

Experimental Farm at Agassiz, British Columbia.

In British Columbia it is generally acknowledged that what is known here as fern land (ours is of that class) is not good for much the first year after breaking, and, in fact, it takes about three years to subdue the ferns and get the land into good condition.

In a general way I might say that this year the following grains and roots of those tried under like conditions gave the most satisfactory returns:—Corn—Moore's Early Concord. Fall wheat, old varieties—Manchester; new varieties—Carter's Hybrids, A, B, F, H. Spring wheat—White Russian, Campbell's White Chaff and Rio Grande. Oats—Extra Prize Cluster, Victoria Prize White and Flying Dutchman. The best returns in this grain was from one pound of Golden Grains bought of J. S. Pearce & Co. that gave us 48 pounds, and we gave it no extra chance, only it was sown on old land, and it had to take its chances with wild buckwheat and other weeds. Barley—English Malting, Saale and Rennie's Improved Six-rowed, in the order named. But another year and a better chance might reverse all this. Mangels—Mammoth Long Red or the Yellow Globe. Field carrots—Only two varieties of field carrots were sown, Mitchell's Perfection and Orange Giant; both gave good crops. We did not have land in condition to give cauliflowers, cabbage, tomatoes or onions a fair chance, so did not go into gardening this last year.

THOS. A. SHARPE, Superintendent.

Seed Testing at the Central Experimental Farm.

The past season has in many localities been unfavorable for the perfect maturing of grain. In some districts frost has touched it, in others it has been injured by rain during harvest, or from being stacked before fully dry, thus causing it to sprout or heat, while in other localities some varieties have been shrivelled and partly blighted by hot drying winds. Under each and all of these conditions cereals are apt to lose a portion of their vitality, or to have it so weakened as to produce, when sown, a puny growth. Seed grain, to bring the best results, should have its germinating power unimpaired, so that when placed in the soil the young plants may take a prompt and vigorous start. The character of the crop is much influenced by the quality of the seed, and for this reason it is important that farmers should ascertain whether the grain they are holding for seed possesses the necessary vitality. Provision has been made by the Government whereby this can be done without cost to the individual; any farmer in the Dominion who may have any varieties which he desires to have tested, may obtain the information he seeks by forwarding to the Central Experimental Farm, at Ottawa, samples of such grain or other agricultural seeds. A special testing house has been built for this work which affords ample capacity. Samples may be sent free through the mail, an ounce or two is sufficient for the purpose, and about two weeks are required to complete a test. Since November, when the season opened for this work, the vitality of more than eleven hundred samples has been ascertained, and it is hoped that all those who desire to avail themselves of the provision offered will send in their samples early, so that there may be time to complete the work, and supply the needed information before seeding begins.

WM. SAUNDERS,
Director Experimental Farm.

The Apiary.

Poultry at the Guelph Fat Stock Show.

There was a grand display of poultry at the recent Fat Stock Show held in Guelph, Ont.

There were sixty entries, all shown in pairs, and all spring birds except for the heaviest turkey. The principal exhibitors were:—Mr. Tomalin, from Brampton, who carried off the lion's share of the prizes, with as fine a lot of poultry as I ever saw in my life. Mr. Buchanan, my next neighbor, showed a pair of geese which weighed, dressed, thirty-eight pounds, a cross between the Chinese and Toulouse. Some fine specimens of turkeys were also shown. In fact, it was the best poultry show we ever had in connection with the O. P. F. S. Society. The other large exhibitors were, Messrs. Fyfe, Card, Laing, Young and Anderson. The judges were, Messrs. Goldie, Murton and Tolton, of Guelph, and they had a very difficult piece of business to perform, but seemed to give general satisfaction. The poultry was shown in the old Town Hall. The ladies took a great interest in the exhibition.—J. A.

Poultry.

Michigan State Bee-keepers' Convention.

BY R. F. HOLTERMANN.

