

Grange Column.

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Horticultural.

Tu nips a Profitable Crop.

Waldo E. Brown says that for twenty-five years he has not made a failure with the turnip crop, and with the exception of perhaps two years he has grown from one hundred bushels up to as high as fifteen hundred each year. Although some years he has not been able to sell and so had fed them to his stock, in other seasons they have paid him a larger net profit than any crop grown on the farm, and taking the years one with another, he has found an acre or two of turnips to pay better than most farm crops. He remembers one year that he sold a carload of 400 bushels at 33 cents a bushel on the track at his station, and, as he was loading the car was frequently asked by farmers the price, and several when he told it, they said: "Can you make anything growing turnips at that price?" It so happened that corn was selling at the same price, and Mr. Brown said to them: "You grow on an average less than fifty bushels of corn to the acre and gave it your entire season and several thorough workings; I grew an average of 200 bushels of turnips to the acre and grew them as a second crop, and gave them no cultivation at all." Mr. Brown says that two hundred bushels is a very moderate crop, that he had grown five hundred bushels on acre of highly manured land that had grown two crops besides the same season, the first crop being early peas that were marketed June 11 and the second pickles, and the turnips were sown about the 1st of August at the last working of the cucumbers. He believes that it is easier to grow one thousand bushels of turnips on an acre than one hundred bushels of corn.

Power to Produce Wheat inexhaustible in Soil.

In reference to this subject the Prairie Farmer has this: "Prof. H. W. Wiley, in a recent address delivered before the students of Purdue University of Lafayette, Ind., said that a crop of wheat yielding 15 bushels per acre will take nearly 15 pounds of phosphoric acid from the soil, and therefore an acre of ground might go on producing wheat for 200 years before the phosphorus was all gone. 'For forty years,' Prof. Wiley adds, 'Laws and Gilbert have grown wheat on the same field without returning the straw or adding a particle of any kind. At first this field produced over 22 bushels of wheat per acre, but the wheat per acre, but the amount quickly fell to a mean of about 12 bushels, where for years it has remained varying only with the season. It thus appears that a cereal like wheat, the most nourishing and most important of human foods, refuses to exhaust soil, and so protects the yet helpless future from the rapacity of the present. These experiments have further shown that cereals have a greater conservative power than almost any other plants. Peas, beans, potatoes, in like conditions fall much more rapidly toward the vanishing point, that is, the point where harvest no longer exceeds the seed which has been planted. These facts, so important to the great economic question of the coming food supply, are fully corroborated by the lesson taught by the great wheat fields of the Northwest and California. Here we have seen the great crop of 30 bushels produced by the virgin soil rapidly fall to a yield of only one-third as much. At this point it seems to stand, insuring, at least, a partial supply of food to the next generation, even if it be as unwise in its agricultural economy as its predecessors.'"

It would be rash to take issue with any conclusion of such eminent agriculturalists as Messrs. Laws and Gilbert, and yet we are sure that the theory as stated, as having emanated from them can hardly apply generally to this country. Many people know that a few years ago a large area of Iowa, having previously been very productive of wheat, became what might be called wheat sick, and for several years made comparatively no wheat. These soils were not poor as shown by the fact that they made good corn and other crops. We can think of no reason why this should have been a fact except that the supply of phosphates, or some other equally necessary element was exhausted in the soil.—Ex.

Hand picking should always be the rule for winter apples. Varieties that ripen irregularly ought to be gathered accordingly. Generally speaking, the later sorts should be left on the tree until late, so as to give them opportunity to fully color up. Before picking begins it is well to have a suitable place prepared in the orchard or near by for the temporary storing of the fruit, unless there are two sets of hands for sorting and packing as fast as the fruit is gathered. Apples kept longest if free from atmospheric moisture when taken from the trees. Small baskets holding half a bushel each and suspended from a hook on the ladder are more convenient and less liable to bruise the fruit than bags. Once gathered, the apples should be securely protected from sun and storms until they are sorted. Many farmers who have fruit houses delay sorting and packing until the approach of cold weather. The best method is to sort the fruit immediately and lay all that is sound carefully into tight barrels, shaking the barrels gently two or three times during the process of filling to insure the apples packing closely; they may then be tightly headed, with the head sufficiently pressed and secured to avoid all movement of the apples inside the barrel. Right here is generally the neglect. The barrels should be placed on their sides and not stored away until freezing weather.

Picking and Storing Apples.

Preparing for Wheat.

In preparing the ground for wheat, plow thoroughly to a depth of six inches when the soil is of a degree of moisture when it will not stick to the implements and is not too dry. In the best wheat soil—clay loam—the time to plow is when the ground is friable and easily crumbles to the touch. After plowing work well with the best harrows at your command. There is no danger of ground being too well tilled, and the poorer the tools the more tillage necessary. A first-class smoothing harrow run over the field, followed by the roller and then by another application of the harrow till all lumps are broken, is good treatment after plowing. But tillage is not of first importance in grain growing. The primary requisite is plant food, and where food is necessary nothing is equal in the long run to good animal excrements. Commercial fertilizers have their value, and should not be underestimated, but they cannot take the place of animal manures. Our farmers starve their fields. All through the wheat country crops are insufficiently fed, and the result is our average of eleven bushels per acre and the continual search for more productive varieties. To be sure some varieties are superior to others, but if our fields were less starved not so much fault would be found with the variety.

Preparing for Wheat.

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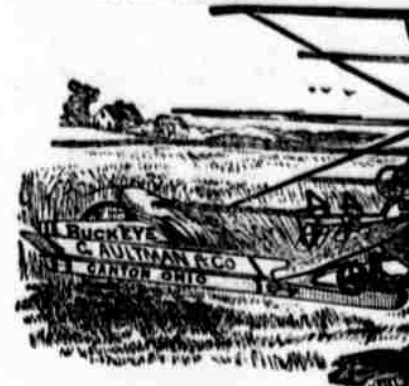
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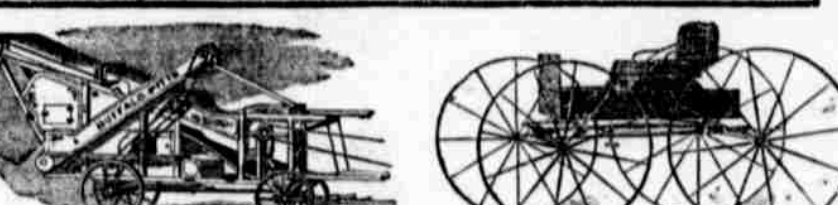
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