



FARMERS in the West have been so busy with seeding and spring work that few of them seem to have looked forward to the question of who will reap the crop when it is ready for the binders. It is pretty well assured that there is an increase of twenty-five per cent in the wheat acreage; there will be an increase of at least twenty per cent in the oats, and some increase in barley. There will be a decrease in flax, but not sufficient to offset the increase in other grains. The three prairie provinces have, undoubtedly, a larger acreage in grain this year than ever before.

With the single exception of 1914, when the crop was known to be short, it has for years been found necessary to bring in many thousands of men to reap the crop. This year there are fewer men on the prairie farms by many thousands, than there has been for at least five years, for many of the men on farms have gone to the war. It is quite safe to assume, therefore, that between 35,000 and 40,000 men will be required to take off the crop in the Canadian West. It will not be possible to bring in trainloads from Eastern Canada this year. Even before the war, labor of this kind was growing scarce and more difficult to obtain. Now it is highly probable that the East will need all the men she can muster to harvest her own crop, as she also has an increased acreage. It will be necessary, therefore, to look to the cities largely for this labor. To-day, every city in Western Canada is crowded with unemployed men, and very many of these men of foreign birth have been accustomed to farm work in their own countries.

Farmers are hard up and money is difficult to obtain, and for this reason they have been slow in the matter of employing men, but this is a very serious mistake, and one which cannot be remedied too quickly. If they are to be in a position to gather their harvest without loss, the only sensible plan is to employ men immediately. They can be secured now at very low rates for the next two months and by making a contract with them to give them higher wages when once the harvest is on, there would be no difficulty in securing a considerable supply. The man who hires now will have the advantage of

being able to teach the man whom he employs his own methods of working, and the man hired will grow accustomed to the farm, the animals and the machinery, and be in a condition to do very much more effective work when the rush comes.

Without saying anything at all about the humanity of employing the unemployed, it would be a part of ordinary horse sense to secure labor at once.

District Representatives

Since my last writing, Manitoba has enjoyed a change of government—has a new minister of agriculture, and it looks as if at last she might come into her own

in the matter of agricultural education and progress. The Hon. Valentine Winkler knows something practical of farming and also has the reputation of being a good organizer, and he has wisely retained Professor S. A. Bedford as Deputy Minister. No man could be better posted on the needs of Manitoba than Professor Bedford, and with a good supply of energetic young men, with both practical and theoretical experience, to assist him, the work of the department will, no doubt, go forward by leaps and bounds. One of the new moves, which promises well, is the appointment of five district superintendents. These are young men from the graduating class of the Manitoba Agricultural College of 1915. They will have under their supervision the provincial demonstration farms, and each man will be provided with a motor and will go up and down his district, keeping track of what is being done and what is needed, and giving information and advice wherever he finds it acceptable. By using a motor it will be

possible for each man to cover his district much more fully than would be possible by horse vehicle as the districts are very large. Moreover, the cars with which these men are being provided will carry several passengers, and it will be part of the programme to take the farmers, who cannot spare the time to drive with horses, to the demonstration farms, to and fro in these motors. On each demonstration farm, 40 acres has been divided into plots on which a regular rotation of crops will be followed, and as far as possible, farmers in the district will be encouraged to keep in touch with this work and to follow it

wherever it is suitable to their own farms.

The districts are as follows: Neepawa, L. V. Lohr, B. S. A.; Killarney, M. S. Smith, B. S. A.; Dauphin, W. J. Stone, B. S. A.; Morris, W. T. Weiner, B. S. A.; and Arborg, W. F. Danielsson, B.S.A.

These young men have all been trained on Western farms, and have now completed five years of Agricultural College work in addition, and they should be of immense value to the province. No doubt, next year the districts will be made smaller and the number of representatives increased.

Extension Lectures

Another new work which will occupy a great part of the month of June is that of extension lectures. These, of course, have been carried on in the last few years by means of special trains, but this year another plan is being tried. Groups of lecturers will be sent out in motor cars and will cover districts of the province hitherto untouched by the special trains, and in many cases somewhat remote from railways. A feature of this work will be for

the lecturers to take in farm picnics and gatherings of small numbers. There will be five of these itineraries started about the 8th of June, and each motor will be accompanied by the representative for that district. The lecturers will be largely drawn from the faculty of the Manitoba Agricultural College, and as they will not have to adhere to a close schedule, as is the case with a train, there will be more time given at each point. It is not expected that more than two points will be covered in a day, and a considerable of the time will be given to inspecting farms in the immediate vicinity of the point at which the lecture is billed.

For the lectures on live stock the best specimens of horses, cattle, sheep and swine in the neighborhood will be utilized. This course of lectures the women will be provided for, and two women lecturers will accompany each motor. If it is to be a success, the work will be greatly extended next year.

While the railway trains have been very valuable and have done splendid work, there is a feasibility about the new scheme that has much recommended it. It means that the newest sections of the province can be reached with the same facilities as the older and more thickly settled parts. The lecture tours will cover the month of June and part of the first week in July. The itinerary of each tour is being well advertised, and no man or woman on a farm should miss the opportunity that comes to their neighborhood.

Alfalfa and Fodder Corn

The open season for the planting of alfalfa and fodder corn is rapidly drawing to a close, and any farmer who has an acre or two of ground suitably cultivated and who has not already made preparations for seeding it to one or the other of these valuable forage crops should do so at once. News comes from Brandon that the J. D. McGregor farms of this year have about 400 acres of corn. This is probably the largest acreage ever planted to corn in the Canadian West by one farmer. Of course, in the case of McGregor, it is divided among his nine farms surrounding the city of Brandon. He used corn planters, and Mr. Haney, superintendent



Second Cutting of Alfalfa (1914) showing 30 days' growth. Wa-wa-dell Farm, Macdonald, Man.