

A New Wheat.

That the varieties of wheat and of other cereals degenerate, no one need tell the farmers of Canada. This they know too well from experience. The varieties of wheat that were brought to our markets a few years ago are grown no longer by our farmers. Other varieties have taken their place; indeed the introduction of new kinds is now believed to be indispensable to successful farming. And though our seed grain was originally imported from Europe—not being indigenous in America—it is deemed better that the new varieties be first raised here and not imported. The very great difference existing between the climates of the Old World and the New makes this necessary. A variety of wheat that may be grown with the greatest profit in the mild, genial temperature of England, may be found not sufficiently hardy for our long winters or the excessive heat of our summers. Our grain is now of different varieties from that of England. Here we do not see the White Lammas or Golden Drop Wheat, or the Potato Oats, the White Holland, the Poland or the Sparrow Oats as on the old farms in the home country. The Chevalier Barley, though imported to Canada, and grown by the farmers in different parts of the country, has not been found profitable. Varieties of seeds of any kind, it is thought, can only do well after being acclimatized.

In the old country, also, varieties are apt to become deteriorated, though not to the same extent as here, nor in so short a time. The greater attention paid to every branch of agriculture tends, with the equal temperature of the climate, to prevent degeneracy. Yet there, too, from time to time, new varieties are introduced to take the place of the old. Below is a report from the *Farmer* (England), of a new variety of wheat:—

In making our annual tour of the Smithfield Club Cattle Show there is a danger of overlooking some objects of interest and value, either because they do not stand out very prominently, or because no special notice has been directed to them. Such might have been the case with a very modest exhibition of a new variety of wheat called the "Mainstay," raised and propagated by the exhibitor, Captain Delf, Great Beilley.

Samples of this wheat were shown both in the straw and dressed grain. The bright, clear, stiff straw of this year of blight did not elicit the admiration of all who examined the ears, and the grain was considered of first rate quality for any year, and, in comparison with any of this year's growth, it is superb.

It is readily admitted that great benefit is derived from a change of seed, from heavy to light land, or from chalk to clay, &c. If such be the case, what must be the advantage of obtaining a new variety of wheat possessing the valuable characteristics set forth in the circular of the grower. There is little doubt but that most wheats degenerate after a long cultivation, especially when grown without exchange in the same district; this remark being peculiarly applicable to our more delicate and valuable white wheats.

We find that the "Mainstay" is a transparent white wheat, held in great esteem by the miller, producing a high percentage of flour of fine quality; but valuable as these properties are, it possesses qualities which will, in the eyes of practical farmers, be regarded as invaluable: the habit of the plant is very robust in all stages of growth, and so in maturity, the straw is red, of moderate length, very dense, large jointed and stiff; the ear is formed of a "rough" chaff, is somewhat short but closely set, and is known to have the property of resisting blight and the frosts of early summer when the wheat is in blossom; being very healthy in the straw it does not fall down, and when the grain is ripe it may be left uncut with impunity, as it will bear as much knocking about as Rivett wheat without shedding the corn.

We know that the "Mainstay" has secured a reputation in Essex, in neighborhood of the grower, and it deserves that which it has gained.

When we remember the disastrous consequences of the weather of last July upon all ordinary white wheats, and then consider that this wheat, being

a white wheat of very fine quality, growing with all the vigor of Rivett wheat, withstood successfully that stormy weather, standing erect while other wheats, grown under similar conditions, were laid prostrate, it is not to be wondered at that it is spoken of as an invaluable stock.

We are disposed to believe that this variety will prove itself eminently adapted for such countries as Lincolnshire and the fen country; in fact, in all free-growing soils. An inquiry has already set in for it for Belgium; and for those who practise the system of Messrs. Prout & Middleditch it supplies a deficiency, as having a strong development of roots, it is enabled to draw its nourishment from a greater depth than the weaker white wheats.

The discovery of this wheat was purely accidental in the year 1869, but it has been propagated and selected carefully since that time.

The Apiary.

Diseased Brood.

Caution.—As no part of the breeding season is exempt, the stocks should be carefully observed during spring and early part of summer, with reference to increase of bees. When any are much behind others in this respect, make an examination immediately. The movable comb-hive is readily examined by lifting out the comb, but the box-hive must be inverted, and the bees smoked out of the way.

Examination.—Attention must be directed to the breeding cells: with a sharp-pointed knife proceed to cut off the ends of some that appear to be the oldest, bearing in mind that young bees are always white until some time they assume a chrysalis form. Therefore, if a larva is found of a dark color, it is dead. Should a dozen or two such be found, the stock should be condemned at once, and all the bees driven into an empty hive. On no consideration put them into combs, as they would be likely to keep some of the honey for their brood. If it is desirable to put them into a home containing comb, they may be transferred to it after they have been in an empty one long enough to consume all the honey they have carried with them. If honey is scarce at the time, they should be fed. But if it is discovered too late for honey to be collected, it will hardly pay to feed them. The honey from the old hive may be used if the poison is first destroyed. This may be done by scalding. Add a quart of water to about ten pounds of honey, stir it well, heat it to the boiling point, and carefully remove all the scum.

Stocks in which the disease has not progressed too far, will generally swarm. Three weeks after the first swarm is the proper time to examine them. It is easily done, as about all the healthy broods, except drones, should be matured in that time. By perseverance in these rules, I allow no stocks to dwindle away until they are plundered by others. If all bee-keepers were equally careful, this disease would only occasionally be found.

The Story.

Queen Tita's Wager.

CHAPTER V.

"GAB NIBBIN' RING DABBL."

