To Begin Well.

GOOD ADVICE TO NEW SETTLERS.

BY SUPERINTENDENT S. A. BEDFORD, EXPERIMENTAL FARM, BRANDON.

While a large proportion of our settlers succeed, it is a lamentable fact that too many are to a greater or less extent failures, and in a short time drift into the towns and villages to swell the already overcrowded ranks of laborers and tradesmen.

While it is not possible in a short article to enumerate all the requirements for a successful settler, yet it may be said that he should at least be industrious, sober, frugal, healthy and fairly strong, for although farming is not the slavish work of the early days, there is still considerable muscle required, especially during the busy seasons of the year. Perhaps the most indispensable requirement is a love for the work; with this and a willingness and ability to rough it for a few years the prospect for success is good.

BEST TIME TO VISIT THE COUNTRY.

Since the harvest excursions have been inaugurated, the question of the most suitable time to inspect this country has been very much simplified, for there is no more favorable time to see it than just before harvest, and young men with little means thus have an opportunity of seeing the country and selecting a home without any outlay whatever, the wages as harvest hands more than paying expenses.

THE SELECTION OF A FARM.

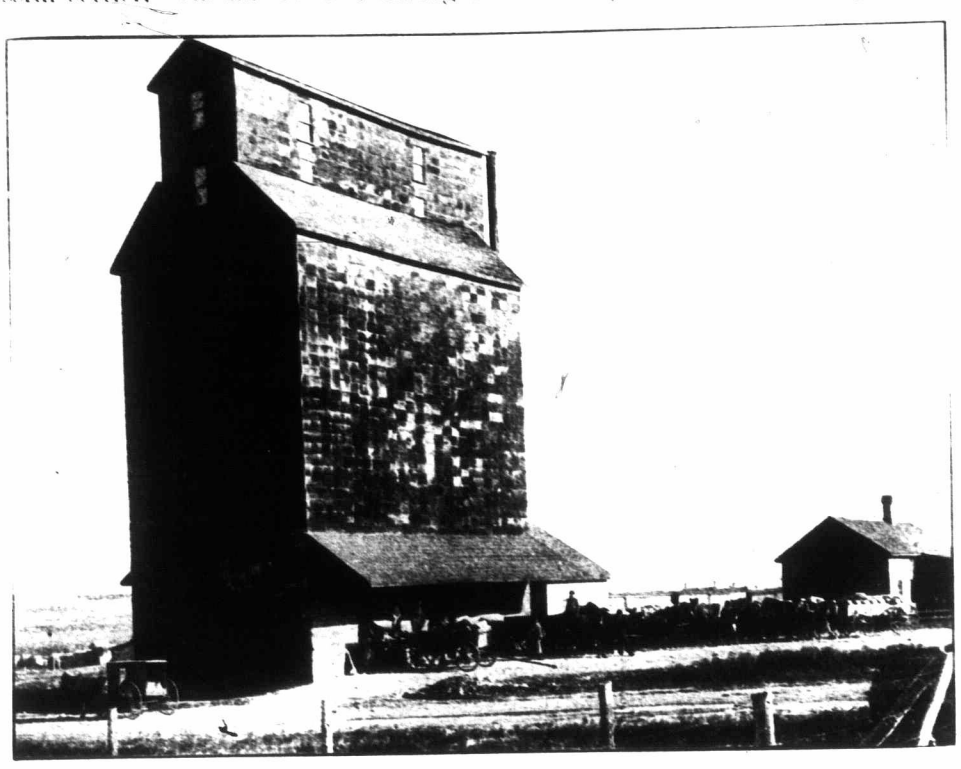
Where one man fails another often succeeds, and individual farmers have been equally successful on entirely different classes of land, yet there are some indispensable requisites in what may be termed a *profitable* homestead. Individual tastes should of course be considered, for unless the selection pleases, discontent and failure are sure to follow. Fortunately, the character of this Province is so varied that widely differing tastes can be suited. For one desiring a comparatively level, strong, deep and rich soil, the Red River Valley offers many advantages; the lover of clear rolling prairie will be pleased with Central and South-western Manitoba; while the large class who are never satisfied when located any distance from timber, can be suited in the bluffy country of Northern and North-western Manitoba. Wherever the location is made, care should be exercised that there is a considerable area of good land in one block, otherwise the settlement will be sparse, making it difficult to establish schools, churches, etc. Where good land is so abundant, inferior soil or subsoil should be avoided, leaving it for pasture.

