

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE.

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DOMINION.

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THE WILLIAM WELD COMPANY (LIMITED),
LONDON, CANADA.

Agriculture in the West for 1906.

Optimism is the main feature of, or, to be more correct, optimistic describes the state of mind of Western men, including the farmers—a fact which is remarkable, seeing that the farmer is generally depicted as a grumbler, one dissatisfied, or a pessimist. In the West he is a different being, whether due to the stimulating climate, constant sunshine, or the evidences of development and general prosperity, or the rise in values of the land he holds, we cannot say definitely. Undoubtedly this optimism is based on the fact that he is thriving.

In the early days of this year the slogan of "Weed Suppression" was heard in the land, and a method (unique in Canada, at least) of carrying the gospel of fungus and weed eradication was started by means of an engine and train of cars, on which the lecturers lived, moved and had their being. The "Seed Special," as it was termed, was a success, and undoubtedly did good, but, from our personal knowledge, this gospel needs to be preached over and over again. An immense area of country was covered, but for all that, the weeds are as far ahead of the farmer as the transportation companies are behind in providing transportation facilities for getting out cattle and wheat. The rush the past season to the unoccupied lands for homesteads, etc., still continues, and the owners of virgin prairie are becoming more enamored of its virginity, and are steadily increasing prices. For example, unbroken land, over sixty miles from railroad, and no prospect of one for a year or two, has brought nine dollars an acre, and ten to twelve dollars are soon to be the figures. The people of the West, generally speaking, are very close to a state which might be described as "drunken with land speculation," which is so common as almost to pass unnoticed, nearly everybody being inebriated with prosperity, or what is taken for it.

The seeding was nothing remarkable, and the growing period of the grain uneventful, save for the amazing crop prophecies issued by those anxious to bull or bear the grain markets. Considered all round, a fair crop was taken off the older lands, which, despite all assertions to the contrary, are beginning to show exhaustion; and good crops were harvested on the newer lands.

The earlier shipments graded well up, but the percentage of high grades gradually diminished as time went on.

In live-stock lines there is nothing eventful to chronicle, save the big increase in shipments of range cattle, which are generally of good quality. Some Ontario men have been up purchasing feeders, which the Western farmer has foolishly let go at 2½ cents, with prospects next spring of 4½ to 5 cents for the same stuff, if properly fed this winter. The Winnipeg stock-yards, owned by the Canadian Pacific, have proved inadequate for the number of cattle shipped during the fall. Hog-production, despite high prices, which steadily hover around 7 cents, is away behind consumption, and it may be said that Manitoba needs an influx of some first-class dairymen. "Farmers won't milk cows," is a quotation which on the older lands will be, by the logic of diminishing crop returns, changed to "farmers must milk cows." Creameries are not kept running as they should be, despite a good and increasing market for the product. The same might be said of poultry production, although in that regard Alberta, with her co-operative creamery, egg-gathering and poultry-fattening system, is not letting those industries fall behind.

Importations of pure-bred stock have been almost entirely limited to Clydesdales—horses, especially heavy-drafts, being in good demand.

In the excitement incident to the general prosperity and land speculation, the upward trend in lumber prices, and the statement by manufacturers that farmers are in favor of higher tariffs—which is not the case—have almost passed unnoticed.

Immigration for the year has been noteworthy in the great and welcome numbers of Old Country Britishers coming to the West, the so-called American invasion not being in it with the crowds



J. Locrie Wilson.

The new Superintendent of Agricultural Societies for Ontario.

from the motherland. Foreigners have been fewer and of a better stamp than some of years gone by; but, after all, the people most to be desired are those accustomed to doff their hats to the Union Jack and the principles it represents. Within the last two years we have noticed a tendency on the part of Western Canadians to fawn on the newcomers from the south, even to the point of adopting some methods not in accordance with the best traits of British life and thought. As a people, the Westerners are verging dangerously on the line of hysteria, rather than sober common sense, and it is for this reason the influx of Britishers from the Old Country and Eastern Canada is welcomed to leaven the mass and instil economy, steadiness, and a stricter respect for the law.

There seems, also, to be a craze for commissions to investigate things—the grain trade, the beef industry—and the latest is to ascertain whether the Mormons are practicing polygamy. The constitution of some commissions, and the readiness with which they are appointed by Governments, looks as if such are not considered seriously. There is a very grave suspicion that abuses exist, and it is hoped that the investigations will go clean to the bottom in every case.

British Columbia has increased her fruit output, and that Province is the Mecca of many farmers of the prairie who have made their pile and tired of the exacting climate. Lumbering in that Province holds out great inducements to young, energetic men with a good knowledge of treecraft and executive ability. Taken all round, the farmer is getting the smallest share of the

general prosperity. Prices for his produce are low or medium; labor is expensive, poor in quality and hard to get, while everything he has to buy is high, for which the tariff now existing cannot be held blameless. The artisan of the town is getting bigger money than ever before, and has more work than he can attend to. Observant men, both of the farm and town, have expressed the belief that the day for public assistance to the transportation companies has gone by, and that no Government will be justified in pledging the credit of the country further; the roads are strong enough to reach out for desirable trade.

Summing up the year, as regards agriculture, there has been a great increase in the area brought under cultivation, and a consequent increase in production, but we cannot truthfully say any marked improvement in quality.

Christmas Number or Premium Pictures.

Notwithstanding the fact that many journals and magazines find it advisable to give premium pictures instead of an especial, illustrated Christmas number, as a Christmas gift to their readers, we have chosen the latter, and for the following reasons: Separate pictures are, no doubt, very fine, but after all they are only pictures. After the first examination but little particular interest attaches to them. We believe that a splendidly-illustrated article is more instructive and gives more pleasure in the end than a separate picture without a context. We aim to give the picture and the context too.

Again, one cannot frame all the pictures that come as Christmas premiums. As a consequence, they knock around for a time, become torn or soiled, and are finally burned. We present our pictures in such a form that they are preserved from year to year without the expense of framing, an item, by the way, costing from two to four or more times the total subscription price of "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine," Christmas number and all. As long as the book, with ordinary care, lasts, the pictures are as good as ever. When the separate-picture premiums are long forgotten, the "Farmer's Advocate" Christmas number will be an ornament in the library.

But there are always those who wish to frame pictures. These we have not forgotten. We have this year arranged for three handsome colored plates, which may be detached and framed, if preferred. Of the originals of these, two were painted especially for "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine." The first, a fine representation of the Ontario Agricultural College farm and buildings, at Guelph, is the result of two months' work by Artists Manly and Bridgen, who will be remembered as prominent exhibitors in the Art Gallery at the Toronto exhibitions. The second was painted by the well-known artist, Paul Wickson, whose pictures of horses are always a delight.

Now, what more can we do? We have spared no expense or trouble in trying to make this Christmas Number the best possible, and it goes absolutely without any extra charge to all subscribers to "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine," being one of the regular issues of the year. Do not let the opportunity slip, and don't forget to let your friends know about it also. Tell them our special rates to new subscribers—a copy of "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine" every week from now until the end of 1907, including two magnificent Christmas Numbers, all for \$1.50.

Remember, Christmas Numbers of this character issued by other publications are sold at 50 cents a copy.