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Succeed."

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EDITORIAL

What with lime-nitrogen, electricity, and now ether to promote plant growth, agriculture must, to the urban mind, seem to be taking on the nature of wizardry.

In a greatly-enlarged building, with regular and special prizes aggregating \$14,000, including \$3,275 for a horse department, the coming Winter Fair at Guelph should assemble an attractive and educative display.

Naming the farm and stamping or attaching the name to butter, eggs and other produce sold is the means suggested by a correspondent of "The Farmer's Advocate" for building up a commercial reputation for products of superior quality, and securing the premium superiority should command. He suggests other points also, but this one will bear thinking over.

Travellers in some sections report a poor outlook for the turnip crop, owing to the very dry condition of the soil. Mangels and sugar mangels make a better showing, having in many cases produced a nice even braird; which suggests one point in favor of mangel-growing, e.g., that in case of failure one has a second chance, as he can still sow turnips. Turnips are nicer to harvest, and in some districts, as in the Maritime Provinces, are an easier crop to raise, but it is not wise to become wedded to any one class of roots.

Winter protection of the tree roots is one, but by no means the only, argument in favor of an orchard cover crop. It is, however, of no small importance in itself. Some years ago, when the Leamington peach orchards suffered so disastrously, it was discovered that one or two, owned by shiftless growers who allowed the weeds to grow, escaped with a minimum of injury. The moral was not to neglect the orchards, but to add to the plan of clean cultivation in the fore part of the season, the sowing of a cover crop in July. There is still time to sow a winter leguminous cover crop to protect from winter root injury, hasten maturity of the new wood, and to enrich the soil by economizing soluble nitrates, at the same time drawing upon the free nitrogen of the atmosphere.

With no disrespect to dairying—a branch of agriculture in which we have every confidence as a means of prosperity for a large proportion of our farmers—we draw attention to the fact that Mr. Rice has laid himself open to retort from bee-raisers, by insisting upon the necessity for a dairy farmer retiring from his strenuous life at or shortly beyond middle age. Those who, from weary experience of the city, regard the farm as a place to retire on and not from, might well reply that a line of stock husbandry which made less exacting demands and did not drive its devotees away from it for a rest in old age would be preferable to a line that does this, even though the bank account did not swell so fast in the former case. We agree with Mr. Rice, that after a man passes the grand meridian he is entitled to relax, but there is something astray in a system of farming which does not hold one's interest and attention except during the stress and for the purpose of money-making. We lift our hat to the farmer who, though he finds time to travel and leisure to rest, yet prefers farm residence and the perennial interest that springs from a scientific insight into the underlying principles of his occupation and their adaptation to the purposes of man.

Wheat-growing in Ontario.

The present high prices for wheat will, undoubtedly, have the effect of increasing the acreage devoted to this crop the present autumn. In speaking at this season of wheat-growing in Ontario, it is understood that fall or winter wheat is meant, as the growing of spring wheat, except in the eastern section, has been practically abandoned. For that matter, many good farmers have left out of their list of crops fall wheat also, believing that other things can be more successfully and profitably grown. Others have never ceased to devote a certain area to this grain right through the period of low prices, claiming that there are advantages in connection with its culture which can scarcely be reckoned in money. A few of these it may be well to mention.

Probably first in importance is the greater certainty of securing a good catch of clover. To miss a catch of clover is to throw many things out of order, and to lose the advantage which a rank and luxuriant clover crop leaves in its train, not only the valuable fodder, but improved mechanical condition of the soil, and actually increased fertility for subsequent crops. Clover is now deservedly accounted by many the basic crop of the rotation. On heavy soil and in dry seasons there are many failures in securing a good stand of clover when sown with spring grain, especially oats. For a season or two there may be good success, and then for a longer term partial or total failure may result. While in seeding down with fall wheat success is not absolutely assured, yet the chances of success are so much better that some have for this reason alone returned to the growing of winter wheat. These remarks do not, of course, apply to sections where there is little fear of failure of the clover catch with a spring-grain nurse crop, or where fall wheat cannot be grown successfully.

