

Farmer's Advocate

and Home Journal

REGISTERED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COPYRIGHT ACT OF 1875

August 12, 1908

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA.

Vol. XLIV. No. 829

Manitoba's Good Farms.

The least that can be said of the benefits of the good farming competitions conducted this year under the auspices of eight Manitoba agricultural societies, and aided by the provincial department of agriculture is that they direct attention to, and stimulate interest in, all-round general good farming. And this is a service that agriculture stands in need of. Many farmers there are, who can produce prize-winning horses, cattle, or other stock, whose vegetable productions will receive the highest awards, or who can do the best work with a plow, drill, or binder in the whole district, or whose buildings are models of rural architecture, or who in some one department or another excel, but it is only given to a very few, to be expert in all branches of farm management and farm work. Those who are expert are our model farmers, and deserve to be known as such by winning awards in the farming competitions.

Judging the farms in the competitions just closed, and the awarding of the prizes, sets people studying whatever constitutes good farming, and from such an examination each farmer in the district returns to his own farm and consciously or unconsciously makes some improvement. Previous to the judging every one in a given district had an idea which farm was best, but there was not always an agreement of opinion. Some put too much emphasis upon buildings, some upon crops, some upon stock and so on. After the judging more rational values have been attached to these different points so that it is not rashly anticipating to say that rapid intelligent strides will be made next year in the direction of good farming.

As to Moving the Crop

All the inconveniences and annoyances of a grain blockade are anticipated in the usual quarters this year. There does not seem to be any doubt but that the 1908 crop will be the largest in history. Whether it will reach one hundred and twenty-five million or not, only the market records of a year hence will disclose, but there is every probability that the total will be above the 1906 record.

As for the moving of the crop an examination of the situation should remove some fears. In 1906, the year of our last serious blockade, there were fewer freight cars, locomotives and men available than this year: There was more freight of other kinds to be moved, including coal, merchandise and lumber; there was but a single track between Winnipeg and Fort William on the C. P. R., and boat space was not by any means as freely offered as it is this year. Yet despite these circumstances about one-quarter to one-third of the crop of 1906 was moved out before the close of navigation.

Generally speaking, a third of the crop of one season is enough to throw on to the market in the three months of the fall, but of course it is impossible to take a third of every man's crop. Some men, especially those situated nearest Fort William, will get out all their wheat, while others will not be able to get cars to market any, and therein lies the hardship of a blockade.

Nor can it be expected that the man who is fortunate in getting out a third of his crop will resign his chance of getting more out, to his neighbor who may not have got any out. Yet this is what ought to be done. Our hope is that the car distributing departments of the railways will exercise more than ordinary care to place cars equitably over the whole grain producing area with due regard to the fact that it requires much more rolling stock to move a million bushels out of the western side of the grain belt than it does out of the eastern, and that it is obligatory upon the roads to not only move out a reasonable percentage of the crop, but also to move it evenly over the whole grain area.

Finding the Best Grain

No other form of public competition for the purpose of improving conditions and methods in farming has met with so much interest and success as have the field grain competitions under the auspices of agricultural societies and aided by the seed branch of the Dominion department of Agriculture. Grain growing is the all absorbing industry of this country. People are interested in it. Instinctively the heart of the farmer yearns toward a clean, heavy, even crop of grain. It represents his care, his work, and his intuitive ability as well as being evidence of the natural fertility of his soil, and if at any time prizes are to be awarded for grain, the most appropriate time seems to be when it is in its most attractive form. In the field, grain, straw, purity, cleanliness, vigor, weight, total yield, and all round general appearance are taken into consideration in judging, while after threshing, the grain alone, shorn of the romance of its growth, comes in for inspection.

Nominally we speak of the reputation red fye wheat has made for western Canada, but in reality, a great deal of the wheat commonly grown is not red fye but a mixture of it and some other varieties. There is expansive opportunity for betterment in the matter of producing wheat, or other grain, true to name and hence true to reputation. In judging seed grain it is practically impossible to distinguish all varieties and strains, but when an inspection of a growing field is made, variations in type can be distinguished, and a closer approximation to its value for seed purposes can be reached. Judging the fields should be combined with the judging of the grain afterwards at the winter seed fairs, and a combination of merits made to decide which lot is justly entitled to be awarded first prize for seed or marketing grain.

