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Fencing.

Fencing is becoming more and more a serious problem in this country. Many of the leading farmers, realizing the necessity of having their farms fenced, are settling the problem by putting up good permanent boundary fences. On extensive grain farms where a system of rotation with grass is being adopted, the divisional fencing, in order to utilize the grass for pasture to best advantage, is a serious drawback. We have seen the following plan adopted on some large farms: Permanent boundary fences being erected, one-quarter of the farm was seeded down and fenced with a light temporary two- or three-strand barb wire fence, put on light posts; then when the next adjoining quarter was in grass and ready to be pastured, one-half of this temporary fence was pulled up, and with a team of horses drawn round and the posts driven again on the new line. In sections of the country where wild hay is depended on, it is advisable to fence the hay meadows to keep stock out of them. Mr. Matheson, of Stonewall, speaking at the stock breeders' convention last winter, said that while a large hay meadow of his had remained unfenced, cattle had pastured on it, cutting it up badly in wet seasons and eating down the aftermath after haying, with the result that year by year the crop got poorer and more filled with skunk-tail grass; but since he had fenced all stock out of the meadow he had got a good crop of hay every year, and the skunk-tail grass had disappeared. He contended that the seed of the skunk-tail grass blowing across the country lodged in the tracks made in the soft sod by the cattle and found favorable conditions for growth in this partly-cultivated ground, whereas it would make no headway on the clean, uncut sod. He also considered that allowing the aftermath to remain unpastured helped to protect the grass roots and insured a good crop the following year.

Elsewhere in this issue Mr. Ivens describes his method of erecting a cheap and efficient fence.

Weed Killing.

The season for fighting weeds is with us once again. Weeds have the peculiar fashion of adapting themselves to circumstances, and generally the worse the weed the more readily does it adapt itself. Be the winter severe or moderate, the spring late or early, still weeds grow, and often when least expected they make the most determined effort. One of the best methods of fighting noxious weeds is education. Hundreds of farms have got more or less infected with weeds of some of the worst varieties simply from lack of knowledge of the weed or of its nature and characteristics. In the way of disseminating information a great deal has been done during the past few years by the press, the departments of agriculture, Farmers' Institutes and agricultural societies, and also through the schools by the course of nature study that has been introduced in Manitoba.

This year a new machine to assist the farmer has been very extensively introduced many carloads of weeders having been sold this year, and we feel confident that wherever they are used with ordinary intelligence they will give a good account of themselves. One of the most effective agencies in keeping land clean under our present system of wheat farming must, of course, be the summer-fallow. And no time should now be lost in getting the first plowing done before the weeds get too far advanced. The plowing can't be done *too well* it will *pay* a hundredfold to cut and cover everything and not skin over the ground. And when the land is plowed, that is not all, for it's a poor fallow that only kills the one crop of weeds that is plowed under. The object should be to conserve moisture and germinate all the seeds, if possible, that are in the soil, and as they germinate kill them. This, of course, necessitates surface cultivation, and unless this can be given, and given as often as required, there is little use undertaking a fallow. Where land is so light, or so lacking in root fiber that it is liable to drift with surface cultivation, it should be seeded down with some of the cultivated grasses as soon as possible, and when the soil is filled with root fiber it can be surface cultivated with no fear of blowing away.

In some sections, as in the rich loam lands of the Portage Plains, fallows cause too rank a growth of the first succeeding crop, and for that reason late-sown green crops are largely used in preference. The system generally followed being to treat the land similar to a summer-fallow during the early part of the season, germinating and killing as many weed seeds as possible, and sowing late with oats or barley, or some other crop intended for feed. The barley can be sown very late and still produce a good paying feed crop, and with a great many varieties of weeds is ready to harvest before the weeds have matured seed. Of course, growing feed barley almost necessitates the keeping of live stock to convert it into a profitable market commodity, and this brings us back once more to the necessity of more stock-raising on the farms of the West.

Butter Exhibits for the Summer Fairs.

The time has again come round to think about your exhibit of butter for the summer fairs, and especially for the great Winnipeg Industrial, which opens on the 10th of July next. Do not be discouraged by want of success on former occasions. Judging butter is not as easy a matter as judging in a horse race. In the latter case there is little room for dispute as to which is the winner. In butter, on the other hand, with twenty samples, all probably as good as can be made, there is an element of luck in securing prizes, dependent somewhat on the taste of the judge. The spirit that should actuate intending exhibitors of butter should be, therefore, not so much a desire to carry off prizes as to assist in placing before the world a good sample of the product of our Manitoba dairies.

In offering suggestions to exhibitors it may be pointed out that exhibits should be early on the ground. It is unfair to yourself to have your packages hustled into the building on the morning of opening. All exhibits should be in position at least two full days before the opening, in order to get firm before coming under the trier. It is therefore to be hoped that the railway companies will provide facilities for getting all butter exhibits forwarded and delivered not later than the evening of the 7th of July, and that the Exhibition Board will have the first icing of the building completed by the evening of the 4th at latest, seeing three days under ice is not too long to reduce the temperature of the building to a safe degree.

