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and a corn crop of some notoriety was announced last season in New England at a cost of 12½ cents a bushel. Whether or not these extreme figures can be shown to be possible, it is certain they are beyond the range of ordinary experience. On the other hand, the present average cost of 50 or 60 cents per bushel in the Eastern States is entirely too high, and there is, beyond any doubt, a lower rate of cost that is clearly within the reach of ordinary farmers.

"AN IMPORTANT QUESTION."

"Here, then, arises the question that most of all interests the tiller of the soil in America. If there is an attainable yield per acre, and an attainable cost per bushel, so much better than the present average of the country, what are the figures that represent these possibilities, and how may they be realized by practical farmers?"

There are circumstances over which the farmer can exercise little if any control that may reduce the yield much lower than it would otherwise be, but, making every allowance for unfavorable seasons and losses that cannot be provided against, none will deny that the yields of the crops of the majority of farmers is low in consequence of inferior cultivation, bad seed—in short, from the owners own fault, and that might be prevented. There are some farmers whose fields never give a yield so low as that which we find the average of the country to be; why should not this be the case with all? We hold that no farmer should sow or plant a crop that he has not reasonable grounds to expect would return him a good yield. How often do we know 25 to 30 bushels of wheat per acre (sometimes 35 or 40). Barley in Canada produces, in favorable seasons, 50 bushels; oats, 60 to 70; turnips and mangolds, 600 to 1,000 bushels; potatoes, 200 bushels. These yields are only from land in good heart and well tilled; but why should a man spend his labor and capital on any other? If the land be wet, drain it; if poor, enrich it; if neglected, improve it. Light crops never pay. A heavy crop is almost sure to be a remunerative one. If it even so happens that, from additional labor and fertilizers necessary to force such a yield, the cost equals or exceeds the return, still there is sure to be a future profit from the improved condition of the land.

August on the Farm.

What of August on the farm? What of the labors of the month? Any work for idle hands to do? Any pleasures in country life those sultry days? Yes, there is work for every hand. Let us look at the fields—some shorn of the grain crops and hay, some ripe unto the harvest, and the fields of roots giving promise of abundance. Only a few short, bright weeks have slipped by since we were welcoming the merry month of May, and now we hail August with her golden sheaves and boughs laden with mellow fruit. The bright promise of spring has matured into the enjoyment of the fruits of the field and orchard. In looking before us to the work on the farm, we would not pass unnoticed the beauties of the country and the pleasures of country life.

Let us see what work lies before us and do it heartily. A good will and high spirits have a powerful effect in lightening labor. The heavy burden of heaving the anchor is relieved by the inspiring "Cherily ho!" To do the cheerful song and the hearty burst of laughter make our field labors unfelt, though the perspiration tinkles from every pore.

Work to be done? Aye, plenty of it. The wheat harvest may be nearly secured, and this, the principal of our breadstuffs, be out of danger from the storm, but the harvest is not all over. The oat crop now demands our care. We, in Canada, hardly appreciate this crop at its full value. Oats, fairly treated, pay a good profit. We are sure of a steady demand for the grain at remunerative

prices; and we need not say it is indispensable for home consumption. For our horses no food equally good is grown. Barley, corn, carrots, wheat-bran have each their especial place in feed for horses, but none of them can take the place of oats. Would we have our horses possessed of vigor, endurance and high spirits, the secret lies in the oat bin. And for man there is no more healthful, strengthening food than oatmeal porridge. Oats should be cut before it is fully ripe, and before the straw has become mere unnutritious fibre—so nearly ripe, however, that there will be little loss by shrinkage. From the joints of the straw, as much as from the grain, we judge of the proper time to cut it. Well saved oat straw is better for stock feeding than ill-saved hay.

Root crops need less culture this month than they have been getting; however, as long as we can, without injury to roots or tops, it is well to use the horse-hoe between the drills. Disturbing the earth assists vegetation, and keeps the ground free from weeds.

Our contending for the mastery with weeds is not yet over for the season. All weeds that have gone to seed, though it be not ripe, should be burned, or by some means thoroughly rotted. The seed would, most likely, ripen on the stem, and the consequence would be a productive crop, whatever might be its worth.

