

FARMERS' COLUMN

REMARKS ON WHEAT GROWING.—All lands with a subsoil impervious to water will heave out wheat on the breaking up of winter. It is caused by the surface soil being surcharged with water which the night-frost congeals, forming an infinity of icy pillars raising the surface two or three inches, with the wheat plants imbedded in them, and torn up by the roots; the succeeding day thaws the ice and leaves the wheat on the surface to perish. Whenever wheat is much heaved out it rarely escapes the rust, and the crop is either destroyed or greatly injured. The first object of the agriculturist, in such soils especially, should be to draw off the surplus water. He will so plow the field in lands that the last furrow, on being open by the plow, after harrowing, will drain off the water. No water should stand in a wheat field.

HAY CAPS.—The best time to make hay caps is from now to November, as farmers have more leisure than earlier in the season, and they must be made in good drying weather. The following is the manner of making very superior caps, as practiced by an Indiana farmer: He takes one-fourth ounce of yellow soap to a gallon of rain water, boil and skim, and then soaks the muslin in this for twenty-four hours; take out and partly dry, and when half dry put the muslin in a solution composed of two ounces of alum and one of sugar of lead to each gallon of water. Soak the muslin well in this and hang it up to dry. He says it will make it both fire and water proof. The caps he cuts one and one-fourth yards long, which makes them square, and after hemming the ends attaches cords to them to fasten them about the hay or wheat coss. One hundred caps will answer for ten acres of grass and they will last for years. A good many farmers do not use the hay caps; but when a supply is obtained and used a few times no farmer will object to them, as they often pay for themselves ten times in a season in saving hay from getting wet.

TREATMENT OF SHYING HORSES.—Shying generally rises from timidity, but sometimes it is united with cunning, and induces the animal to assume a fear of some object for the sole purpose of finding an excuse for turning aside. The usual cause of shying is, doubtless, the presence of some object to which the horse has not been accustomed; and if he has defective eyes, which render him short-sighted, it will be difficult to convince him of the innocent nature of the novel object. There are endless peculiarities in shying horses, some being dreadfully alarmed by one kind of object which to others is not at all formidable. The best plan of treatment which can be adopted is to take as little notice as possible of the shying, and to be especially careful to show no fear of its recurrence when the "alarming" object appears in the distance. When the horse begins to show alarm, but not till then, the driver should speak encouragingly to him, and if necessary, with a severe tone, which may even be supported by the use of the whip if the onward progress cannot be otherwise be maintained. The principle which should be carried out is to adopt such measures as will get the horse to pass the object at which he shies, somehow or other, and this should be effected with as little violence as possible always commanding an encouraging tone as soon as the purpose is gained. Nothing has so great a tendency to keep up the habit as the plan so common among ignorant grooms of chastising the shyer after he has passed the object of his alarm. If he can be persuaded to go quietly up to it, and examine it with his muzzle as well as with his eyes, great good will be effected; but this can seldom be done with moving vehicles, and heaps of stones or piles of sand are generally only alarming from defective vision, so that each time they assume a new phase to the active imagination of the timid animal. Punishing him only make a big encouraged horse worse, and the use of "overchecks" rarely, if ever, proves beneficial.—E.

WINTER WHEAT.—The preparation of the soil for winter wheat is a matter of much importance. A crop of fifteen bushels per acre is grown at a loss for the simple preparing and sowing ground, the seed and harvesting will cost all that the crop comes to. These are fixed expenses, that are no less for a small crop and no more for a large one, and we cannot estimate them at less than eleven dollars per acre. The rent charge for the land or interest upon its cost will amount to at least five dollars per acre, thus bringing the cost of a wheat crop of fifteen bushels per acre up to over one dollar a bushel for these incidental expenses alone. But without manure even this yield cannot be secured, so that the result of our average crops is a positive loss of money, or else the farmer works for half pay, or nothing at all. There are a few things that we have found absolutely necessary to produce a fair crop of wheat; these are clean soil ploughed in season so as to have the stubble thoroughly broken up and mellowed, when it will remain moist and will not bake and become too hard for the final ploughing; well decomposed manure, which should be evenly spread upon the surface just before the final ploughing; a final cross-ploughing no deeper than will turn under the mellow top soil, and to have the manure mixed with it not more than three or four inches below the surface where it will be in the right place to receive the seed from the drill. The last ploughing should be followed by a deep harrowing, which will bring the clods to the surface, and leave the seed-bed fine and mellow. Managed in this manner during August, and the early part of September, the ground is well prepared for the seed. This cannot be too well selected. With good care in selecting the best seed, and with soil prepared in the above mentioned manner, we have had a better yield from one bushel of seed per acre than from five, six or seven pecks. We would however, lay down no rule as to the quantity of seed, because it depends much upon the condition of the soil and its cleanliness whether a thin sown crop will tiller and cover the ground or become overgrown with weeds. Here we would remark that the prevalent carelessness in permitting the self-sown seed of the former crop to smother the young wheat in a mass of thrifty verdure is a great mistake and injury, for it robs the plants when they are weakest and least able to sustain the loss, and they go into the winter prepared in the worst possible manner to resist its hardships. The seed should be sown by no means be drill sown, or else covered with the plow or cultivation. Ploughing in the wheat upon soils that are subject to surface water, we have found a good plan, as the land can be laid up into beds of the proper width, with water furrows between them. These furrows, if made no deeper than necessary to collect and carry off the water, will become nearly filled up and levelled in the spring, and a rolling then will fit the surface well for the harvester or mower. We would advise the entire abandonment of broadcast sowing and harrowing in the seed as a wasteful, costly and laborious practice. If a field is too rough or strong for the drill, we would plough or cultivate in the seed but never again harrow it in. The practice answers for a "spring crop, but not for winter wheat. Wheat must be grown; we cannot choose any crop as a substitute. The demand for it increases year by year and is likely to increase. It is the business of the farmer, not to fold his arms and idly say, "It will not pay; I will grow no more wheat," but to manage so that this crop around which his five or six years' work rotates, and must continue to do so, may be made profitable. It would be a strange thing if the crop which yields the "staff of life" of the civilized world could not be produced profitably to the grower, or that any one section of the country should be beaten in competition with another in production.—N. Y. Times.

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