

On the Wing.

After delivering an address at the farmers' picnic in Walkerton, the Secretary, Mr. Rivers, invited us to his place. He has a fine, rolling farm; the soil is of a porous nature, yet fertile, but requires the good farming that it gets at the hands of the owner, who cleared it from the forest. In fact, although not the prize farm, it certainly is a model farm—one which, with its management, may be copied with profit. So successful has Mr. Rivers been that the county in which he lives owes him a debt of gratitude, as he has been foremost in introducing to them the most valuable kinds of seed and stock. To our knowledge, when we conducted the Agricultural Emporium, he would procure the very best, regardless of cost. The result is that his reputation has spread so that all his surplus grain is sold for seed, and he purchases cheaper grain for feeding his own stock.

He has a very notable herd of Shorthorns of the best and most profitable kind. There are to be seen both the beefing and milking class of Shorthorns. Mr. Rivers uses considerable artificial manure and finds it pays him; but his great complaint is that he cannot get any drill that will distribute it properly. He has tried three different drills. Some of our manufacturers should wake up, or there must be importations made from England, despite the duty, as Mr. Rivers considers that he does not get half as good results by sowing broadcast as when the superphosphate is placed just where he wants it, and hand labor is too expensive to do that. He has an experimental plot and tests different kinds himself, and his orchard, garden, farm, buildings and surroundings are models of beauty and utility. There are numbers of such homesteads in the county of Bruce.

We took the train from this northern county and travelled to the extreme south of Ontario, to the county of Simcoe. The spring crops were looking as well as anybody could desire. At Simcoe the Massey Manufacturing Co. delivered to the farmers of that locality 45 harvesters, 20 mowers and 20 horse rakes. They made a grand procession through the town of Simcoe, preceded by a brass band. The farmers and citizens had a good dinner together. Speeches and music made it a feast of pleasure and information as well.

Mr. J. B. Carpenter, one of the oldest settlers, on being called on, said that on his farm the first reaping machine imported into Canada did its first work. It was about 42 years ago. The cutting was then done by a straight, smooth-faced knife, and the grain was raked off the table by hand. Mr. Carpenter is one of Canada's model farmers; everything is in first-class order. He has erected a farm house that stands second to no farm house we have yet seen either in England or the States. It is one he built to live in. Many owners of fine farm houses we have seen live in one corner or in the kitchen. Mr. C. has erected a stable and drive house after a pattern taken from the *Advocate*, and we have not seen on any farm one that is like it or equal to it. Mr. Carpenter says his winter wheat will average 30 bushels per acre. We enquired of all the farmers who had purchased the harvesters as to the state of their crops; 26 said they had an average crop, 17 said three-fourths, and one said only half a crop. This certainly does not look as bad as some state. It is to be remembered that there

is a good deal of light, and some poor and wet land in Simcoe. If one manufacturer can sell that number of machines in one part of a county, and when it is considered that there are thirty-two manufacturers of these large harvesters in Canada, many of whom are selling in this county, the farmers of Ontario cannot have much ground of complaint. In the northern counties the winter wheat is not quite as good as in this county, but the spring crops are looking as satisfactory as could be wished. If you can find ten farmers together and there is not one that does not complain about the weather, crops or prices, you may look on it as a miracle.

Breeding for Beef.

It is rather unfortunate that Canadian investigators, if we have any (which is exceedingly doubtful), should spend so much time in attempting to decide the respective merits of the beef breeds, and that so little has been accomplished with reference to our dairy stock. Of the three distinguished beef breeds, viz., the Shorthorn, the Polled Angus, and the Hereford, there is very little choice, and no farmer could make a mistake in choosing good representatives of any of these breeds, the distinguishing merits being mere matters of detail.

Some assertions require proof, or the scrutiny of close investigation, and others do not, being admitted by every sharp observer. No experiments are necessary to prove that our native stock belong to the dairy, and are profitless for beef, although their grades cannot be surpassed for this purpose. It must not be forgotten that if our native has to go, the grade must disappear at the same time, and the thoroughbred must then be degraded to the ranks of the grade or the "scrub," so far as price and popularity are concerned.

