

The Farmer's Advocate AND HOME MAGAZINE.

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL IN THE DOMINION.

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Always Plow Under Something.

An American farmer is reported as saying in reply to a question concerning his success as a farmer: "I always plow under something." There is no secret in such success. Thousands of farmers not only in the United States but also in Canada owe their success to the same principle, perhaps not followed out to the letter but followed to the degree that good crops are grown on well fertilized land. Soil fertility is the big factor toward returns in general farming practice and the farmer who always plows something under is on the right road.

The winter season is important in that it is during that time that most of the farmyard manure is made and this is yet the most important fertilizer on the average farm. What kind of manure is best for the soil? This depends somewhat upon the soil. If it be heavy and sticky a manure of a long, strawy nature should prove more valuable than manure which is too short and rotten. On a sandy, light soil the well-rotted manure should be most valuable. But the cost of application must be considered, and in this, spreading green manure on the snow in winter has a big advantage, and if the land be level little loss should ensue. Every farmer in the land should handle his feed and his stock so as to make his manure pile as big as possible, and in the application of the manure it is generally conceded that lighter and more frequent applications are more profitable than fewer and heavier coatings. Keep the manure machinery on the farm busy this winter.

Next to farmyard manure we might mention green manures, chief among which in Eastern Canada is the old reliable common red clover. When buying grass seed for next spring's seeding get some extra even though the price be high and next fall if more acres are seeded down than required have a legume to plow under. Many of our best farmers seed down all land with clover, and each year. A second crop of clover does a fine covering to plow in. And in the plowing

down of manure, clover, or other things avoid the mistake of turning them under at too great depth. The fertilizing properties of these materials will leach away beyond the reach of the roots of the plants soon enough without putting them down below this level at plowing time.

There are other crops which do much good turned under. On a light soil fall rye, pastured for a time in the spring and later allowed to grow up after which it is plowed down, improves the fertility, and physical condition of the soil. It is a very satisfactory green manure for some soils. We have seen exhausted sand lands brought back to usefulness by this method. There are still other crops, which, under certain conditions, prove good soil builders when plowed down.

Then there are the artificial manures both organic and inorganic. Undoubtedly they are destined to fill a bigger place in Canadian agriculture as the years pass on and the farmer becomes more familiar with their various uses and advantages, and also knows more of the specific requirements of his soil. He must know what his soil requires and then make the best use of his barnyard manure and his green manures in conjunction with the most suitable artificial fertilizer for his own special requirements. It would pay every farmer this winter to study fertilizers and next summer to find out what his land needs. We are told that most Ontario soils, light or heavy, require lime. If so, the farmer should make himself familiar with the best forms of lime to apply, having in mind the source of the lime as it affects the cost of transportation.

Fertilizers, natural and artificial, are the big thing in the growing of big crops. Live stock is a great aid to cheap and valuable fertilization. However it is accomplished, plow under something.

The C. N. R. Attempts to Justify Its Trip.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

I have read in a recent issue of your paper an article in which you refer to the Canadian Northern parliamentary and press trip across the Continent. I think you have been very unfair in your comments on that trip, and let me tell you why.

In the first place you insinuate that the Members and Senators will be influenced by a "free trip to the Coast." I suppose you know that under the law Members and Senators already possess passes over every railway in Canada. Therefore, so far as the transportation and is concerned, we could give the Members and Senators nothing except that which they already possessed. There were, of course, meals which were furnished on the trip free, and which were not ordinarily so. I presume that both you and I have attended many dinners and banquets, without in any way surrendering our independence of thought or action.

We, naturally, wanted to influence the minds of the Members of Parliament and the Senators to the extent that we wished to prove that the Canadian Northern Railway had been well constructed, possessing the most favorable grades of any railway on the Continent, and was located through territory which is, and will be, productive of traffic. Or in other words: we wanted to prove that the assistance which we had received from Parliament had not only gone into the railway, but had gone into a railway which, from the standpoint of Canada, was worth while.

You have stated that the daily papers have, with almost every issue, given their readers "glowing accounts of the wonderful trip." You will remember when the daily papers were, with every issue, describing the railways in terms not at all complimentary. Insinuations of these derogatory statements came from our competitors, from political sources, and from a lack of knowledge of the true situation. Start a falsehood on its way, be it ever so small, and it will grow out of all proportion; and in the same way the statements of Canadian Northern officials grew until people believed that the railway was badly constructed and incapable of rendering any great service to the people of Canada. I think you will agree with me that the people of Canada, as a result of the trip, have a different opinion of the Canadian Northern. We might have hung plans and profiles from the "Chateau Laurier" to the Parliament Buildings, and those occupying the seats of the mighty would not have realized the true facts of the case as they have done by traveling over the Canadian Northern from Quebec through the Rocky Mountains to Vancouver, with fifteen cars in the train, without the assistance of a second engine.