The digging of early potatoes will leave bare ground early in the month. It may be turned to good account by sowing white turnips—Globe, Norfolk or Stone. They may not grow to a large size, but they will be found useful—tops and roots for fall feed before housing the cattle. They will also, if not needed for horned stock, serve the sheep when on the after grass and stubbles. Rape, for fall feeding for sheep, is also very valuable. Every headland and corner should be made pay its quota to the farm account. Preparing the ground for fall wheat will give employment for every spare hour. The farmer can waste no time; he must at every season "take time by the forelock." In selecting ground for fall wheat, the very important item; shelter must be taken into consideration. The blowing off the snow from unsheltered fields, and the repeated freezing and thawing the wheat ridges, need to be guarded against.

In making preparations for the fall crop, nothing is more absolutely necessary, if we are to have a remunerative crop, than good, pure, well-cleaned seed. As we sow, so must we reap. If our seed wheat be mixed with the seed of weeds, so must be our crop. If it be of inferior quality or degenerated, we must expect light returns and low prices.

The live stock of the farm must be carefully attended to. The temperature of the "dogdays" has its effect on pasture and water—let us see that our cattle are not stinted in either. Soiling is the best, almost the only resource when pastures are bare, and any labor arising from it is sure to be repaid by the condition of the stock and the returns from the dairy.

In this month the borers are laying their eggs. Every means that can be used for their extermination should be thoroughly pursued. Their ravages are every year becoming more extended. It is not only the apple tree that they bore into and, if not exterminated, kill; locust trees suffer greatly from their attacks, and no tree of soft wood is safe from them.

Growing Flax for Export.

The *American Agriculturist*, while favorable to the growing of flax for home manufacture and home consumption, dissuades farmers from growing it expecting to realize a profit by selling the

fibre in the markets. The reasoning, that to raise raw material to send abroad and to buy the same or similar commodities for use where the article is in its raw state was, must be a losing business, needs no proof. Here in Canada flax can be grown profitably and manufactured into linen for our own use. While a diversity in crops is advisable, judged from an agricultural view, it must also from the employment it gives be beneficial to the country. The following is the article referred to:—

"Some statements about the growth of flax for export, that are calculated to mislead, have recently been widely published. It would be a costly mistake if farmers should be led to raise flax with the expectation of finding a foreign market for the fibre that should be profitable at once, both because we cannot expect to compete with those producers who are nearer to the manufactories, and because it is certain that to raise raw material here to send abroad, and to buy manufactured linens abroad for use here, is a losing business. By and by we shall manufacture all the flax we can produce, but before that time comes we must have the fibre, else manufacturers will not be induced to build mills to spin and weave it. Farmers may therefore grow flax fibre for shipment to foreign countries if they will, but the returns will be but small at first. This is inevitable. To commence the business, will lead to a loss at first, but doubtless the comparatively small loss for a few years would be an ultimate gain, not only for farmers, but for the artisans who would work in the mills, and for all who would use the linen goods, both fine and coarse, which would be manufactured. As it has been with the cotton business, so it is likely to be with the flax and linen business."

On the Migrations of Vegetable Life.

While we are free to admit the debt the Western Hemisphere owes to Europe for the various species of plants introduced and naturalized here, it cannot be denied that with plants necessary to civilized life, weeds, not a few that we would have willingly done without, have been also brought from "over the seas." There are few of the weeds of Europe, of the British Isles especially, that are not now to be met with in the fields of America.

A discourse on "The Migrations of Vegetable Life," by M. Drouyn De Shays, affords us a good though brief, review of this subject. We take a few short extracts from a translation of it in the *Farmer, England*.

"We have often spoken of acclimatization as practised directly and intentionally with the object of enriching a country with the various species that it is desirable to see naturalized there. But side by side with this voluntary interference of man, there are constantly at work, as means of propagation, all the natural agents of transport, such as air, water, glaciers and animals. Man himself enters into the same category, because indirectly, and without giving a thought to it, he is taking part in the same results.

"Air certainly plays the most important part in the dissemination of plants. A vast number of light seeds seem to have been furnished with tufts or membranous wings, only for the purpose of rendering them more likely to be carried away by its movements. To this end the light point of many plants is crowned by a tuft of extended filaments, forming an actual parachute, which rises at the slightest puff of wind. Thus separated from the mother plant, the seed can make very long journeys by the aid of its aerial boat."

By this admirable provision the work designed in the beginning is carried out; so that wherever man may put his foot, whether it be on the coral islands but lately formed in Southern seas, or on the mountain side, the formation, it may be, of volcanic agency, he finds vegetable life in sufficient variety at least to supply all that he absolutely needs. The appointed agents, air and water, are