

Our Western Letter

Agricultural College Commission—Farmers' Institutes—Big Crops

Winnipeg, Dec. 9th, 1901.

We have had a little snow mixed with our weather during the past few days, and hopes are entertained that there may be sleighing for Christmas. The temperature continues unusually high for this time of the year—just below the freezing point. The very light snowfall has given the youngsters unusually fine skating, for ordinarily, the ice is covered with snow early in the season. Startling rumors are current about snow blockades on Eastern railways. These are probably exaggerated, but at any rate, mails and trains from Ontario are unusually slow in arriving. Our people are flocking east and taking their families to spend Christmas with the old folks. That is one of the advantages of wheat farming. Once the crop is marketed there is nothing to keep the farmer from enjoying life. He hires a neighbor's boy to attend to the horses, packs his valise and goes off for a change of air, until seeding time.

The Agricultural College Commission left last week for an extended tour among the colleges. They go first to North Dakota and from there will proceed to Chicago, taking in the Fat Stock Show. Here they expect to meet the officials of many of the colleges of the States. They will visit Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois, Michigan and perhaps other colleges, ending their trip at Guelph. From the Ontario College, of which one of the Commissioners is a graduate, they will probably secure more real assistance than from any other of the institutions they may visit. Though purely a provincial institution, the O. A. C. is a source of pride to every Canadian, for it typifies Canadian enterprise, progressiveness and advancement. Every scheme propounded for our College is more or less based upon the Guelph College. Those having the best understanding of the College adhere most closely to its lines. Doubtless our Commissioners will find there much to help them in their work.

Farmers' Institutes during the past week have not been an unqualified success. The meetings have been interesting to those who attended, but like prayer meetings and temperance lectures, the ones most needing their benefits do not attend. When, after an address, those present heartily endorsed the views of the speaker and pronounce their experience the same as his, the speaker may feel flattered, but he has not that satisfying sense of accomplishing something which might, under different circumstances, attend his efforts. How are those who need the institute to be drawn within its sphere of influ-

ence? That is a question puzzling out institute workers here. Of course, we have no superintendent of institutes as you have, to assume the burden, neither have we a large staff of speakers, such as the Agricultural College affords, to draw upon. Our speakers are mostly men well known to their audiences. They, or their presence, are no novelty. Perhaps a stranger would draw a better crowd.

What would we do were each and every year's crop of the magnitude of the present. During the past four of five years we have had average yields, but nothing phenomenal. The result has been a constantly increasing acreage under crop. Last year the crop was a partial failure, and to even up matters, the acreage went up with a bound. This year we have what we always hope for, a bumper crop, and now we have it, we scarcely know how to take care of it. Nearly twenty thousand men came up from the East to help us, and even with this aid, only part of the crop was properly stacked when the October rains came on. A continuance of such yields would necessitate a decrease in acreage, unless some other source can be found from which to draw the necessary men. The ultimate destiny of the Manitoba farmer is mapped out clearly to those with discerning eyes. He follows a definite evolution from wheat to beef, from beef to butter, just as his brethren in other lands have done. But this process is a gradual and extremely slow one, leaving the problem of harvest laborers to worry us each season for many years to come.

The area prepared for the crop of 1902 may be placed at 1,475,960 acres, or only 85,000 acres less than a year ago, notwithstanding the unfavorable season for plowing. This indicates a determination on the part of farmers to sow as large an area as possible next year. With favorable spring weather, such as we have had for some years past, the acreage will equal, if not surpass, the present year.

Manitoba Crop Report.

The official crop report for the Province of Manitoba was issued on the 12th inst., giving the result of the crops and other agricultural statistics for the past season. The agricultural situation is discussed in much the same terms as it has been in the weekly letters of our Western correspondent.

The figures show that while wheat exceeded the estimate made in August last, oats are on the other hand, not quite up to expectations. In ordinary years the

Eastern portion of the Province has given better returns than the Western, but this year the conditions are reversed. The yield of the Northwestern district averaged 30 bushels, the Southwestern 25, the North central 26, the South central 24, Eastern 21. The average for the Province is 25.1 bushels.

The following figures summarize the production of various grains for the year:

	Area in acres	Average yield bus.	Total yield bus.
Wheat.....	2,011,835	25.1	50,502,085
Oats	689,951	40.3	27,796,588
Barley	191,009	34.2	6,536,155
Flax	20,978	12.7	266,420
Rye	2,707	23.0	62,261
.....	879	18.6	16,349
Potatoes ..	24,429	196.0	4,797,433
Roots	10,214	286.0	2,925,362

The total grain crop is placed at 85,179,858 bushels.

The sales of dairy produce for the year are as follows:

	Butter Pounds	Price	Value.
Dairy	2,740,090	14.4c.	\$395,540.82
Creamery.	2,460,650	17.98	442,424.87
Cheese.....			
Factory ...	1,039,392	8.5	88,348.32

Total value dairy products \$926,314.01

The total value of farm buildings erected during the year is placed at 1,434,880; this amount is somewhat less than last year, few farmers having had time this season for building operations.

The land prepared for next season's crop is as follows:

Breaking ..	149,305 acres.
Summerfallow . .	559,595 acres.
Fallowing . . .	767,150 acres.

Total 1,475,960

The rainfall during the growing season was 16.29 inches distributed as follows:

April89 inches.
May37 inches.
June	6.73 inches.
July	2.62 inches.
August	1.85 inches.
September	3.33 inches.
October50 inches.

Total 16.29 inches.

The number of live stock in the rural districts of the Province, July 1st, 1901, was:

Horses	142,080
Cattle	263,168
Sheep	22,960
Pigs	94,688

"How still they are!" remarked Mrs. Fogg, apropos of the young couple in the next room. "Yes," replied Colonel F.; "it reminds me of my army days. It was always wonderfully quiet just previous to an engagement."

She—Yes, she is a woman who has suffered a great deal because of her belief.

He—Indeed! And what is her belief?

She—That she can wear a No. 3 shoe on a No. 4 foot.