

FARMER'S ADVOCATE

AND HOME MAGAZINE.

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The Farmer's Advocate

—AND—
HOME MAGAZINE.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY.....WILLIAM WELD.

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TO SUBSCRIBERS:

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Condensed farmers' advertisements of agricultural implements, seeds, stock or farms for sale, or farms to let, not to exceed four lines, 50c., prepaid.

Advertising accounts rendered quarterly.

Advertisements, to secure insertion and required space, should be in by 20th of each month.

Letters enclosing remittances, &c., only acknowledged when specially requested. Our correspondence is very heavy and must be abridged as much as possible.

On the Wing:

We have not taken a long flight this time. We went to Burford Plains, in Brant County, also drove some miles into London Township. This latter mentioned township is one of the wealthiest in Middlesex, and Middlesex is one of the best agricultural counties in the Dominion. We presume the farmers of this county can count their savings by millions. Buggies and carriages, silks and jewelry, pianos and melodeons are the rule, not the exceptions of the luxuries enjoyed by farmers in this county. But despite these blessings there is a defect. The passing generation have waged war against the forest; they manfully subdued it, and have reaped rich rewards for the wood they have destroyed or sold in the city, and from the crops raised on the land. The woodman's axe is still heard on many farms, but there are some on which it is heard no more. The last tree is gone that could possibly be taken for building, fencing or fuel. One farmer we met had been driving thirty miles for rails; another was getting posts and lumber from hundreds of miles away. But comparatively few farmers have

PLANTED A TREE

of any kind except in their orchards. The wealthy farmer who had drawn rails thirty miles has not a tree planted along the roadside or hardly anywhere else; the other wealthy farmer, also, who was importing timber from hundreds of miles distant for fencing, has not yet any trees growing by the roadside. The question again arises—

FENCE OR NO FENCE?

Shall we continue to strip our woods of the best timber to keep up these ugly, crooked, miserable-

looking snake fences, or shall we adopt the plan of leaving our timber for more useful purposes, as in France, Germany and many other enlightened countries? Even in some parts of the State of New York the farmers have abandoned the old plan of fencing, and the sooner it is abolished in old settled parts of Canada the better. We know that many may differ with us in this view, but when we are forgotten, as we shall be, perhaps some bound volume of the ADVOCATE may be turned to and regretful tears may be shed by the starving, hungry readers, and they will say that the idea of abandoning the destruction of our forests for fencing and the planting of trees, now so forcibly brought before you, should have been adopted. The time has come when it is absolutely necessary to plant trees.

Ever since we commenced the publication of this journal we have attempted to induce farmers to plant trees, and we shall continue to do so. We have formerly held forth as a great incentive to planting trees the enhancing of the value and the beautifying of our farms and the country. Now we intend to appeal to you in another way, which we hope may have more effect. In our foreign exchange papers we read of the existing famine in India and China. The extent of this calamity appears worse to us than that of a hundred wars or any other calamity that ever befel the inhabitants of this earth since the Deluge. Can it be credible that double the number of the entire population of this Dominion are actually dying of starvation? Millions have died and millions more must die. Read the account.

The following extract from the *Saturday Review* gives a succinct account of the facts connected with the famine in China. A perusal of it will convince all of the importance of tree planting; and will serve to show the dire calamities that may be averted by taking time by the forelock.

The scene of the famine is the vast delta plain which forms one of the most noticeable features in the surface of China, and which includes the provinces of Chihle, Shansu, Shense, and Honan. This immense plateau covers an area of 246,721 square miles, and is inhabited by a population of upward of seventy millions. The soil, which consists almost entirely of loess, is so highly productive when watered by seasonable rains, that the district covered by it used to be regarded as the Eden of China. But on the other hand, it is easily percolated by water and consequently fails to retain moisture for any but short periods, while a few days' dry weather is enough to convert the surface into dust. Tradition says that in bygone ages the mountains which fringe the plain on all sides were thickly wooded, and that in those halcyon days constant and temperate showers almost invariably ensured to the farmers rich and plentiful crops; but at the present time so completely have these forests been destroyed that from Peking to Hankow—a distance of 700 miles—scarcely a tree or shrub is to be seen, except in the immediate neighborhood of some of the villages, and old men say that now rain falls less frequently and with greater vehemence than formerly, and that the showers which used to water the earth at seed time can no longer be reckoned upon.

