

## FIELD NOTES

The strawberry season this year seems to be unusually short. Quite a few carloads of British Columbia berries came into Winnipeg during the early part of July. These berries were received in splendid condition, were high quality goods all around, a credit to the fruit industry of the coast province and to the men who packed and shipped them.

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Some promising new fruits have been originated at the South Dakota Experiment Station by crossing the native Dakota plums and sand cherries with other stone fruits from Europe and Asia. It appears that the native Dakota sand cherry amalgamates readily in hybridizing with a number of other species, and that excellent results may be hoped for, especially with hybrids of the Japanese plums. Many more combinations have been made and the fruiting of the resulting seedlings is awaited with interest. The fact has been demonstrated that it is possible to secure fruits combining the hardness of native stone fruits with something of the size and quality of the choice cultivated stone fruits from Europe and Asia. It is hoped that this brief record will serve to arouse interest in this subject and to many experiments in similar lines elsewhere.

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The Ontario department of agriculture made an exhibit of fruit at the recent Winnipeg Industrial which is a credit to the fruit growing industry of that province. The excellent arrangement of the apples and other fruits was the subject of much favorable comment from the fair's visitors who inspected the exhibit. For this the Ontario fruit men have reason for self congratulation. At the same time however, as has been intimated in these columns time and again for years, there is vast difference between the fruit which the Ontario department of agriculture sends up here each year for exhibition purposes, and the stuff which in the name of fruit comes into the western market each fall and winter from the fruit growers of that province. The manner of putting up, the grading and packing of this latter is too often away below what it should be. Ontario fruit, apples especially, are preferred in the Winnipeg market to all others, providing they are laid down here in anything like proper style. But the apple growers of Ontario, at least the majority of them, will have to change their methods a little if the western market for their products is to be maintained. This country does not by any means depend on the east alone for fruit, and the sooner that fact can be rammed home to eastern growers the better it will be for the fruit industry of those provinces. There is a possibility, however, that before they become sufficiently enlightened the opportunity will have passed.

### War on Gophers

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

I promised to let you know the result of the "Gopher Contest" held at Pioneer. The children's contest ended the first week in June. A dozen boys were in the competition and between them they brought forward three thousand gopher tails. Some had been spoilt and been thrown away so were not counted. Master Kenny Getty headed the list with 600 tails. The farmer's contest is to be continued until the fall when a great number of tails are expected to be shown, as they have among them between 3000 and 4000, but although so many have been killed they seem to be as thick as ever. Acres of crops have been destroyed by them in this district this summer, so you can just imagine what the crops would look like if the 6,000 or 7,000 were alive; together with what young ones they might have had. There is no doubt that there is a loss, on an average, of a bushel to the acre at least to every farmer in districts infested with gophers, and I hope that every school district will take the matter up this winter and get right after the gophers in the spring. I don't believe any farmer would miss a five dollar bill given towards such a good cause. We were only able to give about a cent a tail this year, as many of the farmers would not help us out, but we hope to do better next year as we have seen that the children can certainly catch them if we make it worth their while.

S. M.

### Bees Hanging Out.

Bees generally hang out for two reasons. It may be too hot inside the hive, or there is not room to store the freshly-gathered nectar (honey). Now, if bees hang out for the latter reason, it is, of course, self-evident that more room should be given. If this is neglected, surplus honey is lost, that's all—and enough, too.

It is generally easy enough to tell whether the bees of a colony hang out for want of room. Simply note whether other colonies are working. You see when hives and surrounding conditions are alike, the hanging out of a few colonies hardly can mean that the weather is too hot.

Not much need be said about bees hanging out for want of room, for a beekeeper negligent enough

to fail to provide necessary surplus storage room will hardly read articles on apiculture.

Bees hanging out on account of too high temperature inside the hive sometimes is a serious matter, especially in the Southern States. Hives have been known to get so hot that the comb melted. This is "just awful," to use a feminine expression.

In the first place, don't locate the apiary where there is little chance for a breeze, and the sun strikes with unrelenting intensity. Then, during the summer season all hives should be provided with deep entrances. Seven-eighths of an inch is the depth generally used. If the bottom boards are of the old style, that cannot be reversed to give a deep entrance, I would make them so or discard them entirely.

If extracted (liquid) honey is produced the cover may be raised a little by putting a piece of section under it. This will create a circulation—or perhaps I should say draft—of air through the hive, and thus help the bees in keeping the temperature low enough. This way of ventilation is undesirable in the production of comb honey, as it hinders the bees in comb-building.

Shade boards are used by some beekeepers further south than the writer's location (Central Wisconsin). They are made of any kind of boards, cleated on the under side, so the air can circulate under them. Now, understand, they are put on the covers with the cleats down, so they will not lie in close contact with the hive cover.

Another thing, don't have hives painted a dark color. Paint them white. Dark colors absorb the sun's heat. Plain enough, then, that dark-painted hives will become too hot sooner than light-colored ones.

F. A. STROHSCHNEIN.

Central Wisconsin.

### Trade Conditions in United States.

Careful investigation of agricultural and industrial conditions reveals a steady improvement in the general business situation. The paramount influence which tones the outlook is the easy money market and the promising crop forecast. There is also evidence of increased volume of business and rising confidence in all quarters of the country.

The government crop report is most encouraging for an immense harvest. The estimate indicated 2,726,000,000 bushels of corn, an excess of 130,000,000 bushels over the crop of 1907. The estimate has only been once exceeded, and that by the banner crop of 1906, when the record of 2,927,000,000 was established. The wheat harvest is estimated at 692,790,000 bushels, an increase of 58,000,000 bushels over the yield last season. The yield of oats is predicted at 1,012,000,000 bushels, as contrasted with 754,000,000 bushels last year. The cotton crop is estimated at 13,000,000 bales and indications are encouraging for normal yields of all kinds of agricultural products.

