

### The Potato and the Potato Bug.

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

The extraordinary increase this year in the potato beetle in Southern Manitoba and for all the writer knows in the rest of the province, should bring home to the farmer the necessity of taking active and vigorous methods to get rid of this pest or to keep it down that its damage will be small. The increase which has been steadily growing for years, is no doubt largely the fault of those farmers who neglect or leave till too late the treatment of their potatoes with Paris green, with the result that the bug fully matures and goes into the ground for the winter and comes out as a beetle in the spring to punish him for his neglect or carelessness; and not only him, but his neighbors who may have dressed their vines in time but suffer for their neighbor's criminal carelessness.

Many farmers think by putting their potatoes in a fresh place from last year they will escape the bug. This is a silly mistake, as the beetle when it comes out of the ground in the spring will fly miles with the wind till it finds a suitable place to settle; namely, the nearest potato patch. To keep the bugs down is not a hard matter and if general and united action is taken at the right time they will soon be put out of business. The writer finds the best way to do this is to go over the potatoes with a can when the beetles first appear and every second or third day afterwards. They are easily shaken into the can and a little hot water on them in the can fixes them. But usually they have laid some of their eggs on the underside of the potato leaf, a little cluster of bright yellow eggs. These in the hot weather hatch out in about six to eight days and the bugs then appear and grow very rapidly.

Their business hours appear to be from daylight to dark and for all I know all night as well and as they do not leave off eating all day they grow quick and do a corresponding amount of damage, till in a short time the potato vines are an unsightly mass of stems and the resulting crop small or perhaps no potatoes at all. To apply Paris green, a tablespoonful to two gallons of water and put on with a garden sprinkler is the way mostly used by farmers to get rid of them. The writer has found a much quicker and easier way is to mix one spoonful of Paris green with eight spoonfuls of flour in a tin; punch some holes in the lid with a small nail and dust this over the potatoes. This is much quicker and not nearly the trouble that carrying water is.

T. W. K.

[The editor has had some experience with putting on Paris green both dry and in solution, and has come to the conclusion that the poison is more evenly distributed with water in about the proportions mentioned above or not quite so strong, a tablespoon full to three gallons. We also advise applying it with a wisp of hay rather than with a sprinkler as it can be more easily controlled.—Ed.]

### How I Handle my Hay Crop.

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

I have been thinking for the past three months of sending you a letter on "hay making," as I have had considerable to do with the marketing of hay in the Carman district and found so much hay put up in poor condition that it would not net the producer near the profits that it would have done had it been properly cured and

stacked. Of course the farmers tell me that it was such a rainy time in hay making last season that it was impossible to save the hay crop properly. But I might say that I am a farmer in this district and had the bad weather to contend with just the same as anyone in this part. I had fully two hundred and twenty-five acres of timothy hay to harvest last year, which yielded me an average of one ton per acre, and I did not have five tons that was spoiled in any way to prevent it from going No. 1 hay on the market. I handled this crop in the way I will try to describe as plainly as I can a little farther on in this letter.

I cut, coiled and stacked last year's crop with the aid of four men, besides myself, and boy ten years old, who did a great deal of the cutting and second raking. When a farmer has a large acreage of timothy hay to harvest he ought to commence just as soon as the timothy leaves the first bloom, but if his acreage is not very extensive the best stage to cut timothy is just a day or two after it has gone out of the second bloom. If a man is starting to cut his timothy while it is yet in the bloom he should be very careful not to cut in the morning, before the dew has well dried up, or the bloom will make the hay more dusty than it would be, if he were to wait until midday, for if there is any wind to speak of it will have the bloom very nearly all shaken off by noon.

I have had the best results in haying by cutting as much as possible after three o'clock in the day, as it will not cure much that evening or up to nine or ten o'clock the next morning and if it should get any rain during that time it will do very little or no damage to the hay and if there is any sunshine that forenoon worth mentioning the hay will do to rake and coil right away after dinner. It will not be fit to go into a stack right from the rake unless it has become nearly ripe before it is cut.

The best method I have ever used for curing hay is to put it in the coil before it gets too much cured, as it will be more pliable and will settle together so that the rain will not penetrate far enough into the coil to do any damage; that is, if it is properly coiled. When I say coiled I do not mean to have it bunched up with the horse-rake, or rolled together with a fork, as that turns in all the ends of the hay, leaving it so it will drink in all the rain that comes. I mean when you start to put up a coil make sure to part the winnow at each side of the coil, and always start a coil a little smaller in the bottom than you intend to have it when finished; also make sure that you put one forkful as far over the other as possible, that will make the middle of the coil full and allow the edges to droop enough that it will shed nearly all the rain, especially if it has been up over one night. I always like to put in the coils about one hundred pounds and leave them one day and two nights. This will give the hay a proper sweat and avoid a great deal of dusty hay which is caused by sweating after it has gone in the stack. I might say here that I always consider my hay safe when it has been properly coiled. Last season I had about twenty-five acres of first crop timothy that was real coarse stuff, but it had been coiled in the way mentioned and there came very heavy rains, several of them, but we just left this hay alone in the coil about three weeks before it was stacked, and in the winter when it was pressed, if you did not know that it had got wet in the coil, you

