

Editor Farmer's Advocate.

Carter's Ditching Machine.

Testimonial from the Superintendent of the London Asylum:—

SIR,—I willingly bear testimony to the value and efficiency of the Carter Ditching Machine, purchased from you. Last year we drained fourteen acres with it for our garden, on very stony ground. In clear ground, whether sand or clay, it works well and rapidly and saves labor to a large extent. Next year I shall be better able to give you the cost of draining by the machine compared with hand labor, as I have nearly fifty acres to finish this year. Farmers purchasing it will soon save its cost. I made two hundred rods of drain three feet deep in four hours.

Yours, &c.,
HENRY LANDOR.

London Asylum, Aug. 14, 1871.

Mr. Landor says much more work can be done in the same time on land having no stones on it, and when men are accustomed to work the ditcher.

Editor Farmer's Advocate.

Crops, Canada Thistles, &c.

SIR,—Inclosed you will find four dollars, being this year's subscription for your valuable journal. The weather is extremely dry here; no rain for about a month. Fall wheat light in general, but will yield well; spring wheat and oats light on late sowing—early sowing, average; barley, light but good sample; peas are an average crop; hay, very light. I noticed in your paper an account of a man in your vicinity that can destroy Canada thistles. If he will kill all the thistles on my place or give a method that will, without taking a lifetime to do it in, I will give him one hundred dollars, and I think he will have no difficulty in raising many a hundred more in this vicinity.

Yours truly,

WM. WALKER.
Penville P. O., Tecumseh, August, 1871.

We have been in expectation of further accounts about the destruction of Canada thistles from the experimenter, and will furnish information as soon as obtained.

Letter from Australia.

[We give a few extracts from a letter from South Australia, which we think will be of interest to our readers.]

Editor Farmer's Advocate.

SIR,—I have great faith in this country, and with time I am certain it must succeed. What with our cereals, metals, wool, wine, preserved meats, etc., I can see a state of prosperity and happiness in future for it. I do not advise any one to come, especially those who are grown up in years with all their prejudices and feelings in favor of old views. Habit is a second nature, and I have grown accustomed to the habits of this country, and I should be miserable if I were out of it. Even now we are doing well. Five million bushels of wheat for export at 51 cts. per bushel is not so bad; our land laws also are becoming more liberal every session. Government rent for land is eight dollars per acre for three years, and not a stone or stump to grub. Two young chaps went up last year from this place and put in about 100 acres in five months, realizing 15 bushels to the acre, and this year they have put in 300 acres. If the season (and there is the rub) proves right, they can purchase the land out and out and be in an independent position. We have had a fair season for the farmers, and although the yield in this part has been poor, the crops in the north have made up the deficiency, and the colony is in a state of prosperity, recovering from the depression which three previous bad seasons had brought about. The price of wool also has improved, and I think brighter days are in prospect. The vintage has been the best of my experience in the colony, and the yield of wine correspondingly good, probably producing from four to five hundred gallons per acre. We have not yet obtained a foreign market for this commodity, but what wines have been shipped to England have been favorably spoken of, and in time to come I have no doubt a demand will spring up for really good substantial wines, and when that shall be the case, South Australia can produce enough to supply half the world if necessary.

for the vine will grow almost anywhere in the colony and in places where wheat will not succeed. Then as to dry fruits, such as raisins and currants, we ought surely to do something in that line. By the papers I have sent you a good deal of information may be gathered as to the products of this Province.

This is our seed time and the farmers are as busy as bees; the ground is in capital condition and so far things look well. I am glad to learn you are making headway and that the size of the paper and its contents are improved, but as for writing an article in it that is not in my line, and should I do so I doubt whether you would be foolish enough to put it in.

Yours, etc.,

Nairne, S. Australia, May 19th, 1871.

Editor Farmer's Advocate.

Does Farming Pay?

SIR,—In your July number, the pertinent query comes to "Young Canadian Farmers," if writing was ever taught in the school to which they went? What talk! why I never wrote an article for the press in my life, and would you believe I was considered one of the best writers in our district school. But methinks I hear you say that you mean figuratively. Well, if you will tell me what to write "I am yours to command" all day; or if you will through your valuable paper show "Young Canadians" how to make farming pay without working so hard, I will for one promise to devote part of the time thus gained in writing for you. But when one comes in from a hard day's work, tired and weary, trying to eke out a living on a farm that has seen its best days, unless the ADVOCATE tells us how to improve the soil, what grain is made of, what manure to apply to the soil to furnish those ingredients taken from it by the crops, how to raise thirty bushels where we only raise ten, how do you expect that we can find time or energy for writing? or what can we get to write about, unless to whine and complain of poor crops, hard times, etc. (But enough of that this time, and perhaps we will try and find out the reason why farming as a general thing is not made to pay.)