Directors of agricultural societies should not consider their work complete until they have arranged a seed grain fair, in connection with their field grain competitions, and until they have awarded a substantial prize for the highest average score. Meanwhile push the field competitions to further importance in the work of the society.

Another Word on Repairs

As we said in our issue of July 29th, the relationship between a man who has his machinery repaired by an expert and the local agent at whose instance the expert is engaged, is not satisfactory. The farmer applies to the local agent of the company which manufactures his broken machine; the local agent says he will write the company and have them send out an expert; the services of the expert are charged against the farmer by the local agent, and generally paid. In the meantime the expert gives a statement of his time and work to the company and the local agent enters the transaction in his books. One would naturally think the two would tally, that the local agent would not endeavor to make a profit out of the expert's work, especially as the expert is sometimes anything but what the name implies, but here are two statements:

(FROM THE WHOLESALE COMPANY'S BOOKS.)

January 24, to time and expense of expert repairing windmill:	
Time one day.....	\$4.00
Board and bed at.....	1.50
Breakfast at.....	.35

Per —'s report..... \$5.85

(FROM THE LOCAL AGENT'S ACCOUNT.)

January 28.—To two days' time repairing windmill.....	\$ 8.00
To expenses at.....	2.50
	\$10.50

(Repairman).

Which means whatever they may be wanted to mean, or that as we said before, "there is too much mystery in the machinery repair business."

Tardy Prize Money

Exhibitors who were fortunate enough to win prizes at the Dominion exhibition at Calgary last month are asking themselves where the prize money has gone to. The answer is, the fair board is waiting for the grant of the Dominion government. Ten thousand dollars of the grant were forwarded to enable the board to go on with the exhibition but the other forty thousand is still, to use the vivid language of a politician, "locked in the vaults of the government at Ottawa." It is surmised that when the government has been satisfied that the conduct of the fair was in strict accord with the regulations accompanying the grant, the money will be released, and exhibitors will get their winnings, and the fair board will pay its accounts. In the meantime this paper goes on record as pronouncing this Dominion fair of 1908 as interesting, as wholesome and as original as any yet held.

What a Wonder

We received an anonymous contribution last week, evidently intended for publication, as we notice it in print in a number of American and Canadian news and agricultural exchanges, which purports to be "the greatest wheat story that has ever been told; far greater than the wildest dreams of the wheat king, in the security of his vast domain and the demand for his Golden Grain," whatever such nonsense as that means. The writer goes on to describe a wonderful new wheat, corn-like in growth, with heads four inches long and kernels about four times the size of a grain of ordinary wheat, which a farmer out in Idaho has recently originated. He describes the world as "trembling on the verge of a new era" in which the man with a hundred acres of land suddenly finds his farm increased in area to a thousand acres by the discovery of the afore mentioned farmer in Idaho. With a touching, yet withal a sympathetic eloquence, he refers to the old gentleman's struggles to develop this new and wonderful variety, the difficulties he overcame and the exhaustive tests carried out to demonstrate the phenomenal yielding and other qualities of this greatest of all cereal creations, all of which may be interesting enough from the view point of this doughty seeker of free advertising, and fit matter for the columns of a yellow journal, but quite outside the line we've drawn around the matter that gets into these pages. A wheat may yet be developed that will yield two hundred bushels to the acre, grade number one hard all the time, and be adapted to fall or spring sowing. Dreams nearly as wide have been realized. But the wonder is that if this old Idahoan has been growing such a grain, harvesting such phenomenal yields and kicking up so much excitement as this generally for the past four years, that some of those enterprising experiment stations of the American west, always anxious to get themselves into the lime light by fathering some sensation, didn't get next to this old fellow's work and bulletinize the country. We are content to wait until they do before we print such matter.

The Lesson of the Lumbermen

Memory serves most of us in the matter of the organized lumber trade. Only a few short years ago the mill men of British Columbia realized the extent of the market in which, by the aid of tariff, freight arrangements, and voracious consumption, they could reap the most golden of harvests. Being solicitous for the lumber supply, and also the lumber suppliers, the government arranged the tariff so that the lumber used on the prairie would come altogether from the Canadian forests,—not that the foreigners had any advantage in distances—and ignoring the moral right of consumers to buy where they could, get their goods for the best price.