

# THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE

AND HOME MAGAZINE

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## A Good Time Coming.

Another season is about drawing to a close, and probably all that need be said of it, is that, as usual, it has been a most exceptional season throughout. The oldest inhabitant has no record of anything like it, and the prayer of most of us is that we may never see its duplicate. Throughout seed time the conditions were perfect, and never was a crop put into the ground so satisfactorily, or with equal promise. But the dry time, which was then so helpful, continued throughout May and June, accompanied by very windy weather, which in many localities drifted the soil badly. At this time the outlook was of the darkest, for to all appearances there would be feed for neither man nor beast. By the end of June the long-looked-for rains came, and came in abundance. What a wonderful response did the soil make! A marvellous change came over field and prairie. During July and early August the growth was most rapid, and on the opening of harvest, the indications were for a fair return of marketable grain and an abundance of stock feed. But alack! the rains that would have been so welcome in June, came in September, and came with interest added for the interval of delay. Short straw full of green bottom made bad sheaves to withstand rain. Bleached, sprouted, musty and tough represent the reason why thousands of bushels go "no grade." A large percentage shelled out, owing to long exposure to wind and weather. Labor has been exceeding scarce, as earlier in the season, with prospects of so light a harvest, none felt justified in keeping on a full supply of hands.

A chronicle of unusual damage from hail, lightning and storm has to be added to the record of the past season. Away in the northern settlements, along the Saskatchewan River, at Edmonton and Prince Albert, abundant early moisture gave promise of an extraordinarily heavy crop, but subsequent wet and backward harvest weather leaves these sections in as bad shape as the rest of the country.

Live stock has, generally speaking, done well during the season, conditions having been favorable. Dairying has been profitable, and the output greatly exceeded that of any previous year, several factories have increased their make by 50%, while prices have been well maintained throughout the season. Beef cattle have also done well, and Western cattle have come forward in good condition, fetching fairly good prices, although not as high as might have prevailed had steamboat rates on exporters not advanced so high. Hogs, sheep and poultry are all bringing profitable prices.

Western Canada, as an agricultural country, has long since passed the experimental stage, and no one should be discouraged by the results of the past season. Everyone who is observant will have learned many lessons from the extremes of wet and drouth, and from the effects of hail and storm, which will be turned to account in days to come. Perhaps one of the most important lessons emphasized is the wisdom of seeding down to grass land that has been under cultivation long enough to exhaust the humus or root fiber, in order to prevent the drifting of light, loamy soils, and the baking of stiff, heavy clays. With some of the land in grass, the more general keeping of live stock will naturally follow to utilize the fodder and pasture. More live stock will mean a more equal distribution of labor throughout the year, thus settling to a large extent the "harvest labor question," restoring and maintaining the fertility and mechanical condition of the soil, the more thorough working of the land, all of which will tend to produce in the average season as much wheat off less land at less expense, and have the additional advantage of affording other resources

in the event of a crop failure. The rains have left the land well soaked for next year, and, remembering that this is not the last year for Manitoba and the West, let us all cheerfully look forward to the good time coming, and a bumper crop to commemorate the opening of the 20th century.

## The Labor Question as it Affects the Province of Manitoba.

Owing to the uncertainty as to the value of the grain crop in the early part of this season, there was a decided tendency on the part of farmers throughout Manitoba to dispense with hired help, trusting to secure men in the harvest time if necessary. When harvest time came many farmers calculated on doing the work without engaging any extra hands, as the harvest was early and the crop light. On account of the wet, catchy weather, however, work has been delayed from week to week, and when fine days come, the work must be done with a rush. During the early part of September there was a great demand for harvest hands, farmers offering \$1.50 a day and board, but there were no men to be had. Letters and telegrams poured in from all parts of the Province to the C. P. R. officials, to the Department of Agriculture, and to the Dominion Immigration Commissioner, to send men at once. Farmers in some instances complained because their demands were not forthwith attended to. It is hardly necessary to say that men are not kept, fed and housed in Winnipeg by the C. P. R., the Provincial or the Dominion Governments to meet this short-notice demand at harvest time. In past years, when conditions were favorable in Manitoba and labor cheap in the East, thousands of laborers were brought up to help in our harvest fields, and they most efficiently supplied the demand, but this year conditions are not favorable in Manitoba, labor is high in the East, and men prefer to work for good wages where they are, rather than come to Manitoba simply for adventure, for no better wages. The question facing the farmers of Manitoba to-day is, "What are we to do?" If farmers cannot depend on getting men from the East to help in harvesting, it must be folly on their part to sow broad acres which they cannot possibly reap.

