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M. FITZMAURICE, Editor.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 20, 1909.

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SOWING WHEAT.

It is astonishing how we do not learn by experience, notwithstanding the old proverb to the contrary, says the Weekly Star. We may read in the old books written three thousand years ago, "I have seen seed for a long time selected and culled out with much labor to degenerate nevertheless, unless that which were largest were carefully culled out by the hand." And the same writer describes and advises to be practiced the mediating of the seed to prevent diseases and blighting of the grain. And in spite of the fact that these necessary precautions against the degeneration of the grain, and to insure full crops were made so long ago, our modern scientific schools are even now testing this old settled matter, and writers and other teachers of agriculture are yearly enforcing the necessity for selecting the best, plumpest, heaviest, and most perfect seeds for the crops soon to be sown. We take infinite thought and pains in selecting the progenitors of our young animals, but ignoring the fact that there is no difference in principle between the propagation of plants and animals, we do not think of applying our knowledge to the improvement of our plants.

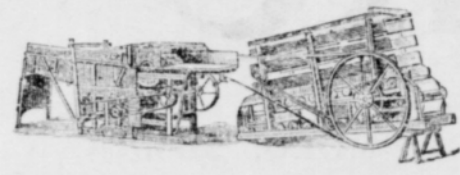
This is a timely matter. The sowing of winter grain is near at hand, and how this work is to be done to secure the best results is something to be considered now if the best results of the work are expected. Our experiment stations and those in the United States have been giving much attention to this subject, and we have a large amount of useful information gathered, which is now being freely published. The Ontario Agricultural College has been foremost in this work, and for years past has been gathering information and experience in regard to the selection and preparation of seed. Selection alone is not sufficient. We may select that which is, as the old writer said, the largest and heaviest, with every care; but something else is needed; and this is as also quoted above, the preparation of the seed to insure its perfect freedom from infectious or contagious diseases. So that with the most vigorous naturally, we may have the most healthful and thus produce the best grain, and that free from wasting and destructive diseases. For many years past the Ontario College has been selecting seed for its plumpness and heaviness. The results have been that selected seed has given an average of eight bushels to the acre over and above the yield of the ordinary kind of seed, as taken from the bin. The partly broken grain taken as it comes from the thresher produced only one-fifth of the yield of sound unbroken grain, so that this fault of grain is one of the

worst that can exist. This is an amazing proof of the wisdom of selecting seed with due care. The time of sowing, too, is of greater importance than is commonly thought. There is a quite common prejudice against early sowing. The common condition of the land at the usual time of the plowing, which is generally deferred too long, is such that it is extremely difficult to get the ground in good condition, not to say the best possible, for the seed; hence the sowing is done under a great disadvantage, and, moreover, the usual dryness of the ground is such that the seed may not germinate for two or three weeks or longer, and the practical result is that the sowing has been still further delayed—in point of fact—by this belated starting of the seed. So that the plowing should be done as soon as possible, and if oats precede the wheat the plowing should be begun the next day after the land is cleared of the crop, and continued without intermission until the end. The experiments made at the Ontario Station have shown every time during several years' consecutive tests, that the last week in August, or the first week in September is the best time for that locality for the sowing of the winter wheat. This will apply to the whole of Western Canada, the Northwest states, the tier of states north of the line of Pennsylvania, and going south, a week later every two hundred miles, thus bringing the seeding time to the last of September in the most northerly of the Southern states. We mention this as a guide for our many readers in the United States, who might not think of the difference due to latitude.

