

## Among the Farmers.

[Letters from practical farmers stating briefly the conditions of crops, sales, quotations and similar items of interest, are welcomed. Short, busy accounts of farmers' meetings and the helpful points brought out may be included. New ideas and short cuts in farm work are especially solicited. Where future prospects for a special crop are unusually bright, our readers want to know it. We have space for short, crisp, newsy jottings from each state.]

### WASHINGTON FARM NOTES.

Hops were contracted for during May and June at 10c. It was estimated that not 2000 bales of the '99 crop are now held by growers in the state. One grower is said to hold 12,000 bales, while in Cal 1500 are held. The quality is not of the best, considerable mold having appeared. Last year's hop crop in this state was about 36,000 bales, and the crop of 1900 is expected to yield as much. This promises to be one of the most profitable years to sheep men in the history of the sheep industry in this section. The price of both sheep and wool holds up well and the wool clip is unusually heavy. The mild winter brought sheep through in better condition than usual. They are stronger and fatter and had a better coat of wool than usual. Prospects for a full crop of corn in Walla Walla Co better than usual to June 11. Pastures good and weather favorable. Fruits of all kinds promising abundant yield. Winter prunes are the leading fruit crops. The prune growers of western Wash have about 1000 a in this fruit. Steps have been taken to complete a strong co-operative association for the marketing of prunes. With the organization perfected by California growers, north Pacific coast prune growers will also place their product on the market under similar conditions. This will do away with competition and net growers considerably more for the crop. Under irrigation a prune tree will bear from 50 to 75 lbs of choice fruit the fourth year after planting. On 7-yr-old trees the average yield should be about 250 lbs of marketable fruit. Growers hope to net a profit of \$100 a by the co-operative marketing of their product. The wool growers' association of Yakima Co held their first meeting with buyers May 15, and regular sales will be held on the 1st and 15th of each month from now on. Several clips are to be on sale June 1, and auctioned off by the usual eastern sample system. The association will advertise the number of bales on hand and for sale at each specified time of meeting, thereby enabling buyers to make estimates of what is obtainable each time before coming.

Minnesota—A series of public grange meetings were held by the state grange at Spencer Brook, June 16, and at Big Lake the 18th. National Master Jones was the chief speaker. Farmers in these sections are interested in organization and no doubt great good will follow the magnificent addresses made. The state grange has the past spring been called on to mourn the death of J. D. Taylor, who for 25 years has been one of the old standbys of the order. Another veteran of the order, R. C. Wright, died suddenly in March. While no new granges have been organized in Minn the past 6 mos, yet old granges have done good work and increased their membership.

North Dakota Filling Up—The state has about 20,000,000 a public lands open to settlement, of which about one-half are unsurveyed. Land offices are at Bismarck, Devil's Lake, Fargo, Grand Forks and Minot. The Devil's Lake district is all surveyed and contains about 2,000,000 a. This district received 72% homestead entries Jan 1 to June 15. From Jan 1, '99, to Jan 1, '00, 4123 entries were made. The total number up to that time was 14,148, made since the office was established in '83. Such figures show most clearly the unusual influx of settlers this last year has brought to this region. During the time the timber culture law was in effect there were 4002 entries made under said law, out of which number only 1681 have been proved up, and as the law was repealed in '91, there are very few original entries still in force. Many settlers have also bought decayed and improved farms. In the Minot district of over 7,000,000 a, settlers' claims were filed on 242,360 a during March and April. The railroad station at Kenmare received 40 car-loads emigrants' chattels, household

goods, etc. in one day. The lieutenant-governor estimates that 100,000 settlers have taken up lands in the state the past spring and that a very large proportion of the people are from the more eastern states and desirable settlers.