From 20 years' experience, I consider a rich, black, sandy or clay loam on a rich but porous subsoil the best of wheat land, being early, productive and enduring. While the soil of scrub land may be good, and many excellent farms have been made from such land, it is tedious to break up, and not at all suitable to persons anxious for rapid progress. A small quantity of surface stone will prove useful for building purposes, and a location should not be discarded on that account, unless, of course, sufficiently numerous to entail a large amount of labor in their removal.

Good drainage is important, for unless the land dries up rapidly in spring, sowing will be delayed and the crop liable to injury by fall frosts. It is also found that badly drained land is unsuitable for cereal crops; the plants turn yellow and sickly, and weeds flourish. It is a favorable sign if the vegetation growing naturally on the land is of a mixed character, and composed largely of rose bushes and other upland plants. Any land producing sedges, or with its surface more or less covered with minute shells, should be looked upon with suspicion. While no large area of good land in the Province is likely to remain long without an outlet for its produce, it is unwise to locate far in advance of a railroad. Much disappointment has been experienced in former years from this cause. Railroads on paper are notoriously unreliable, and should never be depended upon. There is abundant land in the Province within easy distance of a railway without running the risk of isolating oneself for years.

THE OUTFIT.

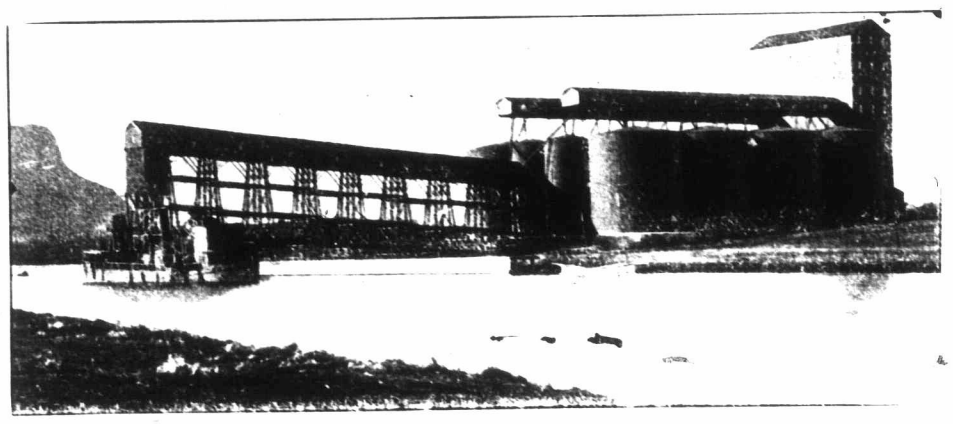
In purchasing an outfit it is a good rule to confine the expenditure to actual necessities. Additional supplies can be procured from time to time as required, one dollar with [illegible] worth two without the [illegible] will be required by all [illegible] to be protected with [illegible] the horses when [illegible]



THE BRANDON FARMERS' ELEVATOR.

THE FIRST YEAR.

From the start a settler should endeavor to make all improvements on a regular plan or system. This will be greatly facilitated if the farm boundaries are marked out on the start, and all improvements laid out on parallel lines. An excellent plan is to break a furrow around the farm, which will prove useful as a guide when laying out future improvements. Shelter will also be required for man and beast. As it is important that no time should be lost during the breaking season, temporary shelter only should be erected, and all permanent buildings deferred until late in the season. The most important work during the first season is that of breaking the virgin prairie, inasmuch as the crop of the following year depends on the quantity and thorough manner in which this work is done; no other work should be permitted to interfere with it. The breaking should be as thin as the evenness of the land will allow, and each day's work rolled as finished. All breaking should be finished by June 15th, and on stiff soil two weeks earlier will give even better satisfaction. When breaking, a garden plot should not be overlooked. It should be long and narrow, so as to allow of as much horse work as possible.



NEW C. P. R. WHEAT-STORAGE TANKS AT FT. WILLIAM.

