

that Rhode Island greenings and the Baldwin can be produced in the southern and western portions and along Lake Champlain, but in the northern and eastern sections it is too cold for them. Of course there is an occasional locality beyond this district which is an exception.

At the Fruit Growers' Convention winter spraying of fruit was very strongly recommended. Now would be a good time to try it. Give the twigs and branches of the fruit trees a good spraying. This will go a long way towards reducing the need of spraying later on when you are more busy. By destroying the spores that are resting on the twigs the first lot of them will be destroyed. When the leaves come out spraying again will destroy those spores that may be on them. By this means much more thorough work can be done. Try it.

### FARMERS OF FICTION

It is the misfortune of farming that it has no competent chronicler; no writer of distinction has arisen who has made farmers and farming life generally his special theme; no one has done for them what Rudyard Kipling has done for the soldier, Clark Russell for the sailor, Ian Maclaren and J. M. Barrie for the Scottish peasantry, and what numerous other authors, specialists in their way, have done for other phases of our national character. Yet assuredly farmers deserve a scribe of their own. Fame and distinction await the man can limn for us, the farmer, as he actually is; who can enter into his feelings, describe his trials and triumphs, his methods of reasoning, his mannerisms, his quaint sayings, his humorous conceits. There is assuredly in this a rich vein yet unworked, that would surprise and delight many to whom farming is little more than a name and scarcely an honoured one at that. And if it did nothing more than supersede the caricatures that are now and again made to do duty as descriptions of farming, it would deserve well of the agricultural community.

It is not that no one has attempted to describe a farmer; many have done so, and numerous pen portraits more or less faulty and incomplete, exist. As biography is one of the most fascinating of studies, a short time spent with these fictitious personages ought to interest the readers of an agricultural periodical.

It is Christmas time at Dingley Dell. Thimmortal Pickwick and his friends are there, guests of Farmer Wardle. All is mirth and hilarity. The best sittingroom has been turned into a ball room. As the upper end is a bower of holly and evergreens, candles stand in every conceivable position, the fire blazes and crackles, and merry voices and light-hearted laughter ring through the room. There is brave assembly of friends, domestics, and poor relations, and dancing and singing, games and feasting are the order of the day. Farmer Wardle, the "kind, excellent, independent spirited, finehearted, hospitable, liberal man," is the presiding genius, putting everyone at ease, and directing and encouraging the revels. Christmas is kept in the true old English style, merry-making, song and story being happily blended. But Farmer Wardle is not a typical farmer. He is a man who has never heard the words agricultural depression. His several appearance in the pages of the "Pickwick Papers," are the occasions of feasting and merry-making, sport and,—let us whisper it—though Dickens has clothed it in picturesque garb—hard drinking. No; in the pages of a novel Wardle is perfect; in real life he could not be taken as an ideal type of farmer.

We know more of Dandie Dinmont's prowess as a sportsman and a fighter than a farmer. There is a not too flattering description of his farm, and we gather that he was in a large way a breeder of sheep, but it is as a breeder of dogs his name is handed down to posterity! His hospitality was unbounded, but what must we say of his obstinacy? He made up his mind to have an expensive lawsuit with his neighbour about a few square yards of barren mountain top, and nothing could drive him from it. He may have faithfully represented the Border farmer of the time, to which "Guy Mannering" refers, but he belonged to a class that in these degenerate days is extinct. Honest Dandie Dinmont will, however, be a favorite character so long as Sir Walter Scott's novels continue to be read.

A halo of romance encircles John Ridd, the hero of Blackmore's "Lorna Doone." Though he tells the story himself, and tells it in a modest way, surely no farmer ever had more wonderful experiences than he. From his faithful descriptions of home life, from his subtle observations respecting servants and their devious ways, from the scenes of farming life he has vividly portrayed for us, we know him to have been a farmer, but