

THE CANADA FARMER

VOL. II. No. 9.

TORONTO, CANADA, SEPTEMBER 15, 1870.

NEW SERIES.

The Field.

Hints on Autumn Work.

FALL PLOUGHING.—As much of this should be done as time and means will allow. Let the work begin as early as possible, in order that the teams may not be too much pushed to get it done before hard frosts render the work impossible. If every field intended for spring crops can be fall ploughed, so much the better. Land that is fall ploughed always is more certain to yield good crops, especially of barley and spring wheat, than if this work is neglected. Land intended for roots should never fail to be fall ploughed. There is more value and profit in the practice than most farmers ever dream of. On clay soils, especially, it is of the greatest value. If a barrel of salt per acre can be sown on such soils immediately after the fall ploughing is done, it will help greatly to dissolve and render available the mineral elements of plant food in them.

No harrowing should be allowed on fall ploughed lands. The rougher the state in which they can be left exposed to the action of frosts the better. It is generally noticeable that those farmers who give the most cultivation to their soils, provided they contain sufficient plant food, always obtain the best crops, and those who get their spring crops in earliest, and in the best manner, are least liable to suffer from such unfavourable seasons in early spring as that of 1870. Land that is fall ploughed, well laid up in ridges, and water-furrowed, is usually ready to be worked much earlier in spring than that not so treated.

SEEDING WINTER WHEAT.—Every effort should be made to get this operation performed as early as possible. A good tillering out in the fall is of great advantage to the wheat-grower, and with some varieties like the Soules and Blue-stem, it is especially so. The Diehl is allowed to be a variety that succeeds well only on good rich soils, and

with good culture, though it may make a fair stand if sown somewhat late. The Lowe wheat promises well, though we are not yet well informed as to its particular merits. It is of fine quality where grown this year. The new varieties lately introduced by Mr. Arnold of Paris, and said to be obtained by cross-fertilization, we have not yet had an opportunity of examining this season. Their value can only be determined by experience in successive years, and without this experience no one can rightly speak either in their favour or otherwise. Now that the once destructive wheat midge seems to have in a great measure ceased its ravages in the crops of winter wheat, our farmers can with confidence grow more of that old favourite, the Soules, than which probably there is no better and more suitable variety for this climate. It combines high quality with productiveness, under good culture, and always commands the top price in the market. Let particular pains be taken to have the seed wheat made clean and free from seeds.

SELECTING SEED CORN.—In those sections where corn can be profitably grown, it is well to be particular in selecting ears from the growing crop for next season's seed. The time to do it is just when the corn is ready to be cut. Choose the finest and largest ears from the strongest stalks, and particularly from stalks bearing two ears; the uppermost ear is usually the best. See that the corn completely covers the cob from bottom to top, and is solidly laid together. Open out the husks, but do not detach them, and hang up the corn by them in a dry place, there to remain all winter. By thus selecting the very best ears, the corn crop on a farm may be greatly improved from year to year in productiveness and value.

STACKING STRAW.—When the grain crops are being threshed out, let every care be taken to preserve the straw clean and sweet, by having it properly stacked, if there is not room enough to stow it away under cover. A vast amount of straw is uselessly wasted for want of a little attention to this matter,

and frequently straw stacks are so badly put up, or get undermined by stock, that during the winter they get blown over, and smother some of the stock in the yard. We had a neighbour who lost several head of cattle in this way during a stormy winter's night.

TOP-DRESSING MEADOWS.—Those farmers who have on hand a supply of well rotted or composted manure should not fail to give a good top-dressing of it to such of their meadows as are most in need of a little stimulating in order to carry heavy crops of grass. The fall is the time to do this work, as then the manure will have the benefit of the fall rains to wash it down among the grass roots. It will also act as a slight mulch to protect the roots from being heaved out by frost. The dressing need not be heavy, say eight to ten waggon loads per acre, scattered evenly over the surface from the waggon box.

GATHERING APPLES.—In this matter there is often too much carelessness shown. Many find it less troublesome to sell the entire produce of their orchards, (reserving only such trees as may be required for a supply of fruit for home use), to some dealer, who having the facilities at command, and knowing the importance of care, will take pains to have them properly gathered, sorted and barrelled. In this case the farmer can generally obtain a fair price for good fruit, and runs no risk of loss from freezing up or bad handling. Sell as early as you can get a fair offer, and insist on a payment down sufficient to cover any risk of loss should the buyer neglect to gather them in time. The better the fruit, the better should be the price. Those who can spare the time and expense of barrels, and will take the trouble to gather and sort properly, and have a good place for storing away, will find their profit in keeping over their fruit, provided they have really valuable winter-keeping varieties.

POTATOES.—This crop should be taken up as soon as they are ripe, which is when the tops are dead. There is nothing gained by leaving them in the soil after they are ripe, and some risk run of freezing up, or rotting should the weather prove wet. On no account