Under the friendly instructions of Dr. Krumm, whom he no longer regarded as a possible rival, Charlie became a mighty hunter; and when he returned of an evening with sprigs of fir in his cap for the bucks he had slain, Franziska was not the last to come forward and shake hands with him, and congratulate him, as is the custom in these primitive parts. And then she was quite made one of the family when we sat down to dinner in the long, low-roofed room; and nearly every evening, indeed, Tita would have her to dine with us, and play cards with us.

You may suppose if these two young folk had any regard for each other, those evenings in the inn must have been a pleasant time for them. There never were two partners at whist who were so courteous to each other, so charitable to each other's blunders. Indeed, neither would ever admit that the other blundered. Charlie used to make some friendly mistakes occasionally, that would have driven any other player mad; but you should have seen the manner in which Franziska would explain that he had no alternative but to take her in, and that he could not know this, and was right in chancing that. We played threepenny points, and Charlie paid for himself and his partner, in spite of her entreaties. Two of us found the game of whist a profitable thing.

One day a registered letter came for Charlie. He seized it, carried it to a window, and then called Tita to him. Why need he have made any secret about it? It was nothing but a ring—a plain hoop with a row of rubies.

"Do you think she would take this thing?" he said in a low voice.

"How can I tell?"

The young man blushed and stammered, and said,

"I don't want you to ask her to take the ring, but to get to know whether she would accept any present from me. And I would ask her myself, plainly, only you have been frightening me so much about being in a hurry. And what am I to do three days hence we start."

Tita looked down with a smile, and said, rather timidly, "I think, if I were you, I would speak to her myself—but very gently."

We were going off that morning to a little lake some dozen miles off, to try for a jack or two. Franziska was coming with us. She was, indeed, already outside, superintending the placing in the trap of our rods and bags. When Charlie went out she said that everything was ready, and presently our peasant-driver cracked his whip, and away we went.

Charlie was a little grave, and could only reply to Tita's fun with an effort. Franziska was mostly anxious about the fishing, and hoped that we might not go so far to find nothing.

We found few fish, anyhow. The water was as still as glass and as clear; the pike that would have taken our spinning bits of metal must have been very dull-eyed pike indeed.

Tita sat at the bow of the long punt reading, while our boatman steadily and slowly plied his single oar. Franziska was, for a time, eagerly engaged in watching the progress of our fishing, until she got tired of the excitement of rolling in an immense length of cord, only to find that our spinning bait had hooked a bit of floating wood or weed. At length Charlie proposed that he should go ashore and look out for a picturesque site for our picnic, and he hinted that perhaps Miss Francisca might also like a short walk, to relieve the monotony of the sailing. Miss Francisca said she would be very pleased to do that. We ran them in among the rushes, and put them ashore, and then once more started on our laborious career.

Tita laid down her book. She was a little anxious. Sometimes you could see Charlie and Franziska on the path by the side of the lake, at other times the thick trees by the water's side hid them.

The solitary oar dipped in the lake; the boat glided along the shores. Tita took up her book again. The space of time that passed may be inferred from the fact that, merely as an incident to it, we managed to catch a chub of four pounds. When the excitement over this event had passed, Tita said,

"We must go back to them. What do they mean by not coming on and telling us? It is most silly of them."

We went back by the same side of the lake, and we found both Franziska and her companion seated on the bank at the precise spot where we had left them. They said it was the best place for the picnic. They asked for the hamper in a business-like way. They pretended they had searched the shores of the lake for miles.

And while Tita and Franziska are unpacking the things, and laying the white cloth smoothly on the grass, and pulling out the bottles for Charlie to cool in the lake, I observe that the younger of the two ladies rather endeavors to keep her left hand out of sight. It is a paltry piece of deception. Are we moles, and blinder than moles, that we should continually be made the dupes of these women? I say to her,

"Franziska, what is the matter with your left hand?"

"Leave Franziska's left hand alone," said Tita, severely.

"My dear," I reply, humbly, "I am afraid Franziska has hurt her left hand."

At this moment Charlie, having stuck the bottles among the reeds, comes back, and, hearing our talk, he says, in a loud and audacious way,

"Oh! do you mean the ring? It is a pretty little thing I had about me, and Franziska has been good enough to accept it. You can show it to them, Franziska."

Of course he had it about him. Young men always do carry a stock of ruby rings with them when they go fishing, to put in the noses of the fish. I have observed it frequently.

Franziska looks timidly at Tita, and then she raises her hand, that trembles a little. She is about to take the ring off to show it to us, when Charlie interposes,

"You needn't take it off, Franziska."

And with that, somehow, the girl slips away from among us, and Tita is with her, and we don't get a glimpse of either of them until the solitude resounds with our cries of luncheon.

In due time Charlie returned to London, and to Surrey with us in very good spirits. He used to come down very often to see us; and one evening, at dinner, he disclosed the fact that he was going over to the Black Forest in the following week, although this November nights were chill just then.

"And how long do you remain?"

"A month," he says.

"Madam," I say to the small lady at the other end of the table, "a month from now will bring us to the 4th of December. You have lost the bet you made last Christmas morning; when will it please you to resign your authority."

"Oh, bother the bet!" says this unscrupulous person.

"But what do you mean?" says Charlie.

"Why," I say to him, "she laid a wager last Christmas Day that you would not be married within a year. And now you say you mean to bring Franziska over on the fourth of December next. Isn't it so?"

"Oh, no!" he says; "we don't get married till the spring."

You should have heard the burst of low, delightful laughter with which Queen Tita welcomed this announcement. She had won her bet.

FINIS.

The attention of our readers is directed to the first of a series of articles on the dairy interest, by a Canadian gentleman who has had much experience in this matter. It will be seen in our columns.