No crop furnishes such a large amount of bedding as does fall wheat, and bedding is an article that is getting rather scarce. Straw and chaff are being used more and more for fodder, and this is well, but some bedding is a necessity, and it is furnished in greatest abundance by wheat straw.

The stress of spring seeding is materially lessened when a portion of the grain acreage has been prepared and sown the previous fall. This means a good deal in such a season as has been passed through this year, when the time usually given to preparation of land for hoed crops was taken up with spring seeding, and corn and roots have been put in late and work has been crowded until haying began. It is also worthy of consideration that the harvest hurry is better distributed when a portion of it comes close after haying instead of being all crowded into a week in August. Where barley is grown to any extent it, of course, answers the same purpose as wheat of spreading the season of harvesting operations.

There is a class of weeds which multiply and ripen their seeds in spring grain, but which are very much checked by fall-sown crops. Wild mustard to some extent, and wild oats in particular, are of this character. We well remember an old farmer in an Institute meeting telling how to combat wild oats. Drop spring grain as much as possible, said he, and grow hay and fall wheat.

It would not be advisable to change from a short rotation to a longer one merely for the purpose of interjecting a wheat crop, unless, perhaps, for the purpose of making sure of clover, nor is it necessary. In a short course of three or four years it is very seldom that the whole acreage plowed from sod is planted to hoed crops, the balance being commonly sowed with peas or oats. William Rennie, when at the Ontario Agricultural College, used to advocate such a course. The

oat, or, especially pea stubble ground, in such a field, if properly prepared, would be very suitable for wheat, and the whole could be seeded down in the one season. Each farmer will have his own special course, and can know better than anyone else what is suitable for him. Fall wheat can be grown successfully after peas, beans, barley, and often with fair success after oats, and even corn, and that there are advantages in having some portion of the arable land, say 10%, devoted to its culture, no one will deny.

A word of caution should be added, however, against the sowing of a large acreage of poorly-fitted land merely because prices have been high. While fall wheat is no longer the money crop of outstanding importance that it once was, demanding two years' use of the land and a barnyard full of manure to produce it; still it is seldom economy to sow it on land that is not in fairly good condition and heart. It is quite possible, too, that many will be a little disappointed in next year's prices, for recent high figures have suffered a drop, consequent upon improved threshing returns and prospects for the 1909 world's crop. For instance, on July 1st the average condition of spring and winter wheat combined in the United States was rated at 86.5, as against 83.9 on July 1st, 1908, and 82.5, the average of the previous ten years. In Canada, winter-killing of fall wheat in Alberta brought down the average, leaving it rated on July 1st at 77.2 for all Canada, against 89 last year, spring wheat being, however, as 86.77 to 80 last year. Other wheat-growing countries of the world also seem likely to average fairly well, so that while low prices next year are not anticipated, the chances are for a material modification of over-hopeful price prognostications. The Canadian farmer will, therefore, be well advised to sow a reasonably large acreage of properly-fitted land, but not to spread himself too wide on wheat.

The annual autumn labor problem again faces the West, no less acute than previously. J. Bruce Walker, Dominion Immigration Agent, is reported as estimating that 20,000 men will be required to go into the harvest fields of the West. Where they are to be obtained is a problem. Eastern Canada can ill spare so many. Some day Western farmers will be obliged to go more extensively into mixed farming and solve the harvesting problem by engaging more men the year round, or at least for the summer months. But as long as men can be obtained on demand, the present path of least resistance will be pursued by the average Western farmer. He runs a chance, though, of finding himself stuck some time in a season of big crops and labor shortage.

H. C. Duff, B.S.A., who has been appointed to take charge of the new district office of the Ontario Department of Agriculture that has been located at Norwood, addressing the West Peterborough Farmers' Institute, announced the intention of putting on a two-year course in agriculture at the Norwood High School. Discussing the obvious deficiencies of our public-school curriculum, he pointedly observed that the pupils studied and learned about Napoleon's Waterloo, but were not taught how to bring about the codling worm's Waterloo. Calendars outlining the agricultural course in full could be obtained at Norwood.

United States imports for the fiscal year, ending with June, 1909, exceed those of last year by about \$100,000,000, while exports fall behind about \$200,000,000, so that with all their rigid protectionism the Americans cannot solve the problem of selling without buying.