The ADVOCATE would like to get farmers' views on this subject, for it is an important one, and will press itself more seriously upon the attention of every one interested from year to year. Next issue the matter will be considered further, and space gladly given to correspondence from farmers on the subject.

## Attend to the Milk Cows.

All things considered, this has probably been the best season the dairy industry has ever experienced in the West. Prices have, as a rule, been good, and the season has been favorable, as a whole—certainly much more favorable for dairying than for any other branch of farming. The dry, early spring, following the mild winter, was most suitable for the dairy cow, and during the continued dry weather, the grass, wherever it was not pastured too close, was full of nutriment, and stock of all kinds did remarkably well. In addition to this, the roads were good everywhere, greatly facilitating the work of cream-gathering, and as the drought continued, evidences of a crop failure began to develop, and farmers the more earnestly attended to the milking of their cows, for there is no denying the fact that it is necessity alone that will bring farmers in this great wheat country to the three-legged stool beside the old cow's flank. The continued moisture throughout the latter portion of the season has supplied abundant pasture of the most desirable sort for milk production, and the

disastrous harvest weather has continued to uphold the cow end of the argument. Owing to a combination of all these circumstances, the flow of milk to the factory has been larger and more continuous than in any past season. This greatly helps to reduce the cost per pound of manufacturing, facilitates marketing, and, in consequence, enables the factory to pay the patrons a higher average price for the season. The longer the season during which the factory is able to run, the less the expense of operating; the higher the average price for the product, the better everyone is satisfied.

What's worth doing is surely worth doing well; it does not do to depend entirely upon nature for the well-being of the cow and the profit from the factory. Under natural conditions, the tendency of the spring-calved cow is to go dry in the fall, and this tendency is only counteracted by the development of a long-milking habit and by careful treatment. Standing out in cold rains and on frosty nights is a severe strain upon the milking cow, using up her vital force and requiring a large proportion of the food consumed, that should go to the production of milk, to keep up the temperature of the body.

It pays to shelter and feed the dairy cow during these autumn months. Nature has this year provided abundance of good green fall pasture; see to it that the cows are comfortably stabled on cold nights and during rains and given a little extra feed, as they will take it. Sheaf oats or corn or even freshly-threshed straw will be relished, and the extra care and feed will be paid for an hundred-fold in a continued flow of milk.

## The Registration of Nova Scotia Live Stock.

During the Provincial Exhibition, Halifax, an interesting meeting was held, at which the Nova Scotia breeders conferred with Mr. Henry Wade, Secretary of the Dominion Shorthorn Breeders' Association and Live Stock Registrar, and Mr. John I. Hobson, President of the Dominion Shorthorn and the Ontario Winter Fair Associations. What the latter proposed was that the stock breeders of Nova Scotia, particularly the Shorthorn breeders, should drop their Nova Scotia registry and adopt that of the Dominion Shorthorn Association. This would give their animals a standing they do not now possess, and would be a great boon for the future. The Shorthorn Association has a very large membership, and has a cash surplus of \$12,000. Membership costs \$2 annually, and the fee to members for registration and certificate of animals under 21 months old is 75 cents. It was stated that the annual registration book, furnished free to members, costs \$2.75, but the great advantage of the proposed change is the improved standing that the greater body would give to the thoroughbred stock of the Maritime Shorthorn breeders. As regards other thoroughbred stock, it should be enumerated in the registry only of the best organizations—organizations recognized everywhere. Mr. Wade and Mr. Hobson made speeches in support of this idea, and among all local speakers who followed there was perfect unanimity in the same line. B. W. Chipman, Secretary for Agriculture, was in the chair, and he also favored the idea. So did Hon. T. R. Black, whose motto was, "It is easier to start right than to get right after having been wrong." C. A. Archibald, J. Rufus Starr, and half a dozen other local men favored the change. Prof. Day, of Guelph; Major Sheppard, of Toronto; David Gregg, and other visitors added their testimony in its favor. There is no doubt, from the tone of this meeting, that the scheme will be carried into effect—that the local register will be dropped in favor of the Dominion one.