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EDITORIAL.

Now the Seeding.

The temperature in the last ten days has been more like that of May than of March. The great depth of snow that lay on the ground a month ago disappeared as if by magic and without causing destructive floods. The indications favor an early seed-time, and farmers will do well to be prepared to take full advantage of these conditions by forwarding the work as rapidly as possible. It is rarely that late frosts do any serious damage to grain crops, and it has been satisfactorily demonstrated that, as a rule, the early-sown seed brings the best yield in bushels and the soundest sample of grain. The early-sown clover seed also gets the best start, grows stronger, and is the more able to hold its own after the nurse-crop is harvested. Economy of time is an important factor in the farmer's calculations in these times of scarcity of help, and it is well to be prepared to make the most of every hour when the weather and the land are in a suitable condition for seeding operations.

If the seed has not already been secured and carefully cleaned, this should be attended to at once, so that a full day's work may be done in the field when seeding operations are in swing. If, for any reason, there is doubt as to the vitality of the seed, it should be tested to ascertain the percentage that will germinate. The implements will doubtless have been examined and put in condition to do effective work in the preparation of the seed-bed, and the horses judiciously fed and exercised, to harden their muscles and fit them for the work, their collars fitted and their harness made strong and safe. Horses which have had little work during winter, and this is the case with most farm horses nowadays, require careful feeding and handling when spring work commences, especially if the weather be very warm. They should not be driven hard for the first few days, but allowed frequently to breathe freely, their collars being slackened to cool their shoulders, which should be washed with cold water at noon and with salt water every evening. Great care should be observed that the collars fit well, that the hames fit the collar perfectly, and that the draught be not too high or too low, but equally divided, so that the horse may work with the greatest ease possible. Galled shoulders are painful to the willing working horse and also to the mind of the man in charge who has the proper spirit in him, and should be carefully guarded against by watching for the first appearance of abrasion, relieving the pressure on the part and applying some lotion to harden the skin and heal the soreness.

It is not wise to take for granted that fine weather is going to be continuous and to cultivate across a whole field, taking the risk of the work being checked by a rain when the work is half done, and the water-furrows filled in so that the finishing is unduly delayed in waiting for the drying of the water-soaked land. Better work one half and finish it, running out the furrows and leaving it in a safe condition in case rain comes. Then the portion first finished will probably ripen first and may be harvested before the second is ready, while if all ripens at once, loss from shelling may occur before all can be harvested. The desire to finish seeding early too often leads to skimping the cultivation, which is a serious mistake. The seed-bed should be properly prepared, though the time and labor be protracted, and one should be satisfied that the work is well done before leaving it, as this may easily

make all the difference between a good crop and a partial failure.

In connection with spring seeding, the gospel of clover-growing cannot be too strongly preached, as this is the sheet anchor of successful cropping and of maintaining the fertility of the land. Sow clover freely with every grain crop, for, even if it is to be plowed down the same season, it will pay in the improvement of the soil, and will afford some pasture besides. Alfalfa as a soiling pasturage and hay crop, should receive consideration from farmers wherever the conditions are likely to be favorable, and a trial given it on a limited scale to begin with. It has many enthusiastic advocates, and where it is adaptable it produces heavy crops of the best of stock food. The earlier this is sown after the soil is in suitable condition the better it succeeds and the larger the returns in the first season.

Do We Need a New Horticultural College?

