

A Word with Farmers.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

The difficulties and drawbacks of your calling are not to be set aside lightly. You have much to cause you anxiety, and sometimes not a little annoyance. You are at the mercy of the weather and the markets, not to mention accidental blight of your crops, or ailments among your stock. We are more than sorry for you in a sunless rainy season, such as this has been, with the grain laid flat, and the harvest prospects not as good as in former seasons. Yet your life is not all "mud and misery," for there are some things to counterbalance the drawbacks.

You have a free, open-air existence that keeps you healthy and helps to make you happy. Your weekly visits to town are pleasant breaks in the routine of your lives, and townspeople often envy you as you drive along with your smart horse and buggy. But what about your farm workers, and the conditions under which they live and work. Is there nothing you can do to improve the well-being of your farm laborers? Think of them sometimes, for it's not what we have done for ourselves, but what we have tried to do for others, that counts most at the end of the day.

Your married worker needs your help and sympathy. He has a wife and family to keep, and his services to you will be all the more devoted for the kindly word and kindest act on your part, and that of your "missus." It is human nature to value highly appreciation and recognition of labor honestly and faithfully done, and your work will proceed all the more smoothly when the laborer knows that you are pleased with it. Your married workers are anchored and steadied with the care of a household, and the responsibilities of a family. But your unmarried men are on quite a different footing. It is your duty, and the good farmer will not shrink it, where a free house is provided on the farm, to see that it is comfortable and as home-like as in the circumstances it can be made. Lastly do you not think that an occasional half-holiday would be a great boon to your workers as well as a benefit to yourself? It is worth considering and weighing carefully all that can be said both for and against, and you will look at both sides of the question before coming to a decision. Grey Co., Ont. "MAC."

Weed Seeds Measured as Grain.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

Knowing the editor of "The Farmer's Advocate" to be an up-to-date farmer, as regards the destruction of noxious weeds, I think he will gladly insert the following, as a warning to farmers in general, with perhaps some of other valuable advice added. I have threshed on my own farm and have been at threshings the last twenty-six years and over, and have always noticed as separator pulled out of the barn after threshing a pile of bad weed seeds, the pile varying according to condition of the farm. I have seen as much as ten or fifteen bushels of ragweed, thistle, mustard, etc., seed, that could be burned up with little trouble. On the contrary this year I noticed on several farms, when separator pulled out there was not one quart of noxious weed seeds there. Where are they? The farm has still a number of noxious weeds among the grain at threshing time. My idea is they are in the straw stack (that is a few that will not grow, perhaps.) The majority have gone in among the grain, and been measured at the rate of 3 cents per bushel for threshing, to be fed to horses, cows, etc., and go out in the manure next year to reproduce their kind fifty fold; so if there should be a poor grain crop, a good weed crop will be assured, to the threshers' financial benefit. Perhaps it is a new kind of separator; if so I advise the farmers to employ a thresher who owns one of the old machines of ten-years-ago manufacture, if he wishes to keep even with noxious weeds. Some may say you can run them through the fanning mill. How many farmers are there who clean up the grain they feed on the farm? If that is not sufficient argument against running them down with the grain, who wishes to pay 3 cents per bushel for the distribution of noxious weeds this year, and then increase and so on? WILD MUSTARD.

Note.—We fully agree as to the importance of carefully separating noxious weed seeds from the grain at threshing, but we believe nearly all threshers conscientiously do so. In some few cases it may be overlooked, and the farmer does well to keep an eye on the matter. The thresherman who did our work this year not only separated the weed seeds, but also some six or seven bushels of flax seeds grown with the grain, receiving no pay for threshing this quantity. Of course there are threshers and threshers just as there are separators and separators. Upon this

point the comment of a local company manufacturing threshing outfits will be of interest.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

"We partially agree with the writer of this article, that the farmer should be very particular to see that the threshing machine he engages to do his work is properly fitted for separating the noxious weed seeds from the grain, and not allowing them to go out in the straw.

"We have always been very particular with our machine on this point. It is fitted with screens to take out all noxious weed seeds that can be sifted out. There are some seeds that are so light that they will blow over the shoe with the chaff. It is impossible for a threshing machine to separate these light seeds from the chaff and straw.

"There should be strenuous legislation against the allowing of weeds to grow on farms, and the spreading of weed seeds by a thresher. The machine should be thoroughly cleaned out before leaving every barn, so as not to carry seeds from barn to barn.

"In reference to the writer's contention that the new machines are at fault, we know of some machines that have no device for separating weed seeds. We would not care, however, to mention the names.

"It is up to the farmer to ascertain before engaging a thresher, whether his machine will separate the weed seeds from the grain or not."

A. W. W.

Electricity on the Farm.

Electricity seems destined to be the farmer's best hired man. The Hydro-electric Commission of Ontario is carrying on an active educational campaign, and is arousing keen interest among farmers of Western Ontario.

In addition to the work of the Commission, some individual farmers have shown commendable enterprise in testing electrically driven machinery on their own farms. The experience of farmers in such a matter is of considerable interest. R. E. Gunn, proprietor of Dunrobin Stock Farm at Beaverton, Ontario, has furnished to the new official publication called "Conservation", some details concerning the use of electricity on his farm:—

"Electricity costs me \$175.00 per annum at the farm for 100 lights and 20 H.P. in motors. This low rate was secured from the local power company for the reason that they had power going to waste, and wished to get some return for it. The power company built the line to the farm (two miles) and put in and own the transformers. I wired the farm buildings, and bought all other equipment.