Exhibits in stone crocks should not be encouraged, as the crock, while nothing can be better for packing to use at home or to supply a city customer for winter use, can never become a staple package, seeing it lacks the essentials of cheapness, lightness, and immunity from breakage. Another point that may be adverted to is the practice of showing partially-filled packages. In the trade a package is liable to a dockage of one-half cent per pound if not properly filled, and there is no doubt a judge would throw off a couple of points or more when dealing with a lot of butter that came within two or three inches of filling the tub. The tubs should be filled within a quarter of an inch of the brim, a circle of new bleached cotton or parchment paper laid over the surface, and the tub filled up flush to the top with wet salt.

Again, any kind of filigree work on the surface of a package is objectionable. The work of the mud-pie artiste does not catch the fancy of a judge that knows his business. In every case he will give the preference to an even, perfectly smooth finished package. Even in one-pound bricks the taste of the trade is for a plain finish, without device of any kind. All lettering or ornament should be on the wrapper. Both for packing and keeping, the plain rectangular pat is preferable to the deeply-embossed one.

The next great Industrial in Winnipeg will bring to witness the products of the Province a very large cosmopolitan crowd. Let us show that in butter, the most delicate and valuable product of the farmer's art, Manitoba is in the van.

WM. SCOTT,
Winnipeg. Manager for R. A. Lister & Co., Ltd.

A Cheap Serviceable Fence.

The question of a grass rotation for Manitoba farming having been discussed in your columns a good deal lately, I send you a few notes on fencing, the cost of which is one of the objections to grass growing. A few years ago I saw in an agricultural paper a short description of a style of fence said to be in use on some of the western ranches, the main feature of which was to put the posts four rods apart instead of one, and then put small poplar sticks about 1½ or 2 inches in diameter every rod between the posts to keep the wires the right distance apart and the right height from the ground. These sticks are not let into the ground, but simply stood on top of it, and should be 4 ft. 8 in. long if the top wire is to be 4 ft. from the ground. I have been using this style of fence for four years and find it answers the purpose just as well as if the posts are a rod apart, and makes a great saving when cedar posts have to be bought at 12 cents to 16 cents each. I use two strands of barb wire where there is no grain on the outside of the fence; three where there is grain. As to the lasting qualities of posts, I am a little doubtful about cedar. My oldest cedar have been up seven years and some of them show more signs of rot than they ought to show in that time. I have poplar posts that have been up thirteen years and are still standing. They were peeled and the bottom half well charred in a fire. I do all my posts that way. Elm posts are not so good as poplar. Ash and oak and tamarack, I believe, are all good, but have not used them. Corner posts should be set three feet deep at least and well rammed, especially at the bottom, and braced by good stiff poles about ten feet long, resting in a notch in the post about the height of the top wire and against a stake or stone in the ground. If these braces are too short, when the wire tightens it will lift the post. For digging holes the best tools I have found are a drainer's spade with a long, narrow blade, and a long-handled shovel to take out the loose dirt. Posts less than 4 in. in diameter can be driven with a heavy maul by punching a hole with a crowbar and putting a little water in it. My plan is to load posts, water barrel and tools into the wagon, take a quiet team, and set the posts all up as I go. Posts that are driven should be rammed a little at the top and well banked up. For stretching wire there are many different plans The one I like best is to take a sleigh, lay two logs 10 or 12 feet long and 10 or 12 in. in diameter on it, notch them to fit over back bunk, notch them about two feet in front of back bunk to lay a crowbar in, and nail a few boards across the front to carry spools of wire, box of staples, etc, Put the crowbar through a spool of wire, staple the end of the wire to end post and drive ahead for 300 or 400 yards; then hook a chain round the reach and throw it over the spool and move up till the wire is tight enough. The weight of the sleigh will hold the wire about the right tension. Have a board with notches sawn in the edge of it at the heights of the wires, put the wire into the notch, stand the board against the post, and staple the wire on. One man can do this as well as two. It is not necessary to put braces against every post the wire is stretched at, only at the corners and gates. Put the top wire on first. After the wire is all on take the wagon again and staple on the stretchers or sticks previously mentioned. Where there is a hollow between two posts put in a stake six feet long driven into the ground. For gates, three or four strands of barb wire put from one of the posts to a loose head fitting into wire loops on the other post and three light stretchers across it does well enough. Gates should be made a rod wide to let a binder pass through. Where three strands of wire are used the stretchers can be woven in by putting the middle strand one side of the stretcher and the top and bottom strands the other side.

Wallace Municipality, Man. CHAS. E. IVENS.

Montana Stock Growers' Association.

The fourteenth annual meeting of the Montana Stock Growers' Association was held at Miles City, Montana, in April. The Association is in a prosperous condition, having enrolled 147 new members during the past year, making a membership of 335. Through the efforts of the Association great benefit has accrued to members in the tracing of stray cattle. The officers are: President, John M. Holt, Miles City; 1st Vice-President, John Harris, Fort Benton; 2nd Vice-President, H. R. Phillips, Miles City; Secretary-Treasurer, W. G. Preuitt, Helena.