The quantity of seed depends largely on the condition of the land. One year the writer sowed wheat in a field of excellent land which was plowed twice and well manured. Only one bushel of seed to the acre was sown. A part of the field was literally occupied by a neighbor's pigeons, which seemingly simply gathered the seed from one-third the field adjoining the next farm. Of course neighborhood will have its effect in such a case to cause one to submit to what was unavoidable, without hurting the feelings of the children who owned the pigeons. But the result was interesting, nay, astonishing. For where the seed had been unquestionably reduced two-thirds, the wheat at harvest time astonished the passer-by, some of whom became so led away by curiosity as to stop on their way home from church on Sunday to gather an armful of best heads as curiosities. The yield on that part of the field was twice as much as that on the other part of the land, and the average over all was a little over 37 bushels to the acre. The seed was Treadwell, and of the very best growth. The result of yields under this sowing are really marvelous. A single half acre has yielded forty bushels; acres have yielded sixty or seventy bushels; and in England eighty bushels has been grown to the acre by dibbling in the seed at nine inches apart each way, and only half a peck of seed has been sown to the acre. In fact it is not by any means the quantity of seed, but the culture of the land, which makes the crop.

It is not intended to convey any thought that this thin seeding alone is the cause of big crops, but that the very best condition of the land with the very best of seed will make a bigger yield with thin seeding, than poor land with much thicker seed; or even with thicker seeding on the best land. On the field above mentioned there were stools having twenty or more stems and ears, the number having eight or ten were probably half of the thinly seeded part, the rest of the field would average four or five stems to the stool. In regard to the highest yield of wheat, it may be mentioned that Sir J. P. Lawes, the noted English experimental agriculturist, has had a standing offer of a thousand dollars for one bushel of wheat grown on a field of not less than five acres with an average of one hundred bushels to the acre. We may, therefore, think with reason that those farmers in West Ontario who have reached the rate of eighty bushels, and one Michigan farmer who reached seventy-eight bushels, got up to the top notch in this respect, for the present at least. The last crop was grown under culture by a machine which worked the land as a corn crop is cultivated, the seed being drilled in rows 18 inches apart. Under ordinary field culture we think five pecks is the lowest reasonable seeding on average good land, and by broadcasting, while by drilling one bushel may be the lowest, and half a bushel may be added for the acre, in each case with less fertile land. The Ontario Station found no difference between drilling or broadcasting the seed, but the caution may be given that in broadcasting seed the greatest

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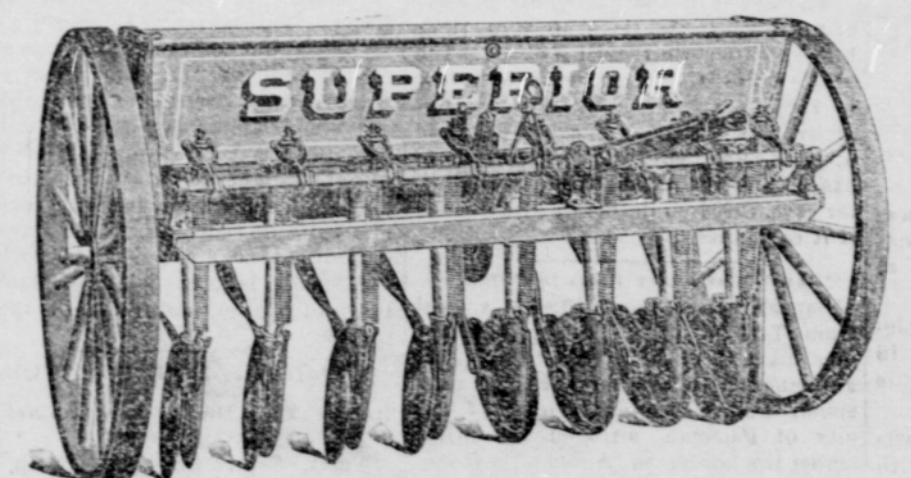
Time Schedule No. 3.—Effective Thursday, Jan. 5th, 1909.
12:01 A. M. Pacific Time.

SOUTH BOUND.		NORTH BOUND.	
No. 1.	No. 2.	No. 1.	No. 2.
Leave..... 6:45 p. m.	Biggs.	Arrive..... 2:30 p. m.	
Leave..... 7:25 p. m.	Wasco.	Leave..... 12:50 p. m.	
Arrive..... 9:30 p. m.	Moro.	Leave..... 11:30 a. m.	

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