

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE

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DOMINION.

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GROWING OUR OWN BRAN.

The past twenty-five or fifty years have taught us pretty thoroughly the value of wheat bran. Its virtues are that it is a laxative; it lightens up a heavy meal ration, making it more digestible, and last, but by no means least, it is rich in nitrogenous matter, the material that goes to make bone, muscle and milk. Excepting peas and clover, the most of our farm grains and fodders are relatively lacking in nitrogenous matter, or protein, as it is generally called. By "relatively lacking," we mean that they do not contain quite enough protein to balance up the starch, sugar and fatty substances they contain. The average ration composed of farm-grown feeds, requires the addition of something like bran, oil meal or gluten meal, in order to make a ration that will give the best and most economical results.

Of late years we have awakened to the fact that we can grow our own bran much more cheaply than we can buy it. To say nothing of clover, which should, of course, be grown in regular rotation on all arable land, alfalfa is found to fill the bill admirably. It contains a large proportion of the very element that makes bran so useful, and, like bran, it is also laxative. While not quite so valuable as bran pound for pound, it is near enough to prove a most satisfactory substitute, and the farmer who has a field of clay hillsides has an excellent opportunity to swell his profits by seeding them to alfalfa and growing some of his protein thereon. Thus he can provide himself with a splendid feed to supplement the ordinary farm roughage, such as straw, roots and corn silage.

We often hear it argued that by buying bran we add to the fertility of our farms. It is one way of buying fertilizers, and need to be a good one. But here again alfalfa can be substituted. Its nitrogen—by far the most expensive element of fertility to buy in the form of commercial fertilizers—it takes chiefly from the air. If, moreover, phosphoric acid and lime it obtains in the soil,

the subsoil. When the soil supply of these mineral elements begins to fail, they may be purchased at comparatively small expense and added to the soil. Where lime and wood ashes are available, they will supply the worst-needed elements. The farmer who does this will find it a speedy and economical means of enriching not only his alfalfa field, but indirectly his whole farm, while it will also enable him to produce large crops of the very best forage that can be harvested. Considered whether as a feed or means of soil enrichment, alfalfa is far ahead of bran in point of economy. With the latter substance hovering around the figure of twenty dollars per ton, we may well ask ourselves the question, "Why not grow my own bran on those stiff clay hills?" Try it. It pays.

OUR MARITIME LETTER.

Regularly within these late years the Province of Prince Edward Island, at least, has had, in the early days of springtime, a sort of educational exhibition called a seed fair. The Seed Grain Department at Ottawa and the local Government conspire to secure a sum sufficient to procure prizes for a modest line of grain and roots, and guarantee the expenses of expert judges and efficient lecturers. Heretofore this Fair has been held at Charlottetown, where all the agricultural meetings of a general character are usually held, and where, strange to say, they are more poorly attended than if they were convoked in the most remote of our rural settlements. This year Summerside has pushed her claims to the holding of this gathering within her precincts, with so much success that on the 27th and 28th of March perhaps the best fair of the kind so far held here was pulled off, the Commissioner of Agriculture, a number of the people's representatives in the Legislature, Supt. Fuller, of Truro Agricultural College, Seed Inspector Moore, Secretary of Agriculture Ross, and a large attendance of farmers and farmers' wives, assisting. The exhibit was larger than ever, and the samples of seeds and roots remarkably good, the judges say, although some fears were entertained of the germinating power of last year's seed on account of the drought which visited us in July and persevered till September. The grain crop was very short here, except in wheat, and, whilst it could be called a good average one, the straw was short in many cases and the grain not as large, plump and vital as the year before.

It will be well, then, for our farmers to exercise a degree of prudence in selecting native seeds this spring. It is a heavy tax on them we know, to have to resort to the complete replacing of their seeds by imported ones, but even this extremity is as nothing compared to the tragedy of consigning those of their own which are not vital to the ground, and thus losing a whole crop or nearly so. It is wonderful with what want of concern in this important matter men will sometimes act, notwithstanding all the missionary work going on amongst them. We hope that the time is not far distant when a farmer would as soon sow seed he has not tested as buy a pig in a poke. Of course, many things have to be taken on faith in this world, but it is dangerous to go very far in the seed line on this assumption. The Government has passed a Seed Control Act, which regulates to a certain extent the sale of impure seeds, but the trade has already found devices to impose on the unsuspecting, and "Government Standard Seed," in big letters, attached to bags of seeds in depots, generally trap them into a purchase of what they consider regular No. 1 seed, whereas the packages contain, in reality, a class of seeds which have simply been clean enough to meet the minimum standard fixed by Section 6 of the Seed Control Act, which allows 90 seeds of such weeds as are named in the Act in every ounce of red clover, 200 in alsike, and 200 in timothy seed.

