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FARMER'S ADVOCATE

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## EDITORIAL

### Location Not Paramount

Why all this writing regarding the location of Alberta's agricultural college? It is a safe guess that those in charge of the definite step will make a selection such as, in their opinion, will suit best for furthering the interests of agriculture in the Sunny Province. No doubt many satisfactory sites can be secured. The choice will be made in due season.

Those who have championed the advantages of one place or another should not forget that more depends on the breadth of mind of the man in charge and the calibre of the men he selects to fill the positions on his staff than on the location of the institution. It is an easy matter to single out agricultural colleges that are parts of the State University and proved dismal failures; and it is also easy to refer to agricultural colleges set apart from the university (except for conferring degrees) that have become renowned the world over. This proves nothing. The history of successful institutions in all lands reveals the fact that a master hand was at the helm—a man who understands men and who is able to hold the confidence of all who work with him. Whether connected with the university or separated from it every college showing long-continued progress is under the guidance of such broad-minded men.

The main consideration, therefore, should be the selection of a principal, president, dean, or whatever he may be called. If disappointment is not found in that score the authorities can be trusted to select suitable land, conveniently located as to railways, etc. Get the right man and the rest is comparatively easy. Many localities offer satisfactory conditions in other particulars.

### Good Farming Contests

Now that judgment has been passed upon the dozens of farms entered in competitions held in various parts of Manitoba during the past season, farmers in all communities should endeavor to ascertain the advisability of holding a similar contest in 1910. That the competitions of the past two seasons have been of great benefit to the localities affected is clear to anyone who knows conditions as they were in 1907 and 1908. In some districts the contest has been carried on for two seasons, many of the farms having been entered in both events. Announcement of the winners of 1908 induced others to enter. Farmers not in the competition improved surroundings and methods of farming so that the homes and farms of their neighbors would not present a more attractive appearance or produce more profitable crops.

In more than one case an increase has been made in the number and variety of live stock on the farm in order that a few points might be added to the score of the judges. These men have not regretted that they increased their herds and flocks. They have found out that in addition to augmenting the points on the score card used in a good farming contest it gave money returns worth while.

There is no reason why every locality in Western Canada should not benefit by friendly rivalry in good farming. Now is the time to make a start that will put your farm in such condition that it will be scored high next summer. Surface cultivation after harvest assists greatly in getting rid of weeds. Thorough care in plowing, and the use of the harrow immediately following the turning of the furrow to conserve moisture, do much to provide a suitable seed bed and maximum water supply for next year's crop. Besides, the farm can be so laid out as to show the judges that system prevails in every operation, fences can be repaired, preparation made for planting trees, garden put in shape and general steps taken to make the farm pleasing to those entrusted with the task of passing judgment in such contests.

### Hardy Trees and Plants

Gradually it is being proven that all that is necessary to have trees and plants of the various desirable kinds of such nature as will withstand the rigors of Western Canadian conditions is to secure seeds or young trees or plants that are home grown or that have become acclimatized. Each year for decades thousands of dollars have been wasted on stock grown in the South or the East. Constant supplies of reports showing the dismal failure have discredited the setting out of trees or plants. The average man points to the disappointment of a farmer in his neighborhood a few years ago and refuses to be advised.

But the pendulum is swinging the other way again and so great has been the success during recent years with stock grown in Western Canada that the next five or ten years is bound to see tree planting work a vast change in the appearance of prairie homes.

Discussions at the forestry convention in Regina and observations at the Experimental Farm at Indian Head pointed out the advantages of Western stock. Superintendent Mackay and Norman Ross point with pride to a hard maple tree from Manitoba grown seed thriving while a tree of the same class from Eastern seed planted under similar conditions freezes back to the ground level each year. The history of apple growing in Manitoba reveals similar characteristics among the trees. Seedlings grown in nursery rows in Manitoba are not injured by the severest winters while imported stock seldom survives one season.

Those who are in close touch with the work are sanguine of ultimate success with many trees and plants. They have the evidence to prove that their hope is not poorly founded. Much already has been done in limited districts. In the not distant future farmers throughout the West will benefit by the past work of a few enthusiasts.

### Using a Valuable Service

During the past twenty-five or fifty years meteorology, that branch of natural science that deals with the atmosphere, has made marked progress. Progress in America has been more marked perhaps than in any other part of the world. Canadian and American governments have been generous of their support of the most important practical end of meteorology, namely forecasting the weather. In both countries a well manned and well equipped service is maintained, the chief purpose of which is to gather data day by day from all parts of the continent and from that data to form an estimate or forecast of the atmospheric conditions likely to prevail during the next twenty-four or forty-eight hours. In this forecasting of the weather a fairly high degree of efficiency has been attained. In this country there are twelve principal districts for which forecasts are regularly made and of about fifteen thousand forecasts made for the Dominion per year, seventy per cent. are wholly, and a large proportion of the remainder partly, verified. In the United States a higher degree of efficiency is said to prevail, due chiefly to the fact that the country is more completely covered in the observations made each day by officials of the service. Here our stations are chiefly along the southern border, and over something like two million square miles of our territory we have no ports from which daily observations of temperature, precipitation, atmospheric pressure and other data necessary for a comprehensive forecast may be obtained.

## Coals

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