

ful and good management, assiduous tillage, and strict supervision of rising crops. Careless, negligent and unskilful farming is clearly indicated by an abundance of weeds.

It has been said that nothing was created in vain, and there is something to be said even in favor of weeds. Many have valuable medicinal qualities; some are very ornamental, and most may be applied to some useful purpose and made to yield a little compensation for the injury they have done and the trouble they have caused.

Young thistles, particularly, when dry, are readily eaten by horses. Wild mustard, if cut before the seed is formed, can be made into hay which is quite acceptable to cattle, and all other coarse weeds may be collected, and added to the compost heap. In all cases when weeds are reserved to contribute to the farm resources, great care must be exercised to destroy all the seeds and living roots.

How strange it is that many cultivators are so lax about the removal of weeds. If they knew that a robber was on their premises they would at once take prompt measures to eject him and would be ill at ease until assured of his absence; and yet, they will allow weeds to invade their lands, and rob their crops, looking on with complacency until the mischief is done.

Weeds, as before intimated, are weeds only when they are robbers. There are no weeds in prairies, pampas or natural forests in one sense, but in another all may be weeds, when one intrudes upon the free development of the other.

Crops and weeds are the same things in antagonistic positions. Crops are plants selected or improved, and planted on prepared ground with a view to a maximum produce. Weeds are such wild plants as many intrude, or they may be individuals of the same crop crowding upon each other.

The destruction of all plants which may injure the crop is one of the most important branches of agricultural practice; for if that is neglected or slovenly performed the value of the crop will be reduced however good the soil may be, and the advantage to be gained by manuring and tillage will be nullified. And further: the existence of weeds in the soil will prevent the crops from receiving the beneficial effects of the atmosphere, and suck up the moisture so essential for vigorous growth. A weedy crop lodges in heavy storms more readily than a clean one. The harvesting

of grain is retarded by the presence of weeds, and if they have been allowed to run to seed, their seeds deteriorate the sample of grain.

Experiments have been tried to prove the advantage to be derived for careful weeding. In one case, seven acres of light land were fallowed, and sown broadcast; one acre was measured off, and not a weed pulled out of it; the other six acres were carefully weeded. The unweeded acre produced 18 bushels, the other six weeded acres, an average of 22½ bushels per acre; one-fourth more than the unweeded. A second experiment was the following: a six acre field was sown with barley; the soil was badly infested with wild mustard; five acres were weeded and yielded 15 bushels to the acre more than the one acre which was purposely neglected, and the land was left clean for succeeding crops. A third experience will suffice: six acres sown with oats, one acre plowed but once, and not manured or weeded, produced only 17 bushels; another six acres well plowed, manured, and weeded produced 37 bushels per acre. This proves that oats will respond to good treatment as well as any crop, and will pay for good manuring and careful weeding.

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(To be continued)

#### PRUNING COB AND FILBERT NUT TREES

I should be much obliged if you would me give in an early number of the *Agricultural Gazette* a few hints on the pruning of cob and filbert nut trees. I had a nice crop this year on my young trees, but they show signs of want of pruning now to keep them within bounds.—A. L. Y. M. [The fact that the catkins have appeared on your nut trees should not deter you from doing what pruning is necessary any time during the autumn and winter. Many crops are lost and the bushes ruined by allowing them to grow wild for years, instead of keeping growth within bounds by a regular and careful system of pruning. The pruned bushes may and do produce nuts, but these are few and situated at the extremity of the branches, where light and air can act upon the wood, encouraging the formation of female bloom, which can be impregnated with the pollen from the catkins. The thing to aim at with nut culture, the same as apples and pears, is to have no part of the trees or bushes overcrowded, as this leads to