

Some people may argue that if any depreciation of seed wheat had taken place annually, even in a most remote degree, during the thousands of years wheat has been known, it would have entirely run out. But this view of the case really only strengthens the supposition, as during the time of the Pharaohs the yield of wheat was immense, and the quality then cultivated is not now known. Since that time an immense number of new varieties of wheat have continually appeared, and in their turn been tried, found prolific, and after a certain term of trial sunk into disuse, from the fact that they did not continue to yield or that other new varieties would yield better.

The American publications are full of puffs of various kinds of oats that will yield eighty to ninety bushels per acre; but we must take these statements cautiously, if not sceptically. Yet, of my own knowledge, I am aware of a farmer at Lucan, in the London district, who raised last year eighty to ninety bushels of Russian oats per acre.

The subject of improvement is not necessarily confined to expending large amounts on artificial manures, which few people can afford in Canada, and which manures may only, after all, be requisite to enable our worn-out and depreciated seed to bear, by extra stimulant, a reasonable crop.

When I see, again, as a rule, new land of the same quality as that formerly found to be so productive when sown with our poorest seed wheat, produce with its former certainty as heavy crops as we used to obtain, thirty to forty years since, at which time forty bushels to the acre on good new land could be calculated on with reasonable certainty, I will then say that farming in Canada does not suffer from depreciated seed. These observations only apply where the crop is not injured by midge, and as a comparison with new land now sown with the same wheat and under the same circumstances as formerly found to be successful. Old worn-out land, so called, would be no fair comparison.

We are all aware of the fact that all imported animals depreciate and degenerate here, and require renewal, and some years since the same observations applied even to the vines grown on this continent, and we well know one-half the crop of potatoes can not now be raised as formerly. I have myself many times in England, forty years since, raised 500 bushels of "Monk" potatoes to the acre, and seen my friends with heavier crops than even these; this kind has long since run out. No such quantity can now be obtained, unless we take the recent statements of crops from the "Early Rose," which we see so extensively puffed on the other side of the lakes. I planted potatoes in new land in Canada many years since, nearly every year, and so did my neighbours, and we always had at least 300 bushels per acre if they were well and early put in and on good land; but

of late years 100 bushels an acre from new land is the most that can be ordinarily relied on. There is some reason for all this, and we must look for the remedy elsewhere before we attempt the production of heavy crops by an expenditure of artificial manure to each acre of about one-fourth the value of the land.

When the Siberian wheat was first introduced, great crops were obtained from it; the yield gradually got less and less, until now little is sown. The same observation will apply to Fife wheat; at first it yielded wonderfully, especially on new land, but now no such yields can be obtained, although the wheat has lost none of its attributes, so far as resisting rust is concerned. Golden Drop has shared the same favour and same fate. Club wheat has passed through a similar ordeal, and we might with reason attribute the loss of crops, or yield per acre, to our depreciated land, were it not for our new land, which must be the same as formerly, and on which we obtained such good yields; but on which no such yield is now obtained. As I said before, if we are compelled to continue to grow the same wheat seed, and if this seed will not yield without increased stimulants, in the shape of artificial manure, why, of course, we must use them, and obtain them the best way we can; but I trust we are not yet in so sad a plight. If a merchant is compelled to purchase his goods at a higher rate, he equalizes his profits by charging higher; but the bushel of wheat has a value here in Canada entirely irrespective of its cost of production, and if we only get fifteen bushels of wheat to the acre, we are by no means able safely to calculate on double the price it would be if we obtained thirty bushels. Nor is the price necessarily materially influenced if we do grow thirty bushels instead of fifteen, as we often with good crops obtain as high a price as we do when our crops are about one-half, our markets being governed to a great degree by the crops of other countries.

In another communication I think I can reasonably put the above case, so as to produce conviction in any reasoning mind that there are other ways of regenerating our lands without the enormous expense of artificial manures. C.

Harvesting Barley.

It is a point of importance to cut this crop just at the right time, which is known by the ears beginning to droop and turn over against the stems, which will then be of a yellowish colour. Barley is so extremely liable to shell out whenever it becomes over-ripe that much loss may result to the crop from putting off the cutting of it for even two or three days. Generally it can be cut with a reaper, and if cut when about half-ripe, it may lie in the swath a day or two before being raked up and carried to the barn. The straw being less flinty than that of wheat, the crop becomes very liable to

lodge, especially if heavy rains and high winds occur when it is in bloom. Should the crop stand up fairly at harvest time, it is the best plan to have it bound in sheaves and shocked at once. This, however, is rarely done, most farmers preferring to leave it in the swath, and rake it into small cocks before being carried to the barn. This requires less labour and trouble, but results in more loss than if the crop were bound and shocked at once, and should a wet season come the barley in swath or cock will be apt to become much discoloured and damaged, while if in shock it can be capped at once on the approach of rain. One thing ought particularly to be attended to, and that is, not to allow the different qualities to get mixed together in the mow, or at threshing time. A very little of it may get discoloured by rain, and this thrown in along with the rest, spoils the marketable appearance of the whole crop. Better keep that which is clean and bright separate from the other, in order to get a higher price for it. Buyers are much more particular in selecting qualities in this grain than any other, and a little care and judgment at harvesting and threshing times may put a good many extra dollars in the pockets of the grower.

Haymaking in England.

The English, as a general thing, commence cutting their grass in the first week of June, but on good forward meadows commence the latter part of May, and generally finish about the middle of July, and there is almost every season an interval of three or four weeks before harvesting grain commences, as the middle of August is about the time they commence to cut.

The cause of the haying and harvest coming in here both at the same time, can be laid to two causes—First, the Americans let their grass stay altogether too long before they cut it, as it is hay long before they think of cutting it; and, secondly, the seasons in America are so short and forcing that the neglect to cut the grass when it ought to be done, and the hot sun which forces the grain to maturity so much quicker than in England, is, I think, the cause of both coming in at the same time.

With regard to the quality of the hay, the English is decidedly the best, for it is cut so much greener and has a steadier sun on it, taking three or four days to cure, and they take so much pains with it that when it is ready for the barn or stack, it is nearly as bright in colour as when it was cut. The chief, if not the only cause I can see why the Americans do not cut their grass before the sap is dried up, is that labour is so high, and it would take so much longer to make that it would not pay them, and so they would rather have it harvested in the quickest and cheapest way, according to their ideas.

—Cor. Country Gentleman.