It will thus be seen that there is great need of care with the season's seeds, if we wish our efforts to be rewarded in the harvest time. And it were well to take time by the forelock. Every man can know exactly whether his own seed is fit for the year's crop by having it tested, free of charge, by the analysts of the Seed Division, Ottawa. And, by purchasing what he needs from the seedsmen early enough, he may feel perfectly

sure that he is honestly dealt with by sending forward to the same place a sample of his purchase. It is true that, to be accurate, care must be taken to insure the representative character of the sample by mixing the seed well together from which it is taken. The size of sample sent to "The Seed Commissioner, Department of Agriculture, Ottawa," and which requires no postage, but passes free through the mails, is: "One ounce of grass seeds of all kinds, or of white or alsike clover; two ounces of red clover; alfalfa, millet, or other seeds of this size; one-half pound of cereal grains or other large seeds." If the germination test alone is invoked, a smaller sample may be forwarded, but in no case should less than one thousand seeds of cereals or two thousand of grasses and clover be forwarded.

With this opportunity of making assurances in a matter so important doubly sure, with little trouble, and absolutely free; with the monition of the experts before them as to the doubtful vitality of native seeds this year; with the conviction now full upon them, too, that it were worse than lunacy to commit to the soil bad seeds—we hope that everybody in the land who raises crops will see to it that he is not laboring in vain or contributing to our already too large spread of noxious weeds, but either test or submit to the official test, in the manner above explained, all the seeds he intends sowing this season, so that, with their proper consignment to mother earth, and the watering we may hope for from Apollo, God will give the wonderful increase which constitutes in our crops the perpetual miracle every thoughtful man marvels at more than anything else in the whole scope of his observation.

A. E. BURKE.

CO-OPERATION IN SECURING SPEAKERS.

The suggestion made at the Victoria Co. Beekeepers' Association, that neighboring County Beekeepers' Associations should arrange their meetings in circuit order, and club together to secure some noted outside talent, is a good one. Co-operation is nowhere more effective than in securing speakers for agricultural meetings. The time of good men is valuable, and they do not, as a rule, care to leave home, spending two or three days travelling, to do one hour's speaking, unless the pay per minute of dissertation is a good deal higher than most local organizations are able or willing to offer. There is this further argument, also, that an address loses nothing by repetition. Usually the second deliverance is more lucid than the first, and gains, besides, with the lecturer's increasing familiarity with local conditions. We trust the beekeepers will put this idea into practice.

HORSES.

THROWS DOWN GAUNTLET FOR THE PERCHERON.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

As a farmer's adviser, we are very much pleased with "The Farmer's Advocate." It deals with the business side of farming satisfactorily, and the Home Department and Quiet Hour are most beneficial, but in dealing with the horse question, I am sorry to say you do not give the Percheron a fair shake, and many of your subscribers in this locality are of the same opinion as I am.

Now, I am not French, and am a loyal British subject, and would rather get our horses from some of the British Isles, other things being equal, but when it comes to horses they must stand on their merits.

We will first consider the feet. The Percheron has the best foundation of any draft breed, having a high-cup foot, with strong wall, and carries the weight without letting the sole touch the pavement. The bone is clean, not loaded with hair, and I have failed to see in your magazine anyone wanting remedy for scratches for a Percheron. Percherons are plentiful in this locality. They are the best-muscled draft horse in existence; strongly built; carry a short, nice coat; good thick skin, and will stand hot weather better than any other breed. I have known the Clydesdale and Shire go off their feed and feet in hot weather, and Percherons at the same work never missed a day, while the others were being nursed in the stable.

And when it comes to value, they command the highest price in the market. Two stallions were placed in our locality—one black, at \$2,250, and a gray, \$2,100. Many imported Clydes have been bought and placed for service, none over \$1,000, and most of them much less. This is a lumbering country, and the horses work all year, and none give the satisfaction the Percheron does. Much more could be said, but time and space will not permit.

J. E. ARNOLD.

Argenteuil Co., Que.