

## THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE &amp; HOME MAGAZINE

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL IN THE DOMINION.

PUBLISHED BY  
THE WILLIAM WELD COMPANY (LIMITED).  
LONDON, ONT., and WINNIPEG, MAN.

1. The Farmer's Advocate is published on the fifth and twentieth of each month.

It is impartial and independent of all cliques or parties, handsomely illustrated with original engravings, and furnishes the most profitable, practical and reliable information for farmers, dairymen, gardeners and stockmen, of any publication in Canada.

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9. The Date on your Label shows to what time your subscription is paid.

10. Subscribers failing to receive their paper promptly and regularly will confer a favor by reporting the fact at once.

11. We invite Farmers to write us on any agricultural topic. We are always pleased to receive practical articles. For such as we consider valuable we will pay ten cents per inch printed matter. Criticisms of Articles, Suggestions How to Improve the ADVOCATE, Descriptions of New Grains, Roots or Vegetables not generally known, Particulars of Experiments Tried, or Improved Methods of Cultivation are each and all welcome. Contributions sent us must not be furnished other papers until after they have appeared in our columns. Rejected matter will be returned on receipt of postage.

12. Replies to circulars and letters of enquiry sent from this office will not be paid for as provided above.

13. No anonymous communications or enquiries will receive attention.

14. Letters intended for publication should be written on one side of the paper only.

15. All communications in reference to any matter connected with this paper should be addressed as below, and not to any individual connected with the paper.

Address—  
THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE, or  
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WINNIPEG, MAN.

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## Our Monthly Prize Essays.

## CONDITIONS OF COMPETITION.

1.—No award will be made unless one essay at least comes up to the standard for publication.

2.—The essays will be judged by the ideas, arguments, conciseness and conformity with the subject, and not by the grammar, punctuation or spelling.

3.—Should any of the other essays contain valuable matter, not fully covered by the one awarded the first prize, or should any present different views of the same topic, and we consider such views meritorious, we will publish such essays in full, or extracts from them as we may deem best, and allow the writer ten cents per inch (one dollar per column) printed matter for as much of such articles as we publish. By this rule each writer who sends us valuable matter will receive remuneration for his labor, whether he be the winner of the first prize or not.

See section II and four following in publisher's announcement above.

Everyone interested in dairying should not only read, but study that instructive little book, "Dairying for Profit or the Poor Man's Cow," which may be obtained from the author, Mrs. E. M. Jones, Brockville, Ont. Price, 30 cents. Over 62,000 copies have been sold, and in order to further stimulate its circulation, we will give two copies to every old subscriber sending in his own name (renewal) and that of one new yearly subscriber accompanied by two dollars.

A prize of \$5.00 will be given for the best essay on "Harvesting," describing best and most profitable method of cutting, stooking, stacking and threshing say 100 acres of crop. Essay to be in this office by August 5th.

## Sow Thistle.

Mr. W. A. Brodie has sent us a weed for identification, and asks for a successful plan of eradication.

On examination we find the weed to be the worst of the several varieties of Sow Thistle (*Sonchus arvensis*), sometimes known as the Corn Sow Thistle. It is a creeping perennial. The plant has an upright habit of growth, and often reaches the height of three feet, or may be much less, according to the conditions to which it is subjected. Like the "Canada Thistle," it is somewhat branched towards the top. The stems are rather hairy or bristly, especially the flower stems. The prickles upon the leaves are harmless. The stems are hollow, and when wounded a milky juice is exuded. The flowers are yellow. A plant produces many seeds. This plant makes its appearance in May and continues to grow until autumn. It blossoms and matures seed in July, August and September. It will grow in any kind of soil, but is most at home in rich, moist loams, and it gives the least trouble in stiff clays. It is propagated by means of the seeds, which float about in the air, owing to the downy attachment which they possess, and as these are very numerous the plants increase very fast when allowed to mature. This plant also propagates rapidly by means of its numerous rootstocks, which contain a very large number of buds.

The following are the modes of dealing with this intruder:

1. Drop out of the rotation so far as practicable all such crops as allow the thistle seeds to ripen before these are cut, until infested fields have been dealt with.

2. Plow the land immediately after harvest, shallow enough and narrow enough to cut the thistles off clean without breaking off the creeping rootstocks. Keep the thistles from breathing above ground until the late autumn plowing, which should be deep for the sake of the crop which is to come after. In the spring keep the thistles under by the use of a suitable cultivator until the time of planting a crop of corn, roots or rape. Give the crop thus planted sufficient hoeing to keep down all weed growth, and also keep the thistles cut out of the line of the rows by hand-hoeing. Go over the crop once or twice after the horse cultivation ceases, and the thistles will be pretty well subdued; but it will be necessary to keep a close watch on the next crop or two, using the spud or hand pulling whenever they appear.

The writer has succeeded in entirely cleaning a field that had several patches, which were spreading rapidly, by summer-fallowing as follows:

The land was plowed in the fore part of June, after which buckwheat was sown at the rate of five pecks to the acre; this was plowed under as soon as it came into flower. The field was then harrowed and rolled, and after decomposition had done its work sufficiently, was plowed again and left till the following spring, when a light coat of manure was given. The land thus treated was sown to turnips and well cultivated. Since that time, which was two years ago, not a single sow thistle has made its appearance.

The November number of FARMER'S ADVOCATE, 1892, page 431, gives a pretty full description of this weed.

