

Rural Canadian and Farm Journal,

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

THE CANADIAN FARMER AND GRANGE RECORD.

Vol. VIII., No. 8.
Vol. IV., No. 8 New Series.

Toronto, August, 1885.

\$1.00 per annum in advance.

RURAL NOTES.

Fruit trees should be carefully pruned of sprouts and suckers about this time of year. If cut now they are not likely to start again this season, and the fruit of the tree gets the benefit of nourishment which otherwise would go to the suckers.

Some experiments in forestry are being made at the Model Farm. Why cannot the attempt be made there to grow one or two specimens of every tree and shrub whose habitat is within the limits of the Province? Such a collection would be a most interesting one.

The best time to destroy weeds is just before they appear above ground. A simple stirring of the soil with the hoe is sufficient then; but if left until they are well started the work is much harder, and the crops are robbed of a portion of their necessary food.

It will be a matter of much interest this year to learn if the pea-bug has failed to appear. Last year, for the first time in a quarter of a century, it did almost no harm and the pea crop was of the old-time sort. From all that we can learn the pest has done no harm this year.

Our Ontario farmers are steadily improving their horses by breeding from large and heavy animals, such as the Clyde and the Percheron. Strong horses are needed for such work as ploughing, harrowing and teaming, and there is real economy in rearing such animals for the farm.

The seed of alsike clover ripens from the first blossoms, and as it shells readily the process of re-seeding usually goes on from year to year. In this way the alsike propagates itself very surely, and it is not uncommon to find it spreading from field to field of a farm, and from one farm to another.

The only way to keep butter or eggs fresh for any length of time is to put them in a cool place, and apart from any fruit, cheese, lard or other articles from which odour arises. It is not generally known, but it is true, that eggs are very active in absorbing power, and their fresh taste is very quickly destroyed in a tainted atmosphere.

It is only when Canadian thistle seeds fall in out-of-the-way places, where the ground is loose, that they are hard to keep under control. The most successful way of destroying them is to smother them by cultivation. It is not enough to cut them down; they should be ploughed under, and the ground sown thickly with clover seed, or seed of almost any crop of luxuriant growth.

In South Russia, as well as in the United States, the wheat crop this year is very poor, great damage having been caused by excessive heat and drouth. The latest reports from the Western States give ground for the fear that the crop will sustain an extra loss from blight and rust. A hot wave extending over Wisconsin, Minnesota and Dakota is proving very destructive to the spring wheat.

The visible supply of wheat in the United States and Canada, on the 25th of July, compris-

ing the stocks in warehouse, on rail and afloat, was 37,540,000 bushels, being three times as much as at the corresponding date last year and twice as much as at the corresponding date of two years ago. There is no doubt but farmers and dealers have been holding on for better prices.

The Agricultural College Convention recently held at Washington, pronounced strongly against the system of distributing seeds through members of Congress. The system has nothing to commend it in a country where every town of a few thousand inhabitants has its seed store, and where the farmers have enterprise enough to get whatever seeds they want and pay for them without any sense of obligation to the politicians.

Common belief is that the Hessian fly was brought to America by the Hessian soldiers who served in the British army during the Revolutionary War; but Dr. Hager, of Cambridge, Mass., shows in a letter to the *Canadian Entomologist* that the insect was known in Pennsylvania long before that period. He has also ascertained that it was known as the Hessian fly ten years before the war began. It has been very destructive in Western New York this year.

The haying season has been very fine this year, and the crop has doubtless been cured and saved very satisfactorily. In some localities timothy is light, and in others it is unusually heavy, but on the whole it seems to be a good average. Farmers who reflect on the long and severe winter of the present year will doubtless make an effort to gather every nook and corner of the farm. So many cattle died last spring, and so many others were brought through in a pitiable condition, that it would be a shame to neglect any provision for their wants.

The rotation of crops adopted by Professor Roberts, of Cornell University farm, is clover, corn, oats, wheat and clover. In seeding down two to four quarts of timothy seed are sown about ten days after the wheat in autumn, and from four to six quarts of clover in the following spring. With this rotation he has obtained forty-seven bushels per acre of wheat, seventy-three bushels of oats, and eighty bushels of corn. Of 120 acres especially devoted to the farm, land not originally fertile has been made to yield about \$6,000 annually in grass products.

The *Irish Farmers' Gazette* says that few people have any idea of the labour that bees have to expend in the gathering of honey. Here is a calculation which will show how industrious the "busy bee" really is. Let us suppose the insects confine their attentions to clover fields. Each head of clover contains about sixty separate flower tubes, in each of which is a portion of sugar not exceeding the five hundredth part of a grain. Therefore, before one grain of sugar can be got, the bee must insert its proboscis into 500 clover tubes. Now, there are 7,000 grains in a pound, so that it follows that 3,500,000 clover tubes must be sucked in order to obtain but one pound of honey.

A New York State farmer gives a record kept by him of the quantity of butter made during a

series of years from native, grade and Ayrshire cows. For one year the average of thirteen natives was 147 pounds; for two years the average of grade Ayrshires (sixteen in first year and seventeen in second) was about 170 pounds; and for six years the average of nineteen Ayrshires ranged from 193 pounds in the lowest year to 218 pounds in the highest. A record such as this is very instructive, and if any of our Ontario farmers are able to supply one, we should be glad to publish it. Such figures for whole herds, and for a series of years, are of great value in determining what breeds are best adapted to the dairy in our country.

The best estimates of the United States wheat crop put the yield at about 200,000,000 bushels less than the average of the last five years. Michigan is the only State in which the fall wheat came safely through the winter, in most of the others it is doubtful if the average will exceed five bushels per acre. As a result of this great failure it seems to be inevitable that the price of wheat must advance. Still the movement may not be immediate. Crops were good almost all over the world last year, and the surplus will take some time yet in finding a market. Three or four months hence will doubtless see a rise in quotations, and farmers who can hold on until then are likely to benefit by it.

Here is an instance which illustrates the importance of taking care of farm implements. One season each of two neighbours bought mowing machines of the same style and make. One gave his machine good care at all times, and at the end of twenty five years it was fitted to do good work in the field. The other used his machine in the haying season, for the rest of the year he left it to rot and rust in the field; and at the end of five years he had to buy a new one. The instance is not singular, for there can hardly be a doubt that with the proper care of the wood and iron work of one machine it may be made to last five times longer than one that is exposed to all the weathers of the year. As a lesson in economy, every farmer will readily see the force of the instance given.

The value of white clover for pasture land is generally recognized; but there are very few people who think of improving their pastures by sowing it. Like the alsike, it perpetuates itself once it gets a footing; yet there are many places in which the trouble is to get a start. Wherever a farmer intends to put a field in permanent pasture, he should sow it liberally with white clover seed, and along with it a mixture of blue-grass seed. There are many in this Province who have no idea that the Kentucky blue-grass can grow here, although it is one of our native grasses and perhaps the very best of them for grazing purposes. In some of the Lake Erie counties especially, large fields if it are grown every year for seed, and any reliable seedsman may be trusted to procure a supply of it. The lawn in front of the Agricultural College at Guelph was seeded a year or two ago with white clover and blue grass, and this year it covers the ground like a carpet. No grazing land could be better than this for the dairyman's use in producing milk and butter.