"In relation to other powers as to cost, you can readily see that it is much cheaper than any other form of power, except possibly that which could be generated by water, if we had it.

"It is a most efficient power for farm purposes. We run our milking machines, pump water, grind feed, cut hay and straw, cut wood, fill silos, and run other machinery where belt driving is possible, and have no trouble in any way. The motors need but slight attention, which is more than can be said of any other power available such as steam or gasoline, both of which we have used.

Its advantages are:—

(a) Low cost. (b) Ease of operation. (c) Ease in moving power units from place to place owing to light weight. (d) The little attention required to operate. (e) Speed in starting."

Mr. Gunn claims that electricity can be generated profitably by the farmer if water-power is available, and he is inclined to the view as expressed to "The Farmer's Advocate" that where waterpower or other electric service is not available, it would pay to generate it with gasoline power for lighting houses and barns, and for use on some household articles where direct gasoline-engine attachment is impracticable. He further states that the insurance companies show a preference for the use of electricity if the wiring is done by a reputable firm of electricians.

Perennial Stitchwort.

Our Lochaber Bay, Que., correspondent writing of the Perennial Stitchwort, an imported weed described in a former number, says that this weed is bad on about half an acre in one of his best fields. This field since the weed was first observed has been in grain two years and hay one year. It quite smothered out the grain and young grass in a few places.

This is an innocent looking plant resembling a narrow-leaved chickweed. The report shows what it can do by its perennial root and prolific seeding power. The former maintains it in the meadow, and the latter enables it to resist the ordinary cultivation of the grain field.

From Leamington to London.

In Western Ontario no season of the year yields the student of nature and lover of agricultural pursuits such delightful pleasure and profitable enjoyment as that of early autumn. In journeying between the above mentioned points, the traveller traverses one of the most richly endowed and fertile sections in our fairest of fair provinces. While the harvest of early cereals has been gathered, yet there remains in the fields of tawny stubble, sufficient evidence to demonstrate the abundance of harvest reaped. But that which makes a trip at this season enjoyable is the fact that over a large area the farmer is devoting his attention to the harvesting of our most profitable crop.

The opportunity for such a journey presenting itself, your correspondent gladly availed himself of the privilege. The trip was not accomplished by the nineteenth-century mode of travelling, i. e., by palace-car or swiftly-propelled automobile, but in an open buggy behind a slow-going draft horse. Whatever may be said against this slow mode of travel, it has its advantages. It affords ample scope for observation, and likewise opportunity for conversation. In pursuing this method the traveler is able not only to note carefully the varied conditions in rural districts, but also ascertain to some extent from the knowledge of others, the processes which gave use the different discernible phases in agricultural life. To attain the end in view main roads were avoided as far as possible without lengthening the distance. Our starting point being in the garden of Ontario, we were prepared to meet with many changes which we believed would await us in a drive which took in part of three counties. The comparisons drawn between the methods of farming pursued, character of crops produced, and general line of farming followed, were valuable to the sojourner, yet space is available to the recording of but a few. The first stage of our journey lay through the now far-famed corn lands of Mersea East, Tilbury and Raleigh. Here the eye was ravished with a view of such crops of maize as are rarely witnessed in any land. Fields of corn with golden tassels rustling in the wind rose like a miniature forest of bamboo, while from the many-rooted stocks hung suspended ears of richly colored ripening grain, bursting through its velvety covering, as if anxious to display its beauty. Here were also to be seen not a few orchards bending beneath a weight of choicest fruit, and one orchard in particular that of Mr. Walker, 11th Con., Mersea, deserves special mention. Nowhere in our journey did we behold such apples and pears. Trees were neatly and evenly pruned. The clean trunks, limbs and dark foliage gave evidence of careful oversight. Passing through the noted Chatham plains, rich in their strong clay deposits (bearing a striking resemblance to the bottom lands of the Western States or Red River Valley) were to be observed the damages wrought by continued wet weather during August and September, in stocks of grain rotting in the fields or stacks growing green in farmyards. Improperly constructed roads were almost impassable for heavy traffic, and more than one threshing outfit was hopelessly stranded until conditions altered. Leaving Prairie Siding, we entered a much older-settled section of Ontario, and noted sorrowfully the dilapidated, neglected appearance of many an old and one-time beautiful homestead. Weeds luxuriated on every side. Fences were sadly in need of repair. Buildings bore traces of many a hard-fought battle against the elements of nature. Their sides were racked and rent, while roofs were broken and bent. Doors hung upon a single hinge or lay prostrate along the ground, venerable orchards displayed a most forlorn and dejected appearance. These conditions were if anything more prominent in many sections after passing eastward from Chatham on the bank of the Thames. Many farms still retain the old rail fence, in more than one instance almost entirely hidden by a tangle of wild flowers, briars and underbush, an abundant growth of fodder was observed wherever the gaze turned, while the almost entire absence of both cattle and sheep was especially noticeable. Indeed one of the most frequent questions asked was "Do you know where I can buy a number of cattle?" The reasons for such a scarcity are several such as being compelled in former years through the scarcity of fodder to dispose of stock, the difficult experience in procuring laborers to either till the soil or perform the winter chores. One aged farmer, the possessor of four hundred acres of just such land, said the Prairie land and city allurements had robbed him of five stalwart sons, and made farming under present conditions in labor circles an impossibility. The crying need of to-day is not so much the procuring of men to man western harvest-fields and threshing-outfits, but men, strong, stalwart, scientific, men to till the rich soils of Kent, Essex and Middlesex, now lying idle. The man who will successfully solve