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The Rural Canadian.

EDITED BY W. F. CLARKE.

TORONTO, APRIL 15th, 1882.

THE FARMER'S INSECT ENEMIES.

We call special attention to the article in this issue under the heading of "Field and Farm," on insects injurious to grain and grass. It will be followed by other articles of a similar character as opportunity and space permit. This is a subject which is far too much overlooked. As an example of what one sensible man thinks of the prevailing indifference to this matter, we quote the following, which is "going the rounds" of the rural journals:—

Mr. C. D. Zimmermann, in an address before the Western New York Horticultural Society, upon the value of papers containing correct entomological information, said:

"Why do we fruit-growers grope about as with a smoky lantern for remedies for insects, sure to pick up some self-acting 'sure cure' for the curculio or other pest, that some editor invented to fill up his columns? Why not take a paper on the subject that will give us sound advice (no patent-medicine remedies), and whose editor will be glad to receive specimens of troublesome insects, give us the name and a remedy? Is the subject not of enough importance?"

"When a thief steals a peck of apples, some of us will invest from \$5 to \$25 for a lawyer's advice, etc., how best to capture the thief. But when the codling moth breaks into our orchards and destroys from one-fourth to one-half of our crops, we are not willing to give an entomological lawyer \$2 a year to keep us posted as to how best to fight the insect thieves."

EXCLUSIVE WHEAT-GROWING.

The most attractive charm of the great North-West to many is the continuous and unfailing yields of wheat in that region, of which such glowing accounts are published from time to time. It is currently believed that the resources of the soil for this crop are absolutely inexhaustible. Only the other day it was affirmed in our hearing that at one of the Hudson's Bay stations in that country, wheat had been grown fifty years in succession on the same land, with the exception of a single season, and that the last yield was as abundant as the first. It must indeed be a magnificent soil that will bear such murderous farming. But it is only a question of time, and when nature's day of judgment comes, as it surely will, sooner or later, the exhaustion will be as direful as the original productiveness was wonderful. The fact that continuous wheat-growing is a suicidal system of agriculture, wherever and by whomsoever pursued, cannot be too frequently reiterated; and those who are gone or are going to Mani-

toba to pursue it, cannot be too soon warned of the inevitable and ruinous results that will follow. We clench these few remarks with the following extract from the *Prairie Farmer*:—

"Thousands of British subjects are this year locating in the great wheat region lying between Ontario and British Columbia. Indeed the rush has already set in, and the railroads leading thither are literally blocked with passengers and their personal effects. The tide is swollen by people from Canada and the States. Land along the proposed line of the Canada Pacific Railway, which is to penetrate a country especially adapted to wheat farming, greater than the wheat territory of all Europe, is being rapidly absorbed by great capitalists, and in the Manitoba region by actual settlers, at an astonishing rate. The wheat centre is certainly moving to the northward. Dakota will not enjoy many years of supremacy as a wheat-producing country, if all is true that we now hear of the wonderful British possessions. Still, after the wave has passed, the vast north-west of the United States will be found to be adapted to other profitable and more stable industries. Growing grain for shipment is at best a low type of farming—ephemeral, uncertain, and, in the long run, unprofitable in the extreme."

THE FAST HORSE AT FAIRS.

The "agricultural hoss trot" has done great injury to the fairs across the lines, and it seems very undesirable that such a demoralizing institution should gain a foothold in connection with the exhibitions on this side of the lines. Our Provincial and other leading fairs have, with the exception of the Toronto Industrial, kept themselves entirely free of this evil, and we hope the managing men of our great metropolitan exhibition will see it their duty to part company with it. The *New York Tribune* gives the following summary of the pros and cons of the argument in relation to this matter, as embodied in recent Michigan discussions:—

Mr. T. R. Harrison, Paw Paw, Mich., at the recent ninth annual meeting of the Association of Agricultural Societies of that State, brought up the subject of trotting at fairs, and said that in his county the offer of large premiums for fast horses brought to the show last year "a class of persons who were no credit to any community." A Mr. Baldwin, with the too common but no less strange moral obliquity, maintained that the one point for the management to consider is means of supplying "the needed revenue." If the race promises to "raise the money," that is "the policy to pursue to make the affair a success." Mr. A. B. Copley, of the Volinia Farmers' Club—may his tribe increase—combated this short-sighted and demoralizing view with the earnestness and force that right thinking inspires. Better, he said, have no exhibition, than attract gamblers and rowdies, and "teach all our young men the tricks of the turf." Such a course must lessen, if not neutralize, the opportunities for useful teaching that a properly-conducted fair always affords, and "be a disorganizer fatal to real success." The arguments of the opposition, as summed up by the *Michigan Farmer*, show a lamentable absence of the right feeling.

The first is that "the managers of fairs are not the conservators of public morals." Cain also disclaimed being "his brother's keeper." Again: "The tone of sentiment in a community where the fair is located must be the gauge of action." If all persons in positions of influence took such a view, progress of morals or growth of any kind would be discouragingly slow, if not utterly crushed out. Finally, "It is not the province of the Board (except by egotism) to say what is evil, and fairs must be run on business principles." This is mock humility, and the sentiment back of it would find favour with every blackleg or loafer or parasite of any kind. The frankness of such avowals is, however, unusual, and the poison of the doctrine as it appears in the light of cold type ought to be sufficiently repulsive to serve as its own antidote.

TREE MUTILATION.

About this time of year there goeth forth, equipped with saw, axe, and ladder, a disguised fiend calling himself the "tree pruner." His true name is "tree butcher." Ignorant farmers, unenlightened villagers, and muddle-headed city fathers, let him loose among the fruit and shade-trees, to commit what havoc he pleases. He assails the defenceless objects of his hate, and soon there is an army of despoiled trunks, lifting up their amputated limbs to high heaven in mute appeal against the cruel wrongs that have been done them. He leaves desolation and disfigurement in his track. Orchards are robbed of their beauty, shrubberies laid waste, and highways made unsightly. Mischief is done which the growth of years cannot repair. And all for what? Nobody can tell.

A tree left to its natural development, with judicious training and pruning, is "a thing of beauty and a joy forever." The hand of man should never be observable on it. All its growth and contour should seem to be spontaneous and self-induced. Whenever the work of the pruner obtrudes itself on the notice of the beholder, that work has been badly done or overdone. With proper management, it need never be necessary to cut off a branch bigger than one's thumb. When a tree is first planted, the head should be formed in miniature outline, and all the rest can be done by pinching here and there a shoot, or severing here and there a twig. The botching and butchering that are perpetrated every spring disgrace our civilization and proclaim our ignorance.

Many orchards are slain outright by this ubiquitous fiend in human form. The removal of a large limb from a tree is like the amputation of a man's limb. It causes a terrible strain on the vitality of the vegetable or animal organism. Were a man to have both arms cut off between the elbow and shoulder, and both legs cut off just above the ankle, it is doubtful if he would survive the shock. Fruit trees treated in this manner often die, and their owners wonder what ails them! If they are not absolutely killed, they have a long and hard struggle for dear life. Meantime, they bear no fruit, and with difficulty put forth a meagre show of leaves. Their usefulness has gone, along with their beauty.

If farmers would read agricultural papers,