

THE WORST CANADIAN WEEDS.

There are many definitions of the word weed, but perhaps from a farmer's standpoint the best one is: "any troublesome or unsightly plant that is at the same time useless or comparatively so." As a general statement, it may be said that our most troublesome and aggressive weeds of the farm have been introduced into Canada from other countries; but, at the same time, it is also true that under special circumstances some of our native wild plants may increase and become "noxious weeds." It must be acknowledged that in all parts of Canada weeds are a source of constant and very considerable loss to farmers. Indeed, so much is this the case that the great prevalence of some varieties in certain districts of the Dominion must be viewed with the gravest alarm, for they have taken such possession of the land as to seriously affect profitable farming. As examples of such aggressive enemies, mention may be made of the Wild Mustard, Quack or Couch Grass and Canada Thistle in parts of almost every province, Ox-eye Daisy in the Maritime Provinces, Penny Cress or Stink-weed in Manitoba, and Tumbling Mustard in Manitoba and the North-west Territories.

The increase of weeds has been frequently due to the fact that farmers have neglected them from not being aware of their noxious nature and power to spread.

The following true statement occurs in an excellent pamphlet "Noxious Weeds in Manitoba and How to Destroy Them," issued by the Provincial Department of Agriculture and Immigration of Manitoba:—"Many of our farmers have only a limited knowledge of weeds, and in many cases do not recognize those that are dangerous on their first appearance. Hence we have 'One year's seeding, seven years' weeding.' There are some weeds so noxious that if farmers knew their real character and recognized the plants on their first appearance, they would postpone all other business until they were destroyed * * * * * Self-interest should be a sufficient incentive to farmers to destroy weeds if it is clearly shown that it will pay them to do so."

Another point of considerable importance with regard to noxious weeds is the adoption, as much as possible, of some one English or common name. The names used in this pamphlet have been selected with much care as to those which are most applicable and most widely known. When more names than one are given, the first is preferable. The scientific names, of which only one for each plant is recognized as authoritative by botanists all over the world, are here given, so that the certain identity of each plant mentioned may be known. Few farmers, of course, are acquainted with these scientific terms, even in the case of our commonest weeds, but it would be well if they were; for certainly much confusion exists in different localities in the application of the English popular names, the same plant being frequently called by one name in one place and by quite a different one somewhere else, or quite as frequently a single name is applied to a number of distinct plants in different places or by different people in the same place. The advantage, or even necessity, of calling a plant by its proper name has been forcibly illustrated in the case of the Tumbling Mustard, now so prevalent in many parts of Manitoba and at Indian Head, &c., in the North-west Territories. This most injurious weed was for some time after its introduction, spoken of generally as 'Tumble Weed,' a name properly belonging to a much less aggressive plant, the *Amarantus albus*, one