You have intimated that the trip was devoted to lobbying. Now if this were true, the lobbying was conducted, you must admit, under the full glare of the arc-lights of publicity. There were from twenty to thirty newspaper men on board, sleeping and eating in all of the cars, and wide-awake newspaper men cognizant of everything that happened. We pointed out the advantages of the Canadian Northern, it is true, to Members and Senators and to newspaper men. That was the object of the trip; but we did it fairly and openly, and no efforts were made to secure a judgment that was not based upon facts.

As a matter of fact, the lobbyists who have been most effective in securing aid for the Canadian Northern in the past, have been the farmers of Canada. I can assure you that thousands of them have signed petitions to the Company and to the Governments, asking for the construction of railway lines to be built by the Canadian Northern Railway. Deputations have waited upon Governments asking for assistance. Without the aid of the farmers of Western Canada, the railway lines could never have been built.

You will realize that this country is, to a large extent, dependent upon the markets of the United States for finance. As a result of the acceptance of our invitation by the Members and Senators to go across the Continent, we were able to secure representation from nine daily newspapers in the United States—from New York and from Chicago. They came not only to see the Canadian Northern; they came to see the country and its productiveness. They returned home, not only to say complimentary things about the Canadian Northern, but things about the country and its stability which must be of benefit to Canada, to the provinces, to the municipalities, and to all the institutions of Canada.

There is just one thing more that I want to say, and that is that the Canadian Northern in extending its invitations invited ALL of the Senators and ALL of the members, those who have in the past been friendly, and those who in the past have been unfriendly. We said to those who accepted the invitation, "Here is the railway, here is the country; judge for yourselves, and by your judgment we must necessarily stand."

Yours very truly,

W. H. MOORE, Secretary Canadian Northern Railway System.

Nature's Diary.

A. B. Klugh, M.A.

Last week we had an interesting visitor to the university grounds—a Barred Owl which came and sat in a tree over one of the walls for several hours. There it sat, on a branch only some fifteen feet from the ground, perfectly unconcerned as people passed beneath it, or stood and looked up at it. Occasionally it turned its head round and looked directly over its back, without effort, and without any turning of the body, in the peculiar way that owls have. It remained until a ladder was placed against the tree by an enthusiastic photographer, with a view to obtaining a close-range photograph, when it flew to another tree some hundred yards away, and after a short stay here flew off.

This species is a large owl, eighteen to twenty inches in length. Above it is ashy-brown barred with white, the breast is tawny barred with white and the abdomen is light tawny with dark stripes. It has no "horns," as the feather tufts on the heads of many species of owls are called, but the head is rounded. Its face is given a striking appearance by the large disc of feathers which radiate out from the eyes, and on which are concentric rings having the eyes as their centres. The feet are feathered right down to the toes. The iris of the eye is black, not yellow as in the case of the majority of owls.

The range of the Barred Owl in Canada is from Nova Scotia to Manitoba and as far north as Parry Sound. It is fairly common in some localities, but is not an abundant species anywhere.

The voice of this species is a loud, far-carrying "Who-to-who-to-who-who-who" the last note being long-drawn-out and usually higher pitched than the rest. While in camp at Brule Lake this fall one of these owls gave vocal performance every night, and sent its notes echoing through the stillness for miles up and down the lake.

Considered from the standpoint of the farmer this owl must be counted as one of his friends, for though it does occasionally take poultry and game-birds, careful investigation has shown that these items make up only four and a half per cent. of its food. Its main food consists of small mammals, among them many of the most destructive rodents, such as the common rat and the field mouse. Other mammals frequently taken are the red-backed mouse, white-footed mouse, cottontail rabbit, red squirrel, common mole and short-tailed shrew. It takes numbers of grasshoppers, beetles, crayfish and frogs. It also has a habit, rather unique among owls, of eating smaller owls.

The nest of the Barred Owl is usually in a hole in a tree, but sometimes in a deserted nest

of a hawk or crow four in number at

At this time of twigs of our deciduous trees, they are plainly than they are with leaves. If you are pretty sure to find galls on them, as Oaks are the favorite insects, and about galls are found on

of trees put together course occur on them are found on quite common is a case as irregular as of the Red Oak. often several of the gated mass. If you that they are hard chambers. In the (grubs) or the adult galls. Which adult, depends upon youngest galls we see is a little for abdomen and redd are of course not the word, since all

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Let us have a market situation some of our own

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