But at the present moment it is not a question of the failure of one year's crops, but of three, and this triple calamity is aggravated by the fact that during several previous seasons the yield was far below the average. What, then, is the result? It is this—that seventy millions are in the direst want of food, of whom it is reckoned nine millions are actually starving. The imagination fails to picture the amount of misery and distress represented by these figures, and the accounts which reach this country from missionaries and others on the spot, of hoasted corpses lying by the roadside and in the streets of villages, of the efforts of some to gain nourishment from the bark of trees, the thatch from the roofs of houses, and even from earth and slate-stone, give us but a faint glimpse of the unutterable woe which has overwhelmed a population nearly twice as numerous as that of the whole German Empire.

One of the most horrible aspects of severe and long-continued want is the prominence which the instinctive law of self-preservation almost invariably attains at the expense of every human tie and of every virtue. The gnawings of hunger gradually blunt and destroy every feeling which is not centred in self, and there is always the suggestion ready to hand, that, as food for the whole household is not to be had, it is better that one or two of its members should be sacrificed for the rest. There is no reason to suppose that the sufferers in China yielded more readily to the temptation than others have done under similar circumstances, but now at least the traffic in human beings is openly carried on. Husbands sell their wives, and parents their children in open market.

A traveller recently returned from China writes: "When I left the country a respectable married woman could easily be bought for six dollars and a little girl for two. In cases, however, where it was found impossible to dispose of their children, parents have been known to kill them sooner than witness their prolonged sufferings, in many instances throwing themselves afterward down wells, or committing suicide by arsenic." A less avowed form of selfishness, but one not the less cruel, is the desertion of households by the bread-winners. Thousands of able-bodied men are daily emigrating from the famine-stricken districts to Mongolia and elsewhere, leaving the old men, women, and children to die of hunger or to struggle through as best they may.—[*London Saturday Review*.]

This is only one of many reports we read, and when you have read, weigh well the attributed cause, which was neglect to plant and protect trees. Now, use your own judgment. You went on that hard clay farm, or on that sandy, loamy one when covered with trees; you cleared part and had plenty of moisture, and a luxuriant crop rewarded you for many years. But you continued to clear and your neighbors cleared. The expanse is now wide; the hot summer sun and drying winds now take possession of that once fertile, happy, productive spot; your broad-leaved, hardy corn wilts and droops its wilted leaves more than of yore; the grass is burned to its roots; the cattle, horses and sheep already show the struggle coming. Where is their thrifty appearance? gone! The poor hens crawl below some weed, distend their wings and open wide their mouths for the lack of that humidity that used to be so refreshing and invigorating when you first commenced your clearing.

As that corn is wilting, as the poor cattle are starving, and as the poor hens are opening their mouths from dire heat and lack of moisture, so must all of your children suffer for the lack of the timber we destroy. We must have dry seasons, as they have in the most fertile parts of China. One of our only chances to protect our descendants from being in as bad a state as the poor creatures are in China and India is to plant trees.

It is the duty of Legislatures to encourage the planting of trees. Every county councilman ought to be elected to stay at home unless he uses his position for the proper advancement of such improvements; in fact, the planting of trees should be a guide to the selection of proper men to be our representatives. If you take a Councilman or a Member of Parliament who has no flowers or trees he is apt to be coarser, less educated, more bigoted and less suitable for such a position than one who has trees and flowers.

TO THE LADIES.

We know well that you will aid us, because you know we are right. Now, just persuade your father, husband, brother or sweetheart to plant and protect one tree, at least. That one will in