

went down to my homestead again, and profiting by my new found experience, managed to lay out my first land. Rather ragged it looked I grant you. It resembled somewhat the mark left on a school boys desk by a fly that has dropped (accidentally of course) into the ink bottle and being anxious to escape, does not care in which direction it travels to avoid its tormentor. As I have said I broke in all, seventy-five acres the first summer, besides doing a lot of other work, such as putting up hay for the winter, building a shanty, planting about two and a half acres of potatoes on the sod, helping the neighbors to stack grain, threshing, etc. I did not do so badly for the first season at least,—that is what the neighbors told me.

Breaking is quite an art. The thinner the sod is broken the better. I used to break it about two inches, then in the fall back set it with about two inches more of subsoil. In order to make a good job the plow share must be kept very thin and sharp. The shares are wrought steel and will stand beating out cold. Nearly every settler has a large piece of railroad iron and a round headed hammer, with these he draws out the shares until they are as thin and sharp as razors. The plow will then cut through the roots and turn over the sods, laying them down like so many ribbons. The next spring the backsetting is in prime condition for a crop. During the wet or breaking season, the low lying prairie becomes like a vast lake. Just North of my homestead was a swamp, extending for miles, and whenever I had occasion to go to the settlement of Lowestot, I had to go along a trail, about three miles of which lay under water. In some places the water was up to the pony's back, and I had to lift my feet up and put them over his neck to keep from getting wet. This state of affairs is, however, becoming better year by year as the the country is getting drained.

The dry season begins about the first of August. The days are very hot and the nights cool and pleasant. In Manitoba the sunny days are more numerous than here. For weeks the sky is cloudless, the swamps dry up, water gets scarce on the prairie, surface wells dry up, and the settlers have to draw water in barrels on stone boats from Coulees, perhaps four or five miles distant. The worst of it is, the water they bring home after so much trouble, is neither clean nor palatable. A man who has a good well on his place is considered very fortunate. Most of the water used on the prairie is filthy and unpregnated with alkali. It is so sticky that

after washing, your hair or whiskers seem glued together and your hands and face feel as though they had been daubed over with a coat of paint. The water is full of grim, uncanny creatures. The first thing I had to do before using the water was to pass it through a coarse strainer, and if you only saw the slimy, horrid, creeping things that remained behind you would feel sick (at first you would), afterwards you might get used to it. The next operation was to pass the fluid through a finer sieve or piece of cloth, then it was ready for boiling; after boiling, the taste and smell was killed by adding lots of tea or coffee, and even then I did not take any more than I was obliged to. You may be sure that when it rained every bucket and barrel was used to catch the pure, sweet rain water.

Convention Notes.

THE members of the Ten Hamilton Societies may well feel proud of the success of the late Convention. From the first sunrise prayer meeting to the consecration meeting at the closing, the utmost enthusiasm and goodwill prevailed. Everything connected with the Convention was so excellent and well sustained that it difficult to make special mention. The chairmen of the different committees deserve much praise for the way in which they perfected their plans and so well carried them out. The different chairmen were: J. Souter, Social Committee; R. S. Wallace, Reception; R. McRae, Bill-eting; J. C. Harris, Registration; T. Cook, Finance; C. McLeod, Decoration; J. Mof-fat, Music; R. Robertson, Printing.

The success of the Convention was manifested at the first sunrise prayer meeting. We had a glorious time. The programme of the Convention was followed out faithfully. Dr. Mungo Fraser performed the duties of chairman with impartiality and despatch. It would be difficult to remember all the good things said by the different speakers, but they will all bear fruit.

Dr. Clark was a host in himself, and conveyed many hints by his practical way of dealing with the Question Box. He is greatly in favor of having written monthly reports from each chairman of committees. He would have each chairman read his own report at the business meeting. He would discourage business as much as possible. He would on no account have business discussed before the Society. All matters