The most difficult point connected with this question has reference to the "general purpose" beast, of which there are two phases: (1) The animal which is said to produce milk and beef at the same time; and (2) the one which is said to put on the beef after the milking season, or milking age, is over. Here is ample scope for experiments. The temperaments of the beef and dairy breeds are just as distinct as those of the draft and the race-horse, the desirable points of the one being diametrically opposed to those of the other. It is true that these temperaments can be combined, as in the general purpose horse, but not so profitably in the former as in the latter case. The question can never be satisfactorily decided until the cost of production forms a part of the experiment. It has been found unprofitable to fatten old cows of any breed, and the practice has therefore been to fatten the "general purpose" cow at the age of five or six years. It is certainly an enormous waste of capital to raise a cow for two or three years' use; a good milker can be profitably kept for 10 or 12 years.

Another pointer is, What is the nature of the fattening process? An animal that readily puts on lumps of fat, such as the Shorthorn, cannot fairly be compared with the Holstein, which puts on flesh of the muscular kind. Past experience has given the Shorthorn an advantage in this respect, but the demoralizing practices of our fat-stock shows are beginning to revolutionize public opinion, "lean-stock shows" now being the order of the day, and it is quite probable that the Holsteins may, in the near future, produce a

class of beef more suitable to the taste, and be regarded as the general purpose cow of the period. If the Shorthorns had not been boomed and pampered to death, and that, too, largely at the public expense, they would have been a most excellent breed for many parts of Canada; but there are still many excellent specimens in the breed, which will make a lasting impression upon the herds of the country, even should the system of tests be extensively adopted. The breed is very pliable, the milking or the beefing properties can be easily developed, the tenderness can easily be bred out, and the future specimen may regain the reputation of its ancestry.

The evidence is so strong against the "general purpose" cow, as we showed in previous issues from different standpoints, that we would advise our farmers, chiefly those who make a specialty either of dairying or of beef-growing, to keep the dairy and beef herds distinct.

Care of Preserved Fruit.

Keeping fruit or any provision depends on three things. It must be sound to begin. A speck of decay or acid change will develop ferment in a kettle of fruit. Second, the jars or cans must be air-tight. The object of steaming the fruit is to expel the air and arrest the change in the juice, which would naturally proceed to ferment. Air penetrates in finer ways than we can discern, and needs much less than the crevice of a hair or a pin's point to enter and spoil the contents. Glass that is free from cracks or air bubbles, well-glazed stoneware, free from flaws, yellow ware, or strong, dark earthen jars, will keep the fruit from the air, provided it is sealed with wax, putty, or bladder, soaked and left to shrink on the mouth of the jars. Cans with screw tops and rubber rings are apt to have slight defects, which prevent perfect sealing, and cannot be depended on without wax.

Third, the jars must be kept in a dry, dark, cold place, very little above freezing. A shelf in a furnace-warmed cellar or store-room opening from a kitchen, is not the place to preserve fruit. It may be put up in the best manner, and yet spoil through keeping in the light, or where it is not cool. Glass cans should be wrapped in paper, buried in sand or sawdust, or kept in a dark closet. Packed with plenty of chaff, oats, dry sand or sawdust, or dry, sifted ashes, most preserves will stand freezing weather without injury, but each can needs at least six inches of non-conducting material about it on all sides, for protection. A pit on one side of the cellar, dug below the reach of frost, and lined with boards, with straw or ashes between them and its walls, will keep preserves from heat or freezing. A pit dug in the cellar, four feet below the level of its floor, well drained and lined as above, will prove the best place for keeping small quantities of preserves, enough for a single family.—[Vick's Magazine.]

In a recent report from the Department of Agriculture, Professor Riley states that the screech owl has proved useful in destroying the web worms that defoliate so many trees in autumn, and he adds: "Perhaps the statement may be of interest that this little owl is getting much more common in the vicinity of cities in which the English sparrow has become numerous, and that the imported birds will find in this owl as bold an enemy as the sparrow-hawk is to them in Europe; and even more dangerous, since its attacks are made towards dusk—at a time when the sparrow has retired for the night and is not as wide awake for ways and means to escape." Another point made in this report is that wooden tree boxes are most injurious by furnishing shelter for the formation of cocoons and winter quarters for many noxious insects. Besides this, these boxes, as ordinarily constructed, bruise the bark, and the ravages of the maple borer, for instance, are often confined to trees so injured.