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Care of Trees After Winter Injury

(Experimental Farm Note)

Last winter will long be remembered by fruitgrowers in the province of Ontario and Quebec as one of the hardest on fruit trees of any that has been experienced.

While peach trees were killed back to some extent in Niagara Peninsula, it was among the apple trees in the colder districts where the greatest losses occurred.

The forms the winter injury took were root killing, splitting of the bark at the base of the tree, sometimes known as collar rot, bark splitting on the trunk, trunk killing, crotch injury and killing back of the top. The fruit and leaf buds on the trees were often killed also. While a large number of trees died during 1918, there were many more which went into this winter in a very weakened condition and may yet die. By the time pruning is begun it should be possible to tell any trees which are going to die this winter or which have additional dead wood on them, and it will be possible to prune them intelligently. There will be many cases of crotch injury, however, where almost all of the bark and cambium were killed around the base of the large limbs and where the latter meet in the head of the tree. Trees injured in this way are very unsatisfactory as they may linger for years in a weakened condition and of little value and eventually will break down if they do not die before doing so. The orchard should be gone over carefully this winter and examined for such injury. When pruning the orchard, the dead bark should be removed from these patches, and the wounds painted and kept painted with white lead paint. If much of the bark and cambium in the main crotches are dead, the future of the tree should be considered as very doubtful. If many of the trees in the orchard are effected in this way and the trees are wide enough apart to permit a planting of a young tree half way between them, without too much shading from the older trees, it would be well to plan to do this next spring. Good crops may be obtained from these injured trees for some years, and in the meantime, the young trees will be coming into bearing. Where land is available, however, the setting of an orchard elsewhere is desirable. Other trees may be planted successfully where trees were killed last winter although it has been said that young trees will not do well where an older tree has been. Sometimes they do not, but it is usually due to the fact that the older trees that were left overshadowed them. Where they have sufficient light they should succeed.

When re-planting where another tree has been, fill the hole with good surface soil from midway between the rows rather than use the same soil as was thrown out. A rapid way of removing old dead trees is by the use of dynamite.

Desirable Characters in Grain Varieties

(Experimental Farms Note)

The desirable characters of any variety are those that enable it to thrive in the environment in which it is placed, or give it commercial popularity. The undesirable ones are those that prevent it from achieving its best whether on the farm or in the market. According to conditions a desirable character in one locality may be an undesirable one in another.

In any kind of grain, yield is, and always will be, a desirable character but many localities the variety must primarily depend on other character, such as drought resistance, early maturity and tightness of chaff, to give it value. In localities where conditions are less severe, those again may be of actual harm, as a larger yield could be obtained with a variety that was later in maturing, having a loose chaff and being more adapted to a humid climate.

Earliness exceeds yield in importance in all of the northern districts of Canada, and wherever it is a question of maturing grain before the time of frost.

Tightness of chaff in wheat is necessary wherever high winds prevail at the time of ripening as on our prairies. In eastern Canada, however, where no loss is experienced from winds, and the threshers are not used to threshing tight chaffed wheat, considerable grain may be lost over the rear of the mill.

Varieties that have the ability to resist drought do not, as a rule, succeed where there is an abundance of moisture.

High baking strength is absolutely essential wherever wheat is grown for export, but for domestic use a variety may be grown to advantage that has only moderate baking strength, if it gives a high yield.

Thinness of hull in oats is a desirable character under all conditions. Hulliness in oats is only desirable for a few special purposes. The husk facilitates the commercial handling of the grain and protects the kernel from injury.

Beards on wheat and barley are most undesirable but in the case of barley it has not been possible to produce a beardless variety giving a yield that will equal the best of the bearded sorts.

Awns in oats are necessary are not in any way connected with yield.

The colour of grain is most important, not that it has any intrinsic value, but because the market demands a certain colour of kernel in wheat, oats and barley. This demand has arisen from the association of a certain colour with an outstanding variety such as the red colour of the Red Fife and Marquis wheats, etc. Enough has been said to show the fallacy of the idea that any variety of wheat or oats or barley is superior under all conditions, to all other varieties. The truth is that every variety has its limitations, and it is up to the grower to procure a variety which possesses the characters that will enable it to thrive under his conditions. If in doubt, consult the superintendent of your nearest Experimental Station, or write directly to the Dominion Cerealists, Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa, describing your climatic conditions and requesting his advice as to the variety that will succeed best in your locality.

A Few Good Buys

If there is a man in Norfolk and Haldimand who has been holding back from buying clothes in the hope of a drop in prices—here is an opportunity. There is no drop in prices, because the price has never been raised, but stock-taking has found us with a few lengths of pure wool, fast dye suitings and overcoatings—bought several seasons ago when qualities were better and prices lower than they are to-day—that we have decided not to carry over another season. So for the month of January (only) these will be cleared out at the original prices of 1914-15.

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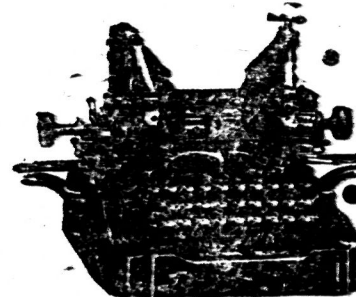
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