

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE

AND HOME MAGAZINE

* AGRICULTURE, STOCK, DAIRY, POULTRY, HORTICULTURE, VETERINARY, HOME CIRCLE.*

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EDITORIAL.

Cultivation for Winter Wheat.

It will be noticed that considerable space is given in this issue of the ADVOCATE to the discussion of the subject of fall wheat and its cultivation. This is in accordance with our aim and rule to furnish as far as possible information that may be helpful to farmers, and at a seasonable time. We know no better way of doing this than by presenting to our readers the opinions and methods of experienced and successful farmers as described in their own words, and we believe the batch of brief letters on this subject published elsewhere in this issue contain the soundest and safest information available. As we have frequently stated, the price of wheat prevailing and probable is not such as to warrant farmers in attempting to grow it on a large scale in the older provinces of Canada, and especially on land unsuited, by reason of insufficient drainage, lack of fertility or imperfect preparation, to the production of a reasonable return for the seed and the labor expended upon it. But experience has proven that even in the oldest sections, where winter wheat was once the principal crop, it can yet be successfully and profitably grown in the average of years. It is only two years since in many sections of Ontario yields of 30 to 40 bushels per acre were reaped, and in the harvest just gathered this year we have seen many fields which had every appearance of being good for the former yield. When it is a success, there is no more satisfactory crop grown. It is a thing of beauty and a joy to harvest, and we do not wonder at the farmers' partiality to it, nor would we for a moment discourage its production. What we plead for is a proper preparation for a reasonable hope of a good crop. There is no satisfaction nor money in half a crop, and we believe that in nine cases out of ten, in ordinary seasons, failure is due to imperfect preparation rather than to weather or climatic conditions, and we can offer no better advice in this connection than that a careful study be given the short letters from practical men of experience which we publish. The chapter on winter wheat growing in Kansas will also be read with interest at this juncture.

The ideal preparation for winter wheat is no doubt the summer-fallow, well manured and worked, but its day for general adoption seems to have passed, since it means two years for one crop; though in special cases it may be time well spent if it cleans a field of noxious weeds. The next, if not the first, favorite appears to be a clover or pasture sod plowed six weeks before seeding time, promptly rolled, and frequently harrowed and cultivated, especially and preferably after rains. Following peas that have been grown on inverted sod, fair crops of wheat are generally obtained, but whether the land in this case should be plowed or not depends much upon the character and condition of the soil. If the land is tolerably clean and is sufficiently moist to admit of its being well worked with the cultivator, it may be better not to plow. If it be necessary to plow, free use of the roller, harrows and cultivator must follow, in order to reduce the soil to a fine tilth and to firm the seed-bed. Barley stubble land, when it is rich in fertility, may in a favorable season be made suitable for wheat by plowing as early as possible after the harvest, following closely with the roller and harrow, and cultivating to the bottom of the plowing to bring up any lumps that may be in the furrows, and applying the roller and harrows again to these. The advocacy of surface cultivation may be misleading if it simply means fining two or three inches of soil on top, while below lumps of clay are left, which will form anything but a congenial feeding ground for the rootlets of the wheat. The secret of success is evidently to have the land in good heart and the seed-bed fine, firm, and moist,

the latter condition being obtained by surface cultivation after each shower that falls. These conditions favor a strong and healthy growth from the start and give the plants a grasp of the ground, which imparts strength and stamina to carry them safely through the rigors of winter weather and spring frosts, and power to resist, outlive and overcome the attacks of insect enemies.

Wanted, a New Winter Wheat.

