

## Correspondence.

**NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.**—1. Please write on one side of the paper only. 2. Give full name, Post Office and Province, not necessarily for publication, but as guarantee of good faith and to enable us to answer by mail when, for any reason, that course seems desirable. If an answer is specially requested by mail, a stamp must be enclosed. Unless of general interest, no questions will be answered through the *ADVOCATE*, as our space is very limited. 3. Do not expect anonymous communications to be noticed. 4. Matter for publication should be marked "Printers' MS." on the cover, the ends being open, in which case the postage will only be 1c per 4 ounces. 5. Non-subscribers should not expect their communications to be noticed. 6. No questions will be answered except those pertaining purely to agriculture or agricultural matters.

Correspondents wanting reliable information relating to diseases of stock must not only give the symptoms as fully as possible, but also how the animal has been fed and otherwise treated or managed. In case of suspicion of hereditary diseases, it is necessary also to state whether or not the ancestors of the affected animal have had the disease or any predisposition to it.

In asking questions relating to manures, it is necessary to describe the nature of the soil on which the intended manures are to be applied; also the nature of the crop.

*We do not hold ourselves responsible for the views of correspondents.*

**Items from Our Northwest.**—Although our fellow countrymen in the older Provinces have had to complain of unprecedented falls of snow, railway blockades and disorganization of things in general, we have not had as yet anything approaching disagreeable weather. From Xmas until about 15th Jan., I suppose the mean temperature would average about 15 below zero, which looks formidable, but we don't care for it if there is no wind; zero is worse with us with a moderate wind than 30 below without it. It is amusing to have a tenderfoot guess at the temperature, if on a fine still morning he puts it at above zero, while during the day, when a breeze gets up, he makes it the opposite; whereas the mornings are always coldest, and the temperature rises during the day. So far we have only got about eight inches of snow, which is enough to make good sleighing, and permits of driving where you please, trail or no trail. This is a great advantage we have over parts of Ontario and Quebec, where winter roads are often next to impassable. Again, in the summer a top buggy can be used with comfort in the newest settlement, as trails are formed in but a short time, and are easier on horse and vehicle than many of your expensively constructed roads. The future of this country, I believe, is only dawning. Much has been said for and against it, and a great deal of the latter can be traced back to the ridiculously exaggerated reports spread broadcast during the boom. People came here expecting to make a living without working much, and never thought of what the difficulties were they would naturally have to meet and overcome as pioneers; many are having these ideas dissipated, and have settled down to the fact that nothing but close attention and hard work will make farming pay here any more than it will elsewhere. Last summer our crops were good, with the exception of roots, and even they were above an average Ontario crop wherever they were thoroughly cultivated. A few lessons of this kind and people will not be so prone to abuse the country and attribute their want of success to the climate, etc. Our wheat averaged from 10 to 27 bush. per acre, and this difference I notice existed in one instance on contiguous sections, the quality of soil being similar; circumstances in both instances were alike, except that one field was well plowed and the other was not. I find that the more the land is worked and cultivated, the earlier crops mature, and where manure is applied I find it pushes them ahead fully ten days. There is an immense deal to learn in farming out here and in understanding how to take advantage of the seasons. This will only be obtained by close observance and practical results. Farmers' clubs would be a great incentive to farming, and I hope to see one organized in our settlement before long. They are more wanted than even in Ontario, for we have no precedents to go by, nor have we the benefit of the experience of a staff such as is attached to your paper. In one line it gives us a valuable leading string, and that is in dairy pursuits, and they, I am glad to say, are attracting more attention every day. I have it from reliable sources that even with the indifferent care that cows get, they give more and richer milk than in Ontario. We can winter our cows comfortably for \$5 per head, and during the summer all they cost us is the bedding.—G. B. E., Kinbrae, N. W. T.

**Insuring Stallions.**—Can you give me some information about getting a stallion insured? Is there a company that insures? I want to get a stallion insured for one thousand dollars.—D. E. C., Chesterfield, Ont.

[There is no company for insuring stallions.]