The Lamb Feeding Season in northern Colorado has just closed and has been a most prosperous one for feeders. The prices throughout a long shipping season have averaged between \$7.15 and 7.25 p 100 lbs. From Larimer and Weld counties about 275,000 head were sent to market. Of this number Larimer sent 150,000 head. The feeders have more than made up their losses of the previous season and have a good margin to embark in next season's feeding with. The success in feeding has given a great boom to alfalfa raising and much new land is being seeded. Run-down farms are being bought and put in to alfalfa. This means an increase in feeding in the future. The present crop of alfalfa is heavy and is being put into the stack in good condition. Crops generally in Larimer Co were never better. Wheat and other small grain have an excellent stand.

Nebraska—Season very dry in Buffalo county to June 15. Oats injured by drought. Rye and winter wheat will make a good crop, but spring wheat very poor. Pastures short and unless rains come will be hard on stock for the season. Early planted corn thrifty. Listed corn a good stand. Potatoes looking fine. Bugs have been so numerous everybody is spraying. Hogs selling at \$4.50. Very little old corn held. Sugar beets in fine condition on the Platte river bottoms. Hogs in fine condition, cattle and spring calves doing well and no decrease in the number of them.

Wisconsin—Nearly all old tobacco in Dane county out of growers hands. Very few cases last year's crop. Prices were higher than for years. The acreage this year is unusually large. Fall grain was severely killed by the winter. Spring dry, and oats, wheat and barley making small crops. Corn will do fairly well with plenty of rains during summer. Very little small fruit expected, dry weather and late frosts having destroyed it.

Iowa—Oats made a splendid growth in Muscatine county, while corn, though a little backward, has made a good stand and promises a full crop. Rye, barley and hay in first class condition and yielding full crops. Apples and pears nearly all fallen. Fruit crop prospects are as follows: Apples 15 per cent of a crop, pears none, plums 100 cherries 65, peaches 100, raspberries 75, blackberries 25, grapes 20, currants 100. The crop of strawberries was very light. Live stock in first class condition. Farmers are taking an unusual interest in developing the horse industry. The usual pig crop is being fattened.

Catalpas are well known and easily distinguished from other trees by their large heart-shaped, opposite or whorled leaves; showy, irregularly bell-shaped, white or yellowish flowers, more or less dark-spotted; and the long, slender seed pods, which contain numerous flat, winged seeds. The wood is very durable and much used for fence posts and railway ties. Catalpas are propagated by seeds sown in the spring or by cuttings from the ripe wood. There are three species in common cultivation. C. bignonioides is a rather small tree, native of southern states as far north as Tenn and planted farther north. Leaves downy beneath. Flowers about 2 in in diameter, white, with two yellow stripes within, and spotted purplish-brown. C. speciosa grows to be a larger tree and is more hardy in the north. This seems to be the commonest species cultivated in Kan. It can be distinguished from the preceding chiefly by its flowers and fruit. The flowers are larger, 2½ in in diameter, much less spotted within, and fewer in a cluster. Its natural range is from southern Ill and Ind to Miss and La. C. ovata is a low tree about 20 ft high, native of China. Hardier than the two preceding. Flowers smaller, only about an inch in diameter yellow with orange stripes inside and dark violet spots. The leaves are usually more or less angled at the sides and are nearly or quite smooth at maturity. The species all flower in June.—[Prof A. S. Hitchcock, Kan Exper Sta.]

## Helps for Farm and Home.

### ONE OF OUR BEST GRASSES.

Timothy has become the most popular, the best known and the most



PHILEM PLATE 51  
(TIMOTHY).

profitable hay grass in the United States. This popularity is due not altogether to its superiority in nutritive elements, but largely also to the fact that it makes the standard hay of commerce with which all other kinds are compared. It is graded like cotton, tobacco or wheat and it is the only hay that is in universal demand. It is most profitable because its sale is most certain. A perennial, it grows best on a moist, tenacious, rich soil. It does not thrive on high, dry or sandy lands, however fertile they may be. The best situation is valley land having a soil rich in calcareous matter and humus, not too loose or friable, but with a sufficiency of clay in its composition to make it reasonably compact. Timothy starts slowly in spring and does not take so rank a hold upon the soil as many other meadow grasses. It is not suited for pasturage, for it has but little aftermath, and the tramping of stock soon destroys it.