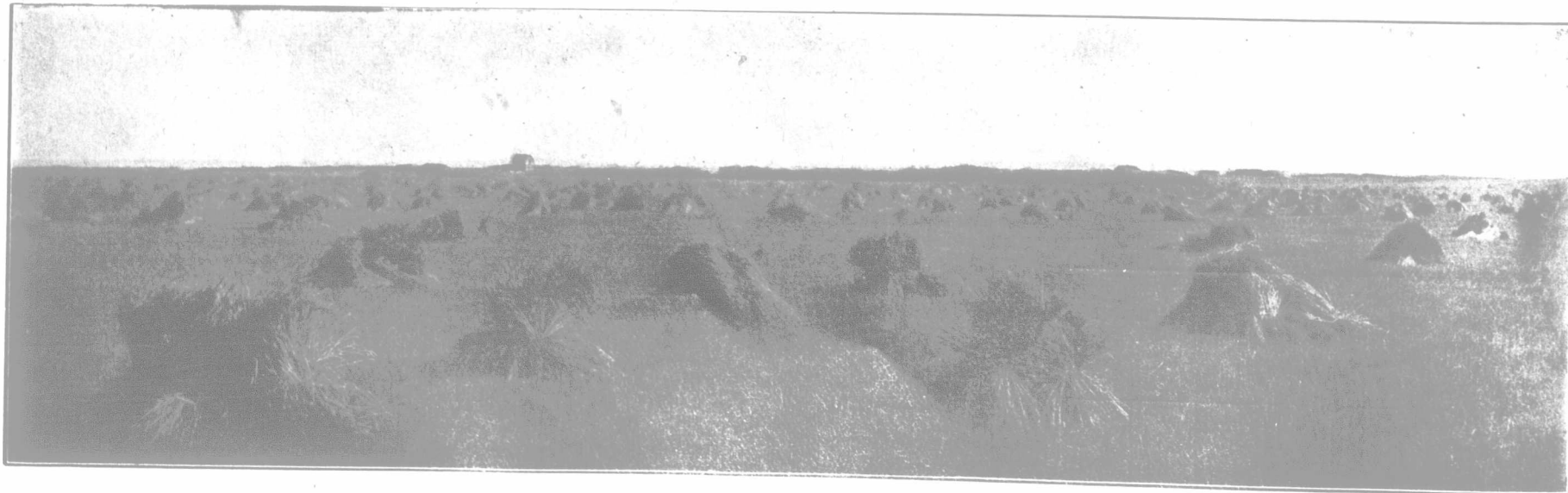
would say that it had never got a bit of rain. What was bleached on the outside of the coil came to its color when it was mixed in with the rest of the hay in the stack.

All the machinery I have ever used in this country yet is the mower and horse-rake, but I intend to use the hay-fork attached to two poles for stacking with this season as the secret of saving hay is to get the stacks up to a good height. The method I have followed in stacking has given the best of satisfaction in saving the hay, as I have left several of the stacks until the first of July the next year. In making my stack I bring in as poor a load of hay as I know of in the field, probably a weedy spot or some of the second rakings, as it is generally bleached before it is gathered, and that makes it all the better for the bottom of the stack, for it will not allow the moisture from the ground to go nearly so far up in the stack as if you were to put good green hay next the ground. In using that which is partly spoiled already, you will save your men's wages for that day, besides saving eight or ten dollars worth of good hay. I select a spot that is a little higher than the rest of the ground, so as to avoid having the water stand around the stack in the spring; then I make the bottom of my stack from sixteen to eighteen feet wide by twenty-five to thirty feet long. My second load I put on the one side of the stack and let it lap over the middle, about four of five feet; then put the third load on the other side and let it lap over the middle in the same way. By this means you keep up the heart of your stack, which is the most essential part, as it has to bear the weight of the top and if it is not kept solid it will settle lower than the sides, thus allowing it to take in the rain. Continue to let your stack swell out until it is about one foot out on each side at about the height of six or seven. Then begin to take it in so as to have it the same size as the bottom is by the time it gets as high as a man can pitch upon it from the wagon. In this way you will have a body of a stack that will settle even and will not allow the top to settle to one side. Then place a scaffold at one end, made in the form of a bracket that will raise or lower to suit the height of your stack. Keep the ends of the stack up straight; just draw in from the sides until you have formed a peak. To tie on this top, take poles from three to four inches thick and place them just below where the stack starts to be drawn in; then take binder twine and fasten it to the pole and pass it over the stack to the pole on the opposite side and tie it there. Do this on about every two feet in your stack and you will have your top securely fastened, and as well there are no poles either on the top or sides to settle in and cause a bad spot in your hay, when you come to handle it.

I would like to give a little advice to those who are putting up hay for the market, especially those who intend to get it pressed. By all means do not put up those great long stacks, so common in this country, but rather place one stack by the side of another, with just room enough to drive a load of hay between. By this means you will keep a great deal of snow from settling on your stacks, as the wind will sweep it out clean from between them; thus leaving them in a position to be got at any time in the year with a great deal less expense and a less loss of hay by being covered up with the snow.

Dufferin Mun., Man.

J. A. RUSSELL.



H. McILROY'S WHEAT FIELD, IN THE ARCOLA DISTRICT, SASK.