At an executive committee meeting of the Niagara Peninsula United Fruit-growers' Association, held at St. Catharines, March 25th, it was decided to apply to the Dominion Government for the establishment in the Niagara District of an experimental farm and college, to be devoted almost entirely to horticulture. The present Dominion and the Ontario Agricultural College experimental farms are too far north to be of much service to the fruit-growers under Niagara conditions. It was suggested that the Horticultural Department of the Ontario Agricultural College might be moved there, and it has since been mooted that, having endowed the institution, the Federal Department might turn it over to the Province, to be run in connection with the O. A. C. The justification for this essentially local assistance is sought in the fact that Ontario pays a large share of the Dominion taxes. We do not think the suggestion is likely to be very seriously entertained at Ottawa; nor could we approve any such step by the Provincial Department. Good work has been done at the Experiment Fruit Station under Mr. Murray Pettit, at Winona, grape culture being the specialty, but, while there is unquestionably need for an extension of systematic experimental work in the Niagara Peninsula, we doubt the practicability of running a special school of horticulture. It is one of those ideas which sound plausible, but do not work out well in practice. In the first place, we would expect difficulty in getting attendance and keeping up interest, while the benefits to the students, we fear, would fall far short of the anticipations of the promoters. The best agricultural college student is the one who takes a general course. It has been often noted at Guelph that the men who take the complete course make better progress in their favorite subjects than others "specializing" on them, omitting the rest of the lectures. The specialist seldom finds in his course sufficient complexity, variety or scope, to employ his faculties to best advantage, and so his interest languishes.

Then, the proposal to remove from Guelph the Horticultural Department of the O. A. C. cannot be considered. It is needed there for the benefit of farm horticulture throughout the Province. Nova Scotia has for years maintained a horticultural school at Wolfville, in connection with her fruit experiment station, but it is now being closed, and the Professor is going to the agricultural college at Truro. A special experiment station is still wanted in the Annapolis Valley, but the results of a special horticultural school have not warranted its continuance. The case of the

Valley is parallel to that of the Niagara Peninsula, and we would do well to profit by Nova Scotia's experience. A good general experiment fruit farm in the Niagara District, the idea of which we commend, could incidentally be made a useful adjunct of the O. A. C. The results of its investigations would be available for the horticultural students, and being convenient of access, they could occasionally visit it, to observe demonstrations in cultural work such as might not be presented at Guelph.

A Conference of Canadian Fruit-growers.

In compliance with the earnest resolutions of the Provincial Fruit-growers' Associations of Canada, Hon. Sydney Fisher has finally announced that a federal convention of fruit-growers will be called at the Capital in the autumn of this year, to discuss matters germane to the horticultural interests of the Dominion. There are many questions agitating the minds of our fruit-growers which only a representative council can satisfactorily adjust, to say nothing of the educational benefits from such an interchange of thought as would be brought about. Amongst the questions to be discussed, perhaps one of the most urgent is the adoption by all Canada of a uniform-sized apple barrel, as a legal standard upon which adjustments of transportation tariffs may be based. At present the law does not prescribe a definite size, but merely provides a maximum and minimum dimension. The 96-quart Nova Scotia or American apple barrel, and the 112-quart Ontario flour barrel are thus both legalized by statute. As the transportation charges, it is said, are based upon the maximum size, the Nova Scotian is taxed the same price on his 96 quarts as the Ontario shipper on 112. On the other hand, it is claimed that the Ontario grower sometimes loses through the failure of purchasers to make full allowance for the greater capacity of his barrel, as compared with that from Nova Scotia and the United States. Be that as it may, the desirability of a uniform legal package requires no demonstration.

The difficulty of the legislators has been which size to adopt. The Nova Scotia three-bushel standard is a very desirable package for apples, and has the advantage of being the same size as that used by our American competitors. The Ontario growers have found their barrel economical, seeing that it may be cheaply manufactured by the flour-barrel factories, cull stock often being used. With the adoption of home manufacture by local coopers, this latter will become a factor of less and less importance. It will be seen that the question is sufficiently complicated to call for mature deliberation in national council, and from the proposed assemblage some definite recommendation will be expected.

Another knotty problem is the more explicit definition of No. 2 apples. A No. 2 barrel may now contain almost any kind of reasonably sound fruit, so long as it is honestly packed. The task of framing a specification that will insure a satisfactory standard in size and quality for each variety, is no easy one, and the suggestions of a council of practical growers and shippers would prove invaluable.

Cold storage and marketing, freight rates and classifications, express charges, regulation of or a means of dispensing with the commission business and a whole range of commercial and scientific subjects will come up for discussion. There will, indeed, be no lack of topics or recommendations, and the work of such a conclave must redound materially to the advancement of Canadian