Timothy is rarely able to survive the summer's heat in those states lying south of the 35th degree latitude. For seeding, the deeper the land is plowed the better. In preparing thin soils, do not throw too much clay to the surface, for this will impair the fertility of the seed bed and prevent young plants from attaining a vigorous vitality. Harrow repeatedly until the soil is thoroughly pulverized. In the border states, sow seed in late Sept or early Oct, after the dry, hot weather has been tempered by cool nights, heavy dews and frequent rains. Sow with a drill from 11 to 16 qts seed per acre, depending on soil, location, etc. After sowing, a light drag-brush or roller, or both, should be run over the land so as to slightly bury the seed and produce rapid germination. The drag brush should be light.

Begin cutting when it has stopped blooming and a few of the blooms begin to fall. If cut before blooms begin to fall, the vitality of the plant will be endangered. If mowed after the stalk has become hard, the hay is of but little value for the nourishment of animals. Cut at the right stage, every part of the plant is palatable to stock. When timothy is overripe it has very little more value than oat straw for feeding. When cut in its prime it has no superior as a hay.—[Col J. B. Killebrew.]

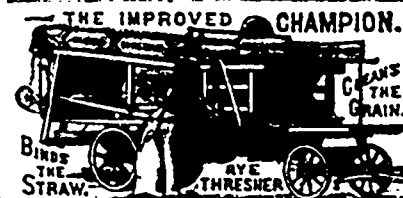
### GERANIUMS FOR WINTER.

To be successful winter bloomers, geraniums must have special preparation during the preceding summer. It is too much to expect such plants to bloom the year around, so if flowers are wanted in winter, the buds must be picked off in summer and a period of rest given. The plan of rooting new cuttings of geraniums in summer for the coming winter's blooming is all wrong, unless one can be contented with one cluster of blossoms occasionally. Older plants naturally are stronger, have more branches from which to throw out buds, and other conditions being equal, will give six clusters to one on a young plant.

I use only the best bloomers, and after the weather is warm in spring the plants are placed outdoors under a tree on a plant stand. No special attention is given them except to remove all flower buds as they appear and water them just often enough to keep them from drying up entirely. What they want is rest, and if much water is given they will continue growing and thus defeat the purpose of the work. About July 12 plants are removed to a shady spot, taken out of the pots and all the earth

shaken from the roots. Both tops and roots are pruned to make a good foundation for a healthy and shapely plant, and to get rid of all old and diseased roots. The work should be done with a very sharp knife, so that the roots and branches will not be torn or bruised. A clean cut will callous over at once and no harm be done, while a ragged one may cause great injury to the plant. New, rich earth is used for potting, and plants are put back into the pots they were taken from.

One great trouble with most people is they give their geraniums too much root room. I often grow them in the same pot for 5 yrs by this method of pruning tops and roots each summer. After repotting, the plants are given plenty of water every day, the buds being removed until the last of Sept, at which time the plants usually have to be removed to the house. Rapid growth starts in at once after repotting, and the pots should be turned often to keep the plants in good shape. No leggy, ungainly-looking geraniums will be seen if this plan is followed, unless one prefers that kind. Such a profusion of flowers as one gets from such plants is seldom seen outside of a greenhouse. The plants will last for years, there being no limit to their age of usefulness, as the tops and roots both being renewed each year makes them almost like new plants. When the main stalk begins to look old and tough it can be cut back whenever a strong new shoot appears near the bottom of the plant, and the new branch be trained into proper shape.—[Lena A. Holmes, Ill.]



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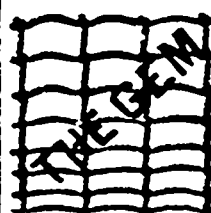
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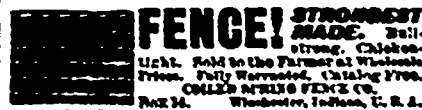
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