## Sheep in Manitoba.

In these days when the advantages of mixed farming, as opposed to wheat growing alone, are admitted by all who are interested in agriculture, no apology is necessary for again drawing the attention of readers of the ADVOCATE to the importance of sheep raising as a branch of mixed farming.

The abundant woolly covering with which Nature has provided it, indicates that the sheep is adapted to withstand the severe cold of our winters, and this is amply proved by the experience of those who have been engaged in sheep farming in the Canadian Northwest. Indeed, the climate of the summer as well as the winter months seems to suit them, as they are remarkably free from the diseases which are prevalent among flocks in older settled countries.

To those who have had experience in the old country in fattening sheep with the help of oil-cakes and other expensive artificial foods, the rapidity with which sheep take on flesh and increase in weight in summer, upon the prairie grasses alone, comes as a sort of revelation.

As to the question of profit, there is no doubt that a flock, large or small, managed with care and attention will pay well; indeed there is no branch in farming that at present prices will yield such a large and certain percentage upon the capital invested.

In making this statement we refer to sheep reared for the butcher, and not to pure-bred flocks kept for ram breeding. In the meantime, probably the supply of these latter is in excess of the demand, although by-and-by, when the industry spreads and the prairies of the Northwest are stocked with flocks numbering millions, there will be ample de-

mand at paying prices for all the pure-bred rams that are raised.

For butchers' sheep it is not necessary to have pure-bred ewes. Good ewes of almost any cross will do to start with, but it is imperative to have pure-bred rams. The particular breed of ram is a matter of opinion, and it is scarcely safe to indicate a preference. He should be a good sheep of his kind, and that a kind reaching a heavy weight at an early age. By the continued use of superior rams, a flock of originally very indifferent ewes will soon be graded up to a pretty fair level.

In Manitoba abundance of food for sheep is found ready to hand, or can be grown at little expense. The prairie grasses in summer, and the same converted into hay for the winter use, are the mainstay. Failing a supply of the latter, sheep will thrive during winter on the straw and chaff of the grain crops, supplemented by a little oats or light grain of any kind.

On a mixed farm a flock of any number from twenty to three hundred ewes would be found profitable. Where settlement is not very close, and a run on the prairies can be got, the oversight of the latter number would occupy the attention of a careful man throughout the year. In more closely settled districts, where the area under cultivation is greater, it is necessary to have inclosed pastures of an extent suitable to the number of sheep. It will be found advantageous to divide the pasture into two enclosures, so that the flock may be changed from one to the other every two or three weeks, as the grazing will thus be kept clean and sweet. The pasture should be on dry land where there is mixed herbage, and not low-lying land of a marshy nature.

Some previous experience in handling sheep is an undoubted advantage, but the want of this should not discourage any one who is anxious to have a flock, and who is prepared to take some trouble with them and give them the necessary care and attention. That is really the point that determines the difference between success and failure.

It would seem to argue a lack of enterprise among the farmers of Manitoba, that Winnipeg has frequently to draw her supplies of mutton from Ontario, Nova Scotia, and even pay the duty of three cents per pound or thirty per cent. on the living animal brought from St. Paul. It may be that this arises from a want of capital, rather than a lack of enterprise. If so, we hope that the Farmers' Provincial Loan Company, whose prospectus we have just had the pleasure of perusing, and which is backed by men of position, will make it a feature of their business to lend money to farmers for the purchase of sheep. The farmer could, from the profits of his flock, repay his loan in three annual instalments, with interest at 10 or 12 per cent., have half as much annually for himself, and at the end of three years have a flock of his own equal in number and quality to that with which he started. This presupposes careful attention and good management, and fair average success.

## Feeding Hogs.

In answer to an enquirer, who is in doubt as to whether he is correctly feeding his hogs or not, and who says that "the feed has been ground—three-quarters oats, balance shorts and corn," the editor of the "Swine Breeders' Journal" gives the following reply:

"If for breakfast, dinner and supper each day, for the time you have been feeding your herd, the rations have been three-quarters ground oats, balance corn and shorts, then there is a 'big' doubt as to the correctness of your method. But if your three-quarters feed has been supplemented with a change on an average of three times a week, then your ration will do. It is not so much what you feed a hog as it is when and how you feed it. You can kill pigs and worry matured hogs on the ration mentioned, if you keep them at it long and hard enough. The science of feeding is to know what is the best to feed at the proper time. A good feeder can tell when a change should be given, and an experienced feeder the best feed to give at that time. The rotation of feeds by schedule is better than feeding a mixture of all the grains forever. But the best plan is to feed a seasonable variety, also a seasonable management. Breeding boars, old sows in pig, old sows with suckling pigs, young sows in pig and with pig, and fall gilts, is the assortment on nearly every breeding farm in the country to-day. To obtain the best results, each and every one of these classes require a special management in some respect. The breeding boar must sustain vitality and vigor, without making fat; the aged brood sows must be kept healthy, strong and vigorous, and just fat enough to prevent suckling down, yet successfully raise the pigs; the young sow, to farrow, must be built up in bone, muscle and vital forces, and carry as much fat as possible without injury to her; the fall pigs must be making pounds every day, or they are losing money. If a three-quarters perpetual rotation can do this, then there is very little to learn in feeding hogs."

We would be pleased if hundreds of our readers would write the ADVOCATE, giving briefly their method of feeding hogs, presenting the separate management of all classes to be found in a herd. The good to be derived from letters of that character would be invaluable. The feeding of hogs is a simple thing, if a profit is not desired; but feeding hogs to make the best results (the most money) is a problem that has been correctly worked by a very small number of feeders.