

# THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE.

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DOMINION.

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one proviso must be inserted in this recipe. To be effective, the cultivation must be thorough. Slipshod methods actually seem to encourage weed growth. The man who does his work extra well is the one who will combat weeds successfully; the other man will always be their victim.

Incidentally, we may remind our readers of the advisability of prompt after-harvest cultivation of all stubble fields that have not been seeded to meadow. Immediate shallow plowing, followed by rolling and harrowing, germinates the weed seeds, which would otherwise lie dormant, to work mischief later on. Nor can we emphasize too strongly the economy of using the scythe or spud in fields intended to produce seed grain or clover seed. The regulations of the Seed Control Act, by practically placing a discount on dirty seed, should prove the necessary incentive to those who needed one, to clean their seed before it is threshed, thus producing a more marketable sample of seed, and at the same time preventing their farms from being infested through stray weed seeds in fodder and bedding.

The grand principle, however, is plain enough: What is one weed's meat is another weed's poison. Rotation enables us to apply the necessary treatment to each one, at the same time combating insect pests, and, best of all, securing maximum yields of crop. He who fails to adopt and carry out a systematic crop rotation, is standing in his own light. It is not quite the only precaution necessary, but it should be the first and principal one. We speak confidently of the benefits, having proved them in practice, and seen our conclusions corroborated by the experience of hundreds of other farmers as well. Rotation is death on weeds.

Do not be afraid to send your son to the Agricultural College for fear he may be seduced from the land. Never was there less danger of it. But if he is attracted to professional work, remember that he is entering a worthy field. The professional agricultural positions will be filled from the ranks of College ex-students, but the surplus will go back to the farms. The larger that surplus is, the better for the country.

## Our Maritime Letter.

Owing to the very backward condition of the crops in these Maritime Provinces, it is not easy to forecast with any degree of accuracy just what the season has in store for us, all other things being equal. Traversing the eastern portion of the country, from Kingston to Prince Edward Island, last week, we were struck with the general backwardness. Montreal is usually three weeks in advance of us, at least; it seemed this year to be barely abreast. West of Montreal the grain was larger and the potatoes and corn well up in the rows, but for June and Ontario, certainly none too promising. They were haying on the farms of St. Anne de Bellevue, but, to the ordinary eye, appeared to be taking time unmistakably by the forelock. Nearer Montreal than this farm, we saw some pretty nice fields of alfalfa, which seemed to convince us that this valuable plant might be grown successfully there, at any rate. Our own meadows here, on the Island, are not nearly so heavy as they promised. The continued cold rains appears to have stunted them considerably, and what we expected to be almost impossible of curing, will be handled easily enough with ordinary machinery. Of course, there are, in protected places, specially limed, or, with us, mudded, and protected, some immense fields of clover. The timothy is not yet out in head. With the heat which we are now getting, and the extraordinary quantities of moisture conserved, we may have a much better showing by haymaking, which with us this year will surely run well into July, and possibly August. This is unusually late. The alfalfa plots growing in the Province are looking fine. We have located a number over the Island on trial, and they have all passed their first winter successfully. Some are on heavy soil, some on the light sandy soil which covers this Province pretty generally. It has been contended that a good light, warm soil, with a generous supply of lime and potash, was best suited to the successful growth of lucerne. The heavy, clayey plot of Peter Doyle, of Lot 7, perhaps the heaviest soil in the Province, and one which must be deficient in lime, too, for it was never mudded or limed, and is cleared since the early days of settlement, of all others, is easily the most promising. Indeed, we never saw such a stand of clover anywhere, its rich dark-green attracting the eye every time we pass the place, contrasted with the other growing grasses adjacent. The soil is well manured, we know, and, whilst we expected it to favor the early growth after seeding, we were afraid that the shaley subsoil would not permit of the roots penetrating to the extent necessary for successful culture. We have no personal knowledge of alfalfa attempts in Nova Scotia or New Brunswick, but possibly Prof. Cumming or some other agricultural leader there may give us the interesting information later. If we could only depend upon permanent pastures of alfalfa here on the sandy hills, which should never have been denuded of their forest growth, it would mean much to the prosecution of successful agriculture. It is well worth trying, too, and the varied experiments in hand must assuredly count for something in the demonstration.