**Effects of Forests on Rainfall.**—I see a piece in the *ADVOCATE* by J. B., living at Moose Creek, having received damages by a neighbor having trees growing along the line fence, and as I was about to send you one dollar for the *ADVOCATE*, I thought I would write a few lines of sympathy for the man. Having had quite an experience with trees along the side of cultivated fields, I consider a great damage to farming. For two or three rods along the side next the trees there is not more than one-third of the crop that is on the rest of the land, and that is not near so good, and it is oftentimes almost lost before it is fit to go in. It often gets one or two rains before it goes in, as, being in the shade, it will not dry out as soon as on any other part of the field, it being of a soft, limpy nature. If I were summoned on a jury, I certainly would have to give a man damages under such circumstances. I think there are some very erroneous ideas concerning the power of forests on rainfall. I saw a well written piece in the *Chronicle and News* about tree planting and the great benefit it is in bringing rain. I am now sixty-one years of age, and twenty-one years of that was in the old land; as a general thing they have too much rain there, and there are no trees for miles, excepting a few around the farm houses. The summer of 1885 was extremely wet, and last summer was somewhat dry, and yet the same woods are growing here now that were then. And now I have had forty years experience in this country, and I don't know that I have ever seen three years alike in all that time, and I think that there is no man living who can prove that woods or trees have any effect on rainfall. I like nice trees around a place as well as any other man, but trees in the cultivated fields are too expensive for me. This is the first writing I have ever done for the press. I like your paper very much. It is truly named "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE," for it is the only paper that gives any encouragement to the farmer in protecting his interests.—J. Q., Inverary, Ont.

**Flax seed for Stock.**—Please give me the value of flax seed for stock—the best method of feeding, more particularly cows in calf and mares in foal.—J. B. E., Norwich, Ont.

[Flax seed has a large percentage of oil, and should therefore be fed to all classes of stock in small quantities. It is fed sometimes boiled and sometimes ground; but those who best understand the feeding of stock, always feed it ground and raw. Cows in calf or mares in foal should not get flax that contain much oil or fat; concentrated nitrogenous rations are best for them. However, there will be no harm in mixing a small quantity of ground flax seed with ground grain or bran, and thus feeding occasionally for a change—more as a medicine than a food. It is especially beneficial when the bowels require loosening. We will take up the subject more extensively in a future issue.]

**Spreading Manure in Winter.**—Will you please answer through the columns of the *ADVOCATE* if it is profitable to spread manure on the ground in winter. Would it do late sowing when any benefit to put it on now?—G. T. St. Catharines.

[A top-dressing of manure in winter, spread on the snow or bare ground, would be of great value to your fall wheat, especially if there is much heaving in spring caused by alternate freezing and thawing. The best results would be on a clay or undrained soil, as the manure would also prevent baking later in the spring, and the fertilizing value of the manure would be great.]

**Notes from Nova Scotia.**—Our Province by the sea seems gradually waking up to the value of its resources and the importance of its position. The gold, iron, coal and manganese mines are being more extensively worked, its railroads extended and new lines projected. Orchardng is being largely extended throughout the apple growing districts. The crop this year was about three hundred thousand barrels, and was largely exported to foreign markets. The small fruit business is also coming to the front. A few years ago a crate of strawberries or a barrel of cranberries were a rarity; now car-loads of them are raised for the market. Judging from present indications, the fruit business, large and small, is yet in its infancy.—I. J. S., Kings Co., N. S.

**More Swindlers.**—Allow me to thank you for your valuable paper; by reading an article in it, it saved me over \$21 cash. Last June an agent came to my place, wishing me to take a book, as he represented it, entitled "Picturesque Canada," the cost price of which was 60 cts. I gave him my order. I foolishly not reading it—for a copy of the above work. A few days after this I picked up your paper and read an article warning farmers against frauds. As soon as I read it, it struck me that perhaps this order I had signed might be a fraud. I at once went to town, found the agent, and asked him for my order. He hesitated for a while, went away, came back shortly, and willingly took my order out of his book and tore it to pieces. I afterwards picked up the pieces, put them together, read the order, and found that it had only been partially read to me, for instead of being simply a book or one copy, it read 36 copies at 60 cts. each. About three months after this the books or pamphlets were left at my house. Shortly after this a third agent came for the pay.