With normal agricultural crops and satisfactory prices, all lines of business will be stimulated. Idle cars of railroads will be brought into requisition to move the crops to market, which will reduce the army of unemployed. The country is justified in taking on a spirit of hopefulness as long as nature is so generous with her bounties that form the basis of national prosperity.

During June 36,696 idle cars went into operation. In Chicago alone fully 10,000 idle railroad men have been reinstated in the past six months. Car shops that have been shut down have resumed operations and in all lines of industries there is steady progress toward normal business conditions. Building construction in Chicago in June reached \$6,561,225, only 6.8 per cent. below the volume of the corresponding month a year ago, while the aggregate building operations in seventy-five of the principal cities for the six months of the current year show a decrease of 30.2 per cent. as compared with the same period in 1907.

While not over optimistic, one who reads the signs of the times cannot be blind to the steady gain in confidence and the gradual resumption of normal business conditions in all parts of the country. —*Farmer's and Drovers' Journal*.

### British Meat Prices.

English meat consumers are paying much higher prices for beef, mutton and lamb than they were at the beginning of the year and even higher prices are expected. No relief is expected till the arrival of American grass-fed stock in about six weeks' time. The receipts at Smithfield in the first five months of this year are 172,835 tons. Last year's totals for the same period were 177,349 tons, a decrease of 4,514 tons.

There was a slight increase from British, Australian and Continental sources, but not enough to offset the big decrease of 8,150 tons from America. The Canadian supply has also fallen in comparison with last year.

The Meat Trader's Federation is considering a proposal to ask the government for a commission to enquire into the whole question of meat supplies. The Federation claims that the only remedy is the removal of the embargo on Canadian store cattle, which would permit of the stock being brought in and fattened on English pastures. British cattle breeding for the purpose of supplying the meat mar-

kets has been declining for several years, as the farmers are going far more extensively into milk production and dairy farming.

Ireland is practically the only source of store cattle and this makes a very restricted market for the English fattener. The result is almost prohibitive prices for the stores. In the "finished product" the feeder has to meet the world's competition.

There are signs that mutton prices may decline, but the beef consumer will probably have to pay the higher prices for a considerable period.

The removal of the Canadian embargo would greatly relieve matters, but government after government has refused to remove it, so little hope can be had for the present movement. Still, the agitation has very powerful backing from the Meat Trader's Federation, and the higher prices may prove a potent argument.

FRANK DEWHIRST.

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It always affords me a certain amount of pleasure to renew my subscription to the FARMER'S ADVOCATE. I have enjoyed reading it from the first time I took it many years ago and since you have begun to send it every week it has more than doubled in value with only a slight rise in price. You can count me as one of your boosters in this district.

Rose Isle, Man.

JOS. SMITH.

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Following the binder with the disc is one of the practices recommended by Professor Campbell for the conservation of soil water. The disc follows the binder, immediately forming a surface mulch that holds whatever moisture remains in the soil after the grain crop has grown. Soil that is shaded by growing grain contains in its upper three or four inches considerable moisture which is immediately dissipated once the shade covering is removed. Dicing after the binder, unfortunately, is hardly practicable in this country, where the short time available for cutting and the scarcity of labor at that season, render it necessary that every man and team shall be engaged in saving the crop. The practice, nevertheless, has much to commend it, and could be followed to advantage in a good many districts in the western wheat growing country.

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In 1906 North Dakota produced 72,534,000 bushels of wheat, more than any other State in the spring-wheat belt, and takes first rank as a wheat-producing State, and paid more than \$7,000,000 for farm labor.

### International Institute of Agriculture

The delegates of the thirty-two countries represented at the International Institute of Agriculture, inaugurated by the King on May 23, have appointed a committee of experts to deal with the proposal of the Italian Government with regard to the working of the Institute. It is proposed to divide the delegates from the countries represented into three committees, with the following aims:

First committee—To deal with the general management.

Second committee—To deal with technical matters, publishing statistics relating to production, amount, area and crop, prices of different markets, diseases in plants and stock, and best known remedies.

Third committee—To deal with questions of agricultural labor, wages, rates paid and co-operation, assurance, and loans to agriculturalists.

### Crops in S.E. Saskatchewan

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

If you will allow me I would like to go over the effects of this year's climate on the crops, as shown by the different methods of cultivation, and also would like to speak on the wild oat question.

At the opening of spring everything was favorable, and for the twenty-four years I have been in the country I never saw a better season for working on the land, or the soil in such good condition for the germination of the seed; and not only was the land in such good condition for the grain, but we were able by cultivation of the land for seeding, to destroy millions of weeds which would have lain dormant had not the land been in such good shape. If the same conditions had continued without any set back, there would have been such a crop that would have beaten all records, but that "if" stands there, for there was a set back. Up to that time, you could not tell the difference between summer fallow, spring ploughing, or fall ploughing. The frost in the middle of June, followed by the cold rains, a few very warm days, then cold rains, and then on the 1st of July, one could see that something had gone wrong with the crop. There was not the healthy look on the blade that one likes to see at that time of the year. Then came a very hot spell from the first to about the thirteenth of July. When the different methods of cultivation began to be shown, the fall ploughing showed up the worst, being even worse than spring disking of stubble or ploughing, the summer fallow being the best, but even in that there was not the healthy color that should be there, but a dirty, dark color, that one sees but cannot explain.