The assurance of sufficient fodder, which can now be given with some show of certainty, removes the most corroding of the farmer's cares. A recurrence of the conditions of 1901 would certainly constitute a menace to agriculture here, the consequences of which we cannot well foresee. With plenty of fodder, other herbage are not so much bewailed; with no fodder, all else cannot make an abundance. It is, however, to be hoped that the horn of plenty will symbolize the Island agriculture again this year. Then, those who will not be beforehand in the race, will not deserve our sympathy when a lean year comes round.

With the spring crops, and outside them, too, noxious weeds are far too noticeable. The ox-eye daisy inoculates the meadows in many sections, especially about the Capital; and, whilst not in bloom, the ragwort (*Senecio Jacobae*) is showing its curled foliage over the Province more markedly than ever. There was a Provincial Noxious Weed Act passed in the last session of our Legislature, which, like the Black Knot Act, and some others, will, no doubt, be more honored

in the breach than the observance. That we require legislation to make people do what they should be most anxious to do for decency's and their own sake, is the pity. If the public good necessitated the passing of such measures, however, we hope that no inferior motive will prevent their being fully exerted against delinquents on this head.

Speaking of ragwort, we have on our table Dr. Rutherford's evidence before the Select Standing Committee of the House of Commons, on the Conservation of the Health of Domestic Animals, and in it he gives the latest results of the experiments the Federal Government is making at Cloverville, Antigonish County, N. S., to fasten the blame for the Pictou cattle disease onto this plant. The Doctor thinks the experiment has removed all doubt. Not only is the ragwort always found where this dire disease flourishes, but it can be induced anywhere by the ingestion by the cattle of dried grasses among which it has been made up. His experiments cover three years now, and he regards them as conclusive, so far as cattle are concerned. He is asking for authority to continue them with horses. The disease is not contagious; it is the result, he avers, of ingesting the dried plant. In the green stage it is not eaten to an extent by any animals except sheep, and they appear to crop it down with impunity. All the cattle fed on a mixed or pure ration in which the dried weed was found, died in time. The Doctor does not say whether or not he believes the green plant, if taken into the stomach of animals, would cause this cirrhosis of the liver; he simply declares that the dried weeds, mixed or unmix with hay, caused sure death ultimately. There are those who contend, with some show of success, that it is not the plant itself that is noxious, but that in its drying stage with other grasses, it is the breeding-ground of a deadly fungus, which plays havoc with the animals ingesting it to any extent. This theory the Doctor does not even mention in the evidence before us, although it is somewhat widely held, and all the experiments he mentions would completely uphold it. In any case, he thinks—and in this we all agree—that no time should be lost in ridding the infested areas (among them our own Province) of a plant enemy so declaredly dangerous to the health of domestic animals.

A. E. BURKE.

## The Country in July.

(Editorial Correspondence.)

A run of 120 miles in July, over the main line of the Grand Trunk Railway, through that famous quintette of agricultural counties, Perth, Waterloo, Wellington, Halton and Peel, with their smiling fields and substantial farm homesteads, affords a pleasing conception of the prevailing thrift and comfort of Western Ontario farmers in these prosperous times. Gently undulating lands, cleanly cultivated and well-fenced fields, solid brick and stone dwellings and big basement barns are the rule, while generous stretches of the primeval forest, spared from the woodman's axe, for the most of the way, form a charming background to the landscape. While pasture ranges and clover meadows constitute a fair proportion of the covering of the fields, a considerable variety of crops are grown, among which oats hold prominence as a sure and serviceable product, suitable for food for all classes of live stock, and always salable at a paying price. Barley is grown to a considerable extent; peas, which had been dropped from the list for a few years, owing to the depredations of the weevil, are again being grown to a moderate extent, and are giving promise of a generous yield, while here and there golden-hued wheat fields are ripening for the harvest, and a larger acreage than usual of sugar beets are being cultivated, to supply the prosperous factory at Berlin, perhaps the most successful of its kind in the Province, the beet crop having proved satisfactorily profitable to those who have given it reasonable care and cultivation. Specially farming does not obtain to any considerable extent in all of this district, except in Perth, where cheese factories and creameries flourish, general or mixed husbandry being the better being followed, and the sale of milk and manufactured goods, along the line, while a larger proportion of the farmers there formerly, owing to their having no good pasture, are laying down of their best land to grass, for the fattening of calves, and some of them, especially in Waterloo, are growing the alfalfa to stall-feed