He showed me an order with my name signed to it, which in reality was not signed by me, but had been forged by the first agent just before he tore out or gave up my order. I might here add that many an intelligent farmer in this county has been swindled by this fraud, and many who are in poor circumstances have to pay.—J. R., Chatham, Ont.

**Notes from Manitoba.**—There is not much worth reporting taking place in this part of the world just at present. The winter is passing away very rapidly, and while we read of roads being blocked up and rendered almost impassable by snow in other parts of the country, we have hardly enough here to make good sleighing. We have had some pretty rough cold days, when it was not pleasant to be out of doors, but on the whole I think we ought not to complain. On an average, the thermometer has not stood so low this winter as usual, but we have had more wind than usually falls to our share. All interest at present seems to be centered in the fight for supremacy between the two political parties. The farmers here of all shades of political opinion are unanimous in their opposition to the railway monopoly and disallowance policy of the present Government, and all the candidates have adopted that plank in their platform, for they know that without it they would not stand the least chance of being elected. Before this reaches you the battle will have been fought and the victory won. I hope the best may be successful.—R. C. B., Stodderville, Man., Feb. 21, 1887

**Canadian Ashes.**—I see in this month's *ADVOCATE* an enquiry as to whether unleached ashes could be procured in Ontario, in answer to which I would say that they can, but not altogether from the farmers. They are mostly gathered in towns and from factories, which in the main are supplied with wood, and are delivered on the cars at about \$4 per ton. There is only one man here in the business. He has a number of teams gathering the ashes for him, and I have gathered a good deal of ashes myself for him during the past two seasons. The same man has an ashery or potash factory in Ontario, and I have been informed that he sometimes leached ashes, but I have not seen it and therefore will not vouch for it, although I know that all the ashes shipped from here and surrounding stations, with one exception, are unleached.—M., Berlin.

**Hand Separators.**—We should be very much obliged if you would kindly furnish us with the name or names of the manufacturers of the "hand cream separator," which you mention in your December issue; and also what the cost would be for one of the separators.—C. B., St. Francois Xavier, Man.

[We have received numerous inquiries on this subject, but cannot yet give a satisfactory answer. The arrangements for manufacturing and handling these separators have not yet been completed, but the results will be duly announced in our advertising and editorial columns as soon as possible, probably in our next issue.]

**Trimming Sheep for Exhibitions.**—Enclosed find subscription for 1887. I have taken the *ADVOCATE* for a large number of years; it is a welcome visitor still, and pays its own way with large interest. In the January number for 1886 I purchased through an advertisement a Jersey cow which I flatter myself has paid my subscription ever since I have taken it. Please answer in your next: Do any of the breeds of sheep naturally shed their wool yearly? Are show sheep shorn in the spring, or are they kept trimmed all the time? I have heard that the Downes are not sheared, but in the spring blocked out into as perfect a form as possible by leaving the wool longer or shorter to hide imperfections. Is this so? If so, is it fair for them to compete with ordinary farmers who are not up to the dodge?—W. M., Highland Creek.

[Any breed of sheep is apt to shed its wool if not shorn once a year. In trimming sheep for shows, various practices are observed. The sheep are usually shorn in midwinter, and kept closely confined in a warm place. The wool, by high feeding, thus grows to considerable length by exhibition time, and the shears are freely used from time to time to give the animal a smooth surface and to hide its natural imperfections. Oil and coloring matter are rubbed into the wool in order to give it a glossy, yolkly appearance, which is supposed also to represent health. If any proposed judges are not in sympathy with this method of bulldozing the farmers, the manipulators see to it that judges are appointed who are. It is a gross imposition upon the farmers; but even this is not the worst feature of our agricultural exhibitions.]

**TO OUR CORRESPONDENTS.** Owing to the increased number of letters which we are receiving, asking for information, we must insist more strictly upon our rules published at the head of our correspondence department. Letters of no public importance will not be published, nor letters not strictly pertaining to matters which belong to some of our departments. Stamps must be sent for answers by mail.