You make a noise about the Colorado beetle, but it has not got this far yet; our potatoes suffered more from late frosts and dry weather than they would from a small army of the aforesaid bugs, so that the potato crop will be next to nothing. Hay was the lightest known for years, but what there was is of the best quality. Fall wheat was rather spotted, and winter killed badly, but the sample is first-class. Barley and peas are in general good, and by the end of this week the greater part of them will be secured. But of spring wheat, for which our township is noted, I am ashamed to speak. Oats, those especially sown early, will be an average crop, and pasture—well, if it does not rain soon, cattle will have to be fed to keep them from starving, as the pasture is dried up. Well, I guess I had better "dry up" to.

Yours, etc.,
A YOUNG CANADIAN.

Erin, Aug. 8th, 71.

We insert "Young Canadian's" prelude to expected future articles, but he will have a difficult task to show that farming does not pay. We contend it does pay, but blundering may not. Answers to his queries are continuously to be found in the columns of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE; we hope he may report on some of the plans successfully carried out, such as clovering and draining. We hope some other "Young Canadians" from other counties will send in communications. Information and suggestions for improvement are what we most require.

Editor Farmer's Advocate.

Grant's Hay Fork.

SIR,—I write to inform you that through the advertisement I inserted in your paper I have been enabled to introduce my fork to a much greater extent than I could otherwise have done. I have even sent them into New Brunswick, the advertisement having been seen in your paper in that distant part of our Dominion. I wish you every success in your useful undertaking.

Yours respectfully,

PETER GRANT.

Clinton, Aug. 11th, 1871.

From the Ontario Farmer.

Mulch.

Too many are apparently quite ignorant of the value of mulch. Indeed we have met with parties making some pretensions to be gardeners, who did not know the meaning of the term. As a protection and help to newly planted trees there is nothing like it. Few transplanted trees would fail if this precaution were taken. A good mulching of straw, tan bark, or sawdust, keeps the ground loose, friable and moist, and in the best state generally for securing steady and thrifty growth. A correspondent of the *Rural New Yorker*, writing on this subject urges the use of all manner of material for the purpose, that may happen to be within reach, and says that shavings, brush, but short, and even cobble stones will make a mulch, if nothing better is at hand. He also gives an interesting account of "the philosophy of mulching," a point on which little has been written. He observes: Downing says, "by preventing evaporation it keeps the soil from becoming dry." This is the general theory, right as far as it goes, but is far from expressing the whole truth. Mulching is actually watering. It is providing a constant and ample supply of moisture. It does more than this: it provides a constant supply of fertilizing matter. Some years since, observing the remarkable effects of mulch, the writer tried some experiments, which to his mind, tended to throw some light upon the mode of its action. Perceiving that a heavy mulching of saw-dust produced all the apparent effects of heavy manuring, and kept the ground moist in the driest season, the bulb of a thermometer was sunk to the bottom of the mulch, and the mercury fell ten degrees. This demonstrates to my mind the cause of moisture and fertilizing. The mulch being always porous, permits the free circulation of the air, and being ten degrees cooler than the general atmosphere the moisture of the air is condensed. This accounts for the constant moisture of the earth under it, even in the driest season. The fertilizing matter of the air consisting of the ammonia, and carbonic acid, are deposited by the condensation of moisture under the mulch. We are familiar with the fact that frequent stirring of the soil, in a dry time will prevent injury to a crop for want of rain. This acts upon the same principle as the mulch. The soil being kept porous receives its moisture by condensation from the air. Nitre is often gathered from the earth in damp, dark cellars, and from under rubbish which has been long undisturbed, and it was deposited there in the same manner as the mulch.

Mulch has another remarkable quality. It will render the hardest and most compact earth loose and porous in a few months. The benefit of summer fallow is based upon the free circulation of air through the soil, caused by many ploughings. If the soil is left unused, but without stirring, it becomes compact and little or no benefit arises from a year's rest. If the ground were mulched, it would need no ploughing to produce the same benefit. It is recommended by some horticulturists to remove the mulch in September, for a time to prevent too much water from being taken up between the bark and the sap wood, which it is said, will freeze in winter, and cause the frozen sap-blight; the mulch may be returned at the commencement of the cold weather. This may be done by those who believe the winter-blight thus produced. But let no one forget to mulch who has anything to do with it.

Horace Greeley's Agricultural Maxims.

I. Only good farming pays. He who sows or plants without reasonable assurance of good crops annually, might better earn wages of some capable neighbor than work for so poor a paymaster as he is certain to prove himself.

