

# The FARMER'S ADVOCATE

AND HOME MAGAZINE.

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## THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE

—AND—  
Home Magazine.

WILLIAM WELD, Editor and Proprietor.

The Only Illustrated Agricultural Journal  
Published in the Dominion.

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### The Month.

January has been unusually mild and open; some farmers have had a few days' plowing. We do not consider much injury is done to the wheat, but we always consider it safest when kept well covered with snow during the winter. Wheat has been dull in the market, and then declined; this and bad roads prevented the usual amount of business being done in January.

Clover seed has also materially fallen in price, but timothy is scarce and high. Those who have any they can thresh should save the seed.

Not much ice has as yet been secured. If you intend to keep any get it this month; honey-combed ice is not the best to keep well.

The summer's wood must now be prepared, and manure may be hauled to distant fields and deposited in heaps ready for use. Perhaps you may amuse yourself in the orchard when the weather is not too cold. Some orchards we have seen have too much wood in them. If you intend grafting in the spring, cut the cions now.

Perhaps there are some tools or harness that want repairs. A little paint would be found a good investment.

Batten your shed well where the ewes are; a lamb lost now would be more expensive than a bit of lumber. Give the young animals something that will loosen their hides and keep them loose. Are there any lice on the hens or other stock, or ticks on the sheep? They should not be there. Have you got your seed grain home yet? Are your plans now made for the next crop, and the accounts all square? Do you know how your books balanced for 1879? If you ask yourselves these questions they will do no harm.

### Sowing Wheat.

We have been asked which kind of seeders are best. We quote the following from J. P. Billington's catalogue. As he is one of our first manufacturers of drills in Canada, in fact, we believe the first, and as he has suffered greatly by loss from fire, we are pleased to see he is now to the front again, and deserves patronage and attention. His mode of disposing of drills, and taking part of the profit from surplus raised, is new to us, and no farm would feel the expense when paid in such a manner. He claims to make the best seed drill in the Dominion. Send to Dundas and procure his circular:—

"Many persons not having experience in sowing grain with machinery are very liable to be imposed on in their purchase of such machinery, and in none more so than in buying broadcast sowing machines. They are made to believe that the broadcast sowing machine has many advantages over hand sowing. Since the first introduction of these broadcasters I have taken a great deal of pains to learn if there is any advantage over hand sowing, and from what I have found out and from particular observation, I am led to the conclusion that there is no advantage over hand sowing, and afterwards using the cultivator; and particularly so if the land is lumpy or stony, as the jolting and oscillating motion of the machine throws the grain to one side, and I am quite satisfied that an ordinary hand-sower will distribute the seed more evenly than the broadcast sowing machine in use.

The most scientific and practical agriculturists theorize that the grain plant, in common with all vegetation, takes very largely for its sustenance and growth from the atmosphere, and under more favorable conditions a larger percentage is thus taken, and that that more favorable condition is in putting it in rows, as the Drill does, so that constant uninterrupted currents of air passing through the grain gives it this increased growth.

Therefore, the large increase over broadcast sowing of any kind, averaging from 3 to 5 bushels to the acre, by practical tests; and no one has proven this oftener than myself, by taking the increase of grain sown with the Drill over broadcasting for my pay for the drill, by which offer I never yet failed to get full price and sometimes double in one year. Now this may seem pretty strong, but I have the proof that can satisfy you. Anyone can find this out by broadcasting and drilling the same quantity of land side by side (not from appearance, for it is always against the drill); keep separate and thresh, and compare quantities. This will tell the story, and can be done with very little trouble. Try it, farmers, you are more interested in knowing than I am.

I may here say that it some thirty years since I commenced making farming implements and machinery, and some 25 years since I commenced manufacturing the grain drill, and in my time have manufactured all the different kinds now in use (except the broadcast seeder), and am thoroughly convinced that no machine that the farmer uses will pay in dollars and cents like the grain drill in proportion to its cost; and I think when I confine my principal efforts to the production and sale of grain drills I am pursuing an honest and legitimate business, for although I have a profit on these drills, the farmers by using them have a larger."

### The Editor's Chair.

"There are truths which some men despise because they have not examined them; and which they will not examine because they despise them." The Editor's chair may be of the hardest oak or the softest velvet, yet a thorn will be found there. It is a matter of impossibility to conduct an independent journal and please all. We allowed a letter signed "A. P." to appear. The letter was from a pretty clear-headed old subscriber; it condemned Prickly Comfrey. It has brought such a sweeping confutation in the form of marked papers, extracts and letters, many from old reliable subscribers, that we insert some for your own perusal. We must say that they have very materially changed our opinion about this plant. These correspondents are all from Quebec and Maritime Provinces. We should like to hear from some of our Ontario subscribers who have tried it.

A communication in last issue signed "Brant" has brought some complaints. The numerous replies to correspondence that appear each month all require attention and time; sometimes we have difficult questions submitted. No one can satisfy all, and all our subscribers will bear in mind that we are not responsible for opinions expressed in the correspondence department.

But the chair is not always thorny. Pleasing, kind letters arrive, and lots of them. Every mail brings its quota of care and pleasure.

We must return our thanks to the many thousands that aid us, and for the prompt manner in which our friends have renewed their subscriptions this year. How pleasing it is to receive such a letter as appears in this issue from our English correspondent! Every one must be pleased with it. Then we have the astonishing letter by Prof. L. B. Arnold, the highest authority in dairy matters, who furnishes us with information about the new and wonderful manner of raising cream from milk. Almost every contributor furnishes some honey for others to sip. We leave the honey for you to extract, and still we labor and enjoy quite as many roses as other people.

### Agricultural Societies.

No class of premiums would be productive of more good than one offered in each county for the best managed farm. Hedge cultivation, greater pride in the care of stock, better buildings and a more thrifty appearance about the farms would be the result if thus stimulated by competition. Again, the farms under the best management would be brought prominently before the eye of the public, and would guide those who are trying to improve their method. We hope this feature of the work of Agricultural Societies will receive attention.

During fifteen years, ending in 1877, the average yield of corn in the United States had fallen off 20 per cent., and of wheat, 16 7-10 per cent.