences let them take a trip over to Rochester, N. Y., and take a day's drive along the roads there and ask the farmers there which is the best method.

In conclusion, I would say that when the farmers can get along without road fences in the State of New York I can see no reason why we cannot do so in this province.

JAMES S. MILLAR.

Parry Harbor, Ont., July 26, 1899.

Oats as a Food for Horses

To the Editor of FARMING:

I suppose everyone admits the superiority of oats over any other grain as a food for horses. No grain will give nervous energy to the horse like oats. It is only about ten years ago that I understood why oats stimulate the nervous organism in the equine species. I was quite familiar with the living example of the effects of the oats on the *genus homo*; that my "brother Scots" were possessed of greater energy, grit and shrewdness than any other nation; I was prepared to give credit to the oat, but when I became familiarized with the many different nourishing principles it contains I was not surprised that horses and men fed on oats as the principal diet are hardier, stronger and possess greater nervous energy. The following from a French paper appeared in 1891, of which I give a translation:

"What is the value of oats as a nourishment given to animals? Oats contain twice as much mineral principles to form and grow the bones of the animal as Indian corn. It is 12 to 14 per cent. richer in protein—that is to say, in matter that makes muscle and other tissues. Besides that, oats contain a principle that has been ignored for a long time—a stimulant similar to theine, contained in tea, and caffeine, contained in coffee. The German chemist who discussed this principle calls it *avenin*, from the Latin word *avena*—oats. Oats are almost indispensable for the horse, and with regard to all other animals one ought to feed this grain in preference to all others."

The fact as described by the German chemist that oats contain a principle similar to theine, caffeine, strychnine and quinine makes it easily understood why oats stimulate the nervous energies of the horse as no other grain will. We are all familiar with the stimulating effects of a cup of tea or coffee, and of the stimulating medical properties of such drugs as nux vomica (which is a compound of strychnine), quinine and other alkaloids of like class. The oat, apart from the powerful alkaloid it possesses, contains mineral and albuminoid properties in a greater degree than most other grain. At the time it was thought this principle was contained in the germ of the oat, but I have seen lately that a French scientist failing to find it in the germ found the principle in the inner coating of the oat. The same scientist contradicts the statement that this principle is an alkaloid. Before accrediting the analytical contradiction of this savant I must have more chemical data. That the principle is an alkaloid similar to strychnine, etc., my own practical experiments bear me out.

Knowing the different principles contained in the oats the question arises, can we not feed other grains to make up the amount of protein and mineral matters contained in the oats? This would seem easy enough, but here we lack the stimulating principle *avenin*, which is a part only of the