II. The good farmer is proved by the steady appreciation of his crops. Any one may reap an ample harvest from a fertile virgin soil; the good farmer alone grows good crops at first, and better ever afterward.

III. It is far easier to maintain the productive capacity of a farm than to restore it. To exhaust its fecundity, and then attempt its restoration by buying costly commercial fertilizers is wasteful and irrational.

IV. The good farmer sells mainly such products as are least exhaustive. Necessity may constrain him, for the first year or two, to sell grain, or even hay; but he will soon send off his surplus mainly in the form of cotton, or wool, or meat, or butter and cheese, or something else that returns to the soil nearly all that

is taken from it. A bank account daily drawn upon, while nothing is deposited to the credit, must soon respond, "No funds;" so with a farm similarly treated.

V. Rotation is at least negative fertilization. It may not positively enrich a farm; it will at least retard and postpone its impoverishment. He who grows wheat after wheat, corn after corn, for twenty years, will need to emigrate before that term is fulfilled. The same farm cannot support (nor endure) him longer than that. All our great wheat-growing sections of fifty years are wheat-growing no longer; while England grows large crops thereof on the very fields that fed the armies of Saxon Harold and William the Conqueror. Rotation has preserved these, as the lack of it ruined those.

VI. Wisdom is never dear, provided the article be genuine. I have known farmers who toiled constantly from daybreak to dark, yet died poor, because, through ignorance, they wrought to disadvantage. If every farmer would devote two hours of each day to reading and reflection, there would be fewer failures in farming than there are.

VII. The best investment a farmer can make for his children is that which surrounds their youth with the rational delights of a beautiful, attractive home. The dwelling may be small and rude, yet, a few flowers will embellish, as choice fruit trees will enrich and gladden it; while grass and shade are within the reach of the humblest. Hardly any labor done on a farm is so profitable as that which makes the wife and children fond and proud of their home.

VIII. A good practical education, including a good trade, is a better outfit for a youth than a grand estate with the drawback of an empty mind. Many parents have slaved and pinched to leave their children rich, when half the sum thus lavished would have profited them far more had it been devoted to the cultivation of their minds, the enlargement of their capacity to think, observe and work. The one structure that no neighborhood can afford to do without is the school-house.

IX. A small library of well selected books in his home has saved many a youth from wandering into the baneful ways of the Prodigal Son. Where paternal strictness and severity would have bred nothing but dislike and a fixed resolve to abscond at the first opportunity, good books and pleasant surroundings have weaned many a youth from the first wild impulse to go to sea or cross the continent, and make him a docile, contented, obedient, happy finger by the parental fireside. In a family, however rich or poor, no other good is so precious as thoughtful, watchful love.

X. Most men are born poor, but no man who has average capacities and tolerable luck need remain so. And the farmer's calling, though proffering no sudden leaps, no ready short cuts to opulence, is the surest of all ways from poverty and want to comfort and independence. Other men must climb; the temperate, frugal, diligent, provident farmer may grow into competence and every external accessory to happiness. Each year of his devotion to his homestead may find it more valuable, more attractive than the last, and leave it better still.

Tanning Sheep-Skins with the Wool on.

About every six weeks we have an inquiry as to the best method of tanning sheep-skins with the wool on, for use, as doormats, rugs, &c. Here are the directions: Tack the skin upon a board with the flesh side out, and then scrape with a blunt knife; next rub it over hard with pulverized chalk until it will absorb no more. Then take the skin from the board and cover it with pulverized alum; double half way over with flesh side in contact; then roll tight together and keep dry for three days, after which unfold it and stretch it again on a board or door, and dry in the air, and it will be ready for use.—*American Artisan*.

PRICE OF HORSES IN EUROPE.—Some alarm has been felt least a great rise in price may take place when the gaps caused by the recent destruction of horses on the Continent come to be filled. We have not met with any estimate of the total number of horses during the war. It is stated that 70,000 horses were eaten in Paris; but what was the total number used up by the Prussian and French armies will probably never be known. Even if roughly estimated at 500,000, however, there is no ground for a large advance, as the latest returns report that there were about ten million horses in Western Europe.—*Sat. Review*.

From a recent English special report, it appears that Mary is the most popular Christian name, William ranking next. Of one hundred thousand children, half boys and half girls, six thousand eight hundred and nineteen bore the name of Mary, six thousand five hundred and ninety, William; six thousand six hundred and thirty, John; four thousand six hundred and seventeen, Elizabeth; three thousand eight hundred and seventy-six, Thomas, etc. There were also twelve hundred and thirty-seven Arthurs, twelve hundred and thirty-two Alfreds.