Better Methods Of Farming.

There should come to this same farmer in his vision a full realization of what better farming means. Land is comparatively cheap in Western Canada and there is a tendency on the part of a great many of our farmers today to cultivate for quantity rather than for quality. "Let me turn over a section of land," says the farmer, "and I will reap a profitable crop;" while at the same time he does not always stop to realize that a half section of land thoroughly tilled would bring him double the returns on half of the labor. To the average farmer it is plow and sow and harrow and reap with very little regard for how it is to be done, so long as the work is gotten through with. We have gotten beyond the age when we can tickle the earth with a crooked stick. We have reached that age in agricultural progress, when there is a method to be followed in every farm operation. Our Governments have spent millions of dollars in experimental work and in demonstrating to the farmers the absolute necessity of doing things in a certain way. They have proven that a method of cultivation that may be very beneficial to one kind of soil would be ruinous to another and they have proven beyond the question of a doubt that there is nothing for the farmer to sow but good seed. It takes the same amount of labor to cultivate 160 acres upon which poor seed is sown as it does to cultivate that same 160 acres and sow upon it good, clean seed, a maximum percentage of which will germinate. In the days of our forefathers, farming was pursued largely as a means of gaining a mere living, but in this day and generation, farming has become a business and must be carried out according to the most approved ideas and methods; otherwise there is a ruinous waste of labor and land.

Operation No. 1.—A sight to gladden the eye.

Farm Machinery To The Rescue.

During the past fifteen or twenty years, the revolution that has taken place in methods of farming is due largely to farming machinery. The man with the hoe is no longer a subject for admiration, but is rather considered as a back number. It is the farmer to-day who sees in the farm machine something that he can use, and accordingly uses it, that gets the most comfort and the most profit out of his labor. The average farm equipment today on 160 acres of land will run up into the neighborhood of $2000.00, whereas the farm machinery equipment a quarter of a century ago on that same piece of land would not run over $500.00. We no longer speak of the areas under cultivation in terms of acres, but in terms of quarter, half, and sections, this being due to the powerful influence of farm machinery. One man can now do the work of five and with the powerful traction engine, either steam or gasoline, we have something that will do the work of from twenty to thirty horses. Most of our farm machinery today is being designed and built so as to do things on a big scale. There is a full realization of the fact that the season is short, that hay must be made while the sun shines.

Traction Cultivation.

We have just entered upon an era of what might be known as traction cultivation. Five years ago, it was an entirely new thing, indulged in by those farmers who were on the look-out for a fad. To-day however, it is employed more or less extensively in every prairie country. The farmers have come to realize that there is in the modern traction engine a power that they can turn into considerable profit. They are alive to the fact that the plow and the harvester once looked upon as freaks have been the greatest civilizing agencies the world has ever known and knowing this, they are not as skeptical as they might otherwise be towards traction cultivation. Traction cultivation is of such recent development that practically all things connected with it may be said to be new. Less than a decade has passed since the problem of plowing, harrowing, seeding, etc. by other than animal power, assumed importance and, relatively speaking, all methods of equipment are new and untried. Modern invention, however, has set such a pace that ideas are old as soon as heralded. Inventors are working overtime to mould theory, fact and experience into definite shapes of steel and castings and the final word cannot be said regarding anything along this line. Some will fail and all will be subject to improvement before becoming lasting successes, but out of the mass of ideas there will undoubtedly in time crystallize a traction cultivation equipment which will enter into general competition with the horse. The latter in fact is about the only thing in connection with farm machinery that has retained his place throughout a century of marvelous development along these lines, largely because man has been unable to produce a dangerous all round rival.

Ready for operation No. 2.—Safe from the changeable weather or other conditions

We are each and every one of us but students in this great school of Traction Cultivation and each and every farmer to-day is keenly alive to the fact that he must acquire all the information possible if he is to adapt this system to his own farm conditions. He has no definite rule to work by. There are a number of machines on the market to-day that have proven themselves a success, and there are scores of others that are being put out as purely experimental. They are all working towards a common end and that is to supply the farmer with something that will do the work of the horse; will do it more cheaply, more quickly and with more comfort to the farmer. As to whether or not traction cultivation as it stands to-day is a decided success can only be answered by making a canvass among the farmers that have tried it. Each and every one of them is in a sense an experimentalist in this line and he is working out his own problem in his own way. Just what the final results will be no one can predict. There is one thing, however, in connection with this traction cultivation proposition that should not be lost sight of and that is the sacrificing of intensive to extensive agriculture. There is a tendency on the part of the farmer who buys a traction engine in which he can develop a large amount of power, to get a quantity of work out of that engine regardless of the quality of work done. This sort of thing may not be so apparent where new land is being broken, but in a few years when that land has been tilled, unless due care is exercised, the results of this extensive cultivation proposition will show themselves. The old Scotchman who took pride in the straight furrow, cut at an even depth and turned in a beautiful slice, was the man who got down close to the soil and who learned from it its innermost secrets, turning his knowledge to account in the production of the largest possible crops. The man who rides on a traction engine, which pulls six, eight, ten or fourteen plows, or who pulls