

# FARMER'S ADVOCATE

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FARMER'S ADVOCATE

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## EDITORIAL

### Alberta Grain Going West

Alberta grain is finding a market somewhere to the west, according to the figures supplied by George Hill, the Calgary grain inspector. Of the one thousand seven hundred and twenty-one cars of grain of last year's crop inspected in Calgary up to the end of January not five per cent. was consigned to Eastern points; while in former years the bulk of it was shipped East, and very little west. While it is not definitely known that big orders are coming from Mexico, considerable grain has gone to that country. Large numbers of sealed samples have been sent by Calgary grain dealers to shippers in Mexico, and numerous inquiries have been made as to the methods of weighing and handling the grain at the Pacific coast. It is quite evident that a good market would be found for considerable of the western grain in Mexico, if proper storage facilities were provided on the western coast.

The demand for spring wheat was very pronounced, while in former years winter wheat dominated the market. The movement of Alberta grain recently has been a little more liberal. In the first three weeks of February 320 cars were inspected at Calgary and fifteen per cent. of this moved eastward.

### Lower Western Freight Rates

A revision of freight rates on grain and produce going westward from Alberta is needed. It has been pointed out that the western channel opens a market for the grain, and that British Columbia provides a market for Alberta's produce. The farmers' associations of the province are doing much to alleviate conditions, and much is being said regarding

ownership of elevators and storage facilities. Freight rates should be the main issue. The distance from Calgary to Fort William is twelve hundred and seventy-five miles, and from Calgary to Vancouver it is only six hundred and twenty-five miles, but the proportional rate is a great deal higher. While the matter of adjusting freight rates is a question for the Railway Commission to decide, yet the farmers, through their various agricultural associations, in conjunction with the boards of trade of the towns and cities in Alberta and British Columbia, can do much to bring about desired conditions. As time passes such matters find adjustment, but should farmers in the meantime be deprived of profits they should receive while waiting for this adjustment of rates, the present regulating factor for the prices paid the farmer? The West is recognized as a market. The consumer pays the price for his products, but the producer scarcely receives his dues.

### Weaknesses in Evidence

The annual convention of agricultural societies held in Winnipeg recently served well in revealing weaknesses in Manitoba's department of agriculture, as referred to in our issue of February 9. From beginning to end lack of organization was in evidence. No one seemed to be responsible for success or failure—and no one in authority seemed to care. The sessions of the convention dragged on, and some business of importance was dealt with before the close. Provincial organization was effected so that future conventions, no doubt, will be conducted in more business-like fashion. It is to be hoped that the chairmen, at least, will know what is supposed to be done.

Another important feature was the unanimous request that the managing directorship of agricultural societies be taken out of the hands of the deputy minister of agriculture, J. J. Golden. But the delegates did not go far enough. If all that was said regarding his lack of ability to manage agricultural societies is true he certainly is not qualified to hold the position of deputy minister of agriculture. The ordinary individual would immediately disconnect himself from all relationship with the department of agriculture. But Mr. Golden had informed the convention that he is not "thin skinned." Why, therefore, did they not request the government to make a change of deputy? As before stated in these columns the solution of the many weaknesses now so much in evidence lies in the appointment of a competent deputy minister of agriculture.

Every individual interested in the development of agriculture in Manitoba should write his local member of the legislature stating his opinion regarding officials now in charge.

### Punishing Weak Societies

Surely the proposals as to treatment of weak agricultural societies made by the principal of the agricultural college are not meant to be taken seriously! It was suggested at the annual convention that where a society does not succeed in securing a reasonably good attendance at institute meetings, and where little enthusiasm is displayed, support be withdrawn until such time as assurances are forthcoming that the response will be worth while.

If a parent is unfortunate enough to have a weakling in the family is punishment the means adopted to strengthen the child? If a school teacher finds that a pupil is weaker than his fellows is the strap used to induce that pupil to do better? If an agricultural society displays a weakness should the managing director punish it by withholding support and ignoring it until assurances are given that a better showing will be made? Anyone who has the interests of agricultural societies and education of the rural population through those societies at heart will grant that it is with such societies that special work is needed. Perhaps the weakness is due to negligence on the part of officers, or perhaps some misunderstanding has resulted in the society falling below the line. Whatever the cause special efforts should be made to bring it up to the standard and to advance the interests of improved agriculture in that locality. That is what a superintendent or managing director is appointed to look after in addition to perfecting the organization as a whole.

### Clover and Alfalfa Inoculation

Whether or not it is necessary to inoculate with the proper bacteria in order to have a good stand of clover or alfalfa is a debatable question. Some maintain that failure has resulted where no inoculation was made, and marked success followed judicious inoculation. Others claim that a satisfactory stand has been secured without any precautions as to providing bacteria. It would seem, therefore, that more depends on the thoroughness with which the seed bed is prepared than on the steps taken to inoculate. However, it is always best to make conditions as favorable as possible, and the man who really wants a good stand of these leguminous crops will not hesitate to inoculate.

Two sources of supply and two methods are within easy reach. Colleges provide bottled culture and explicit directions for treating the seed prior to sowing. Practical men suggest the transfer of the bacteria desired by means of soil being introduced from a field in which a strong, healthy crop has been grown. While both these plans are satisfactory, the latter is to be preferred by the average farmer.