From various quarters the FARMER'S ADVOCATE has received increasingly loud complaints in regard to the milling qualities of the more commonly grown varieties of Ontario winter or fall wheat. We have interviewed a number of London and other millers, and find them practically of one mind upon this subject. The Goldie Milling Co., of Ayr, whose letter we publish elsewhere, puts that view of the case quite strongly, as do also Bramm Bros., another milling firm. Speaking of varieties, a local miller states that the most objectionable of all was the Dawson's Golden Chaff sort, which has topped for so long the Ontario Agricultural College list as a yielder, being also hardy and having a good straw. The Red Clawson was some better; Manchester was not so bad either, and the Democrat still better, though very little of it could now be got, and the old Scott variety, which had gone out entirely, had been the best of them all. The trouble is, he said, these wheats lack in gluten. They are starchy, and without mixing with Manitoba wheat good flour cannot be made. The millers became desperate and determined upon importing Kansas seed in order to try to effect an improvement. Another miller said the Dawson's Golden Chaff, which made up the bulk of the wheat now coming to market, had neither strength nor color. The flour had a dull yellowish cast, which the most careful milling could not eliminate. He was of opinion if a hard winter variety could be successfully grown, farmers would be entitled to more for it, as it would take the place largely of the high-priced Manitoba No. 1 hard. Our soft winter wheats, there was not a sufficient market of that sort to consume the Ontario crop, and for export a high-grade flour was necessary. Providing a sort could be got that would succeed as well generally as the Dawson's Golden Chaff and combine the necessary strength, it would prove a very great boon. This is, of course, a crucial point, something akin to that which cropped up during the evolution of the bacon hog, some of the earlier types of which the farmer did not take kindly to, as they were regarded as being harder to feed and did not command a higher price than the more cheaply fattened lard variety. Representative millers have had the matter under serious consideration for more than a year past, and being satisfied with the result of some trials in Waterloo County, particulars of which we give elsewhere in this issue, decided to import some fifteen or twenty carloads of what is called Kansas Turkey Red, to be sold at enough to cover the cost at different points throughout Western Ontario. It is very desirable that the seed should be scattered over a considerable area, so that its practical merits will be determined under a variety of conditions, from the standpoint of the farmer as well as the miller, before embarking in it too largely, and to accomplish that the price should not be set very far above the current Ontario market quotations.

The following from the last issue of the weekly edition of a pretentious Canadian city newspaper is a fair sample of the valuable information dished up by a class of sheets that make a fad of imparting agricultural instruction: "Since the habits of the Hessian fly are better understood, farmers have learned how to make it much more destructive than it was when first introduced." It would be interesting to know who the farmers are that have been trying to make the Hessian fly more destructive than it was on making its first appearance.

Politics and Newspaper Postage.

The FARMER'S ADVOCATE never has and does not now object to a fair and equitably levied rate of newspaper postage. Being business enterprises, it is no more than right that publications should pay for the service which the government renders in carrying them from one portion of the country to another, though there is room for fair argument that they should be encouraged rather than discouraged, on the ground that the public is advantaged by the spread of knowledge. We believe that the public business of this country should be conducted upon business principles, and it would greatly simplify and lessen the cost of the conduct of public affairs if governments would not only do that, but curtail rather than expand their functions, which latter seems to be the patronage-creating fad of the present day. Prior to July 1st, 1899, papers had been carried free through the Canadian mails for a considerable period of time. With their increasing circulation and the increasing bulk of a good many newspapers, in imitation of the ponderous and trashy Sunday "yellow" journals of the United States, the burden upon the postal department at last became simply intolerable, and the Postmaster General of the present Canadian Government (Hon. Wm. Mulock) undertook to deal with the subject, and the result was a bill whereby papers were recharged $\frac{1}{4}$ of a cent per pound for the first six months of last year, and thereafter $\frac{1}{2}$ a cent per pound, except those circulating within a twenty-mile radius of the office of publication, which go free. In case of papers located upon a lake, their zone was measured 40 miles on one side of the office. This absurd zone system, making fish of one and flesh of another, was a sop to the country weeklies and the unfortunate political price paid for getting the measure through Parliament, because we believe the original intention must have been to treat all alike. It involved taxing the journals of greatest merit, circulation and influence, for the benefit of the little organ of the country M. P.; and further, while a protective system was continued by the administration for large numbers of enterprises, United States sheets, big and little, good, bad and indifferent, had the free run of the country. To the FARMER'S ADVOCATE the 20-mile zone exemption is a mere flea bite, and no relief from the unjust imposition of the bill. Edited for the improvement of all branches of agriculture, being practical in its teaching and of superior merit, its circulation extends, naturally, not only into every part of the Province of Ontario, but throughout Quebec, the Maritime Provinces, Manitoba, the Northwest, and British Columbia; also very generally through Michigan, Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa, Ohio, New York, Maine and many other States; and Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, and India, as well as several European countries; in fact, hardly a country can be named where farming is successfully carried on by people who understand the English language, that the FARMER'S ADVOCATE is not received and highly prized for its helpfulness. So far as Canada is concerned, for 34 years the paper has steadily associated itself with the advancement of this great industry, and if the whole truth were told there is no doubt that its work and the knowledge and stimulus imparted to the public have done more for the real progress of the farmer than all the Government institutions and projects that have ever been set afloat; and this can be said without in any way reflecting on the excellence and usefulness of much that scientific research, experimental work and demonstration has accomplished. To the outside world the pages of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE have been a constant reminder of the splendid achievements of agriculture in Canada, and yet this publication is discriminated against in favor of the purveyor of local gossip and politics, while from Ottawa great quantities of political lit-