It probably holds good with a gathering of all classes, as with bee-keepers, that when they gather with a determination to learn something they profit. We met at Detroit, and such eminent bee-keepers as Prof. A. J. Cook, A. I. Root, Doctor A. B. Mason, Senator R. L. Taylor, W. Z. Hutchinson and James Heddon, were present. The space in the FARMER'S ADVOCATE is too valuable to give a detailed report of all the proceedings, only a few of the best points will be touched upon, the balance must go to educate the writer and assist him in giving the readers of the ADVOCATE better articles in this department. Senator Taylor gave an article on foul-brood. In it there was nothing particularly new, only the method of detecting the disease when the bees were not breeding was entirely novel to all in attendance at the convention. The method was as follows: Upon taking up the comb and holding it from you, with bottom bar away from you, the comb at an angle so the light could strike into the cells, ridges would be seen about the collar of the comb and partially drawn back from the mouth of the cell. This was caused by the decayed brood in part drying on the side of the cell, the balance breaking away and drawing to the cell bottom. Mr. Taylor exhibited a specimen of comb about three square inches in size, having in it a number of cells affected as stated. Another valuable point was the placing of honey in the hive for wintering. The method is particularly valuable for outdoor wintering. In preparing for winter one side of the hive should have full combs; next, combs with less honey, and so on until on the other side are the combs without honey or having the least honey. Towards this latter side the bees cluster, and as they require more honey they move towards the full combs. The importance and advantages of this method can be easily explained. We know in cold weather a colony with stores at either side often moves towards one side and after consuming that honey perishes for want of stores, the empty combs being between and the cold not allowing bees to stray away from the cluster. By placing the combs in the way described above the stores are never divided and the bees can move on them gradually. So much for the method advocated at the late convention. The article upon "Bee Spaces" will be resumed in the next number.

Garden and Orchard.

Growing Small Fruits for Farmers' Use.

BY W. W. HILBORN, LEAMINGTON, ONT.

Farmers are beginning to see the advantage of growing a good supply of small fruits for their own use. It not only lessens the cost of living for the whole year, but adds very much to the health of the family. Nice, fresh, ripe fruit may be had for the table for at least four to six months of the year, a luxury not enjoyed by those living in the cities and depending on buying from the market. Although the percentage of farmers growing small fruits for home use has increased very rapidly within the last few years, still there is a very large number that make no pretension to grow them. Such should not be the case when they are so easily grown. Good varieties can now be had suitable for any soil that will grow a good crop of corn or potatoes. Many farmers think they cannot spare time to grow small fruits; have already more than they can attend to! The fact remains, however, that the farmer who grows a good supply of small fruits and vegetables does not have to work as hard (other conditions being equal) as the other man must do to pay the extra grocer's bills. Strawberries begin to ripen in June, and a succession may be kept up with raspberries, currants, gooseberries and blackberries until the first of September, when grapes will be ready to take their place and may be kept in perfect condition for months with very little trouble, thus extending the period to nearly, or quite, one half the year that small fruits can be used in a fresh state.

STRAWBERRIES

are more easily grown than perhaps any other fruit, still more farmers fail with them than with any of the other small fruits. Not because they do not know how to plant and care for them, but because they do not plant often enough. It is the usual custom to plant out a plantation and let it remain until it has "run out" to such an extent that it will not produce a crop. Plants cannot be obtained from an old "run out" plantation suitable for a new plot, hence the strawberry patch is often allowed to go rather than buy fresh plants. The most practical method for farmers is to plant out a new plantation every spring. Less time will be required to plant out and to care for the new plantation than to clean out the old one; by this system the finest plants can always be obtained to form a new patch. The rows should be planted four feet apart, and one foot apart in the row for most sorts. Varieties that increase rapidly, such as Crescent, may be planted two feet apart in the row. Never make a ridge to plant on, but keep the rows on the level with the surrounding soil. Cut off all blossoms the first season, and also the first runners. When the plants have gained sufficient strength to send out three or four runners at once they may be allowed to run and form a matted row. Cultivate and hoe often, especially early in the season; do not let the weeds get a start, and it is but little trouble to take care of them. In the fall, when the ground has frozen about two inches in depth, cover with straw or coarse manure, putting most of the mulch between the rows with just enough over the plants to nearly cover them from sight. This covering must be raked off from the plants early in spring before growth begins, and left between the rows where it serves the double purpose of keeping the soil moist and fruit clean. If the mulch is allowed to remain on the plants until growth begins in spring the plants are almost sure to smother to such an extent that they will produce but a very small crop of fruit.

Plant such varieties as Crescent, Bubach, Wilson, Haverland and Woodruff, they will yield well and give a succession from the earliest to the latest.