Between breaking and backsetting comes an interval which can be profitably utilized in erecting such buildings as are required for the first few years. Right here is where many newcomers make a serious mistake. Unless the family is large and money plentiful, expensive buildings should not be erected during the first few years, as the time available is short, and later on a better idea can be had of the settler's requirements. Whatever [illegible] improvements are undertaken [illegible] sidered as a part of a definite [illegible] work in with the permanent [illegible] building site should, if possible, [illegible] roads back from the [illegible] thoroughfares, selected site, and shortest [illegible] selected plan of [illegible] cuts of such [illegible]

A WHEAT-CARRYING WHALEBACK STEAMER.

water should be secured, as springs usually run in narrow veins here. The first failure to secure water should not discourage; but successive trials should be made before a desirable location is abandoned. A two-inch auger, fastened to an iron rod, is a quick way of sinking test holes.

An abundant supply of hay, cut when in bloom, properly cut and stacked, is an important part of the first year's work. Usually every settler underestimates the amount of hay required per head of stock, with the result that a further supply has to be purchased at high figures.

As soon as the breaking is thoroughly rotted it should be backset, turning an inch or two of additional soil. This should be well harrowed before winter, and on the average sandy loam soil this will be sufficient treatment, but on clay soils where the sod is very tough, a thorough disking before winter will add many bushels to future crops.

The first winter's work will consist in cutting an abundant supply of firewood, rails, building timber, etc., and as much as possible of the freighting should be done at this slack season of the year.

THE SECOND YEAR.

With our short seasons it is important that the grain be sown as early as it is possible to do it properly, and nothing should tempt the farmer to cultivate a larger area of wheat than can be sown in good season. Oats can be sown two weeks later than wheat, and barley a week later still. With the experience available, no one should now think of sowing with a broadcast machine. A drill will do better work, the returns are larger, and the crop matures several days earlier. Only clean, pure, sound seed should be used. This rule applies to all farms, but particularly to new homesteads, where the land is naturally clean, and when the settler has a reputation to make for his produce. Directly seeding is completed, the teams should be promptly started to break up additional land, so as to complete both breaking and backsetting before harvest. Fortunately, our usually bright, clear harvest weather permits of the grain being cut slightly on the green side. For that reason the harvest can be commenced early, and the crop secured without the necessity of hiring much additional help. I would impress on the intending settler the necessity of promptness in harvesting as in all other farm operations. There is a time when the different lines of work can be done to best advantage, and every effort should be made to do it at that time.

FUTURE OPERATIONS.

It is impossible to point out the best course for the settler to follow in every instance, but a few suggestions will perhaps prove useful. At the commencement some regular system should be kept in view, and a rotation of crops adopted. The very common plan of rushing from wheat to cattle, or cattle to hogs, etc., as the market price of the different commodities varies, is a fruitful cause of disappointment and failure. While it is advisable to grow as much as possible of the produce required for home consumption, it is generally well to make a specialty of one class of stock or produce, and by the excellence of the article establish a reputation in that particular line, with resultant profitable returns. Changes of plan should be resorted to as seldom as possible.

Perhaps the greatest defect in the character of the average Western farmer is a lack of thoroughness. It appears on every hand, and leads to endless loss and worry. A farm may have excellent soil, but the breaking is done so late that the crop is a failure; or the land may be well prepared, and for the sake of a few cents per acre poor seed is sown; or the seeding so late that half the crop is frozen; bluestoning is forgotten or improperly done, and the crop seriously injured.

Handling Manitoba Wheat.

The illustrations upon this page afford an idea of how the vast wheat crops of Manitoba and the Northwest are transported eastward. After threshing, the bulk of the wheat passes into elevators such as the one at Brandon, from thence via the railway to the C. P. R. elevators at Fort William on Lake Superior, where we find located the new C. P. R. storage [illegible] elevators, which are made of boiler-plate iron [illegible] practically indestructible. Eight of these [illegible] city of 125,000 bushels each, and sixteen of [illegible] bushels each, and may be extended to the [illegible] of canal so be widened. A great variety [illegible] down wheat over the Great Lakes [illegible] rapids toward eastern ports, a [illegible] boat of this design, called the McDougall. It has a total length [illegible] and depth 22 feet