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FARMER'S ADVOCATE

AND HOME MAGAZINE

* AGRICULTURE, STOCK, DAIRY, POULTRY, HORTICULTURE, VETERINARY, HOME CIRCLE. *

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VOL. XXXVIII.

WINNIPEG, MAN., AND LONDON, ONT., JULY 20, 1903.

No. 578

Editorial.

Sittings.

Care is the main requisite in the management of sheep, but it must be supplemented with good feed.

Do not neglect the ventilation of the stable on these hot nights. Keep the stalls clean, and the ventilators open.

Care is, in the vocabulary of the careful farmer, synonymous with good feeding and is confined to no class of animals, but is carried out with regard to every animal on the farm, including even the domestic cat.

Teach the colt to eat oats and chop. The time is not far distant when the apron-strings will be cut loose and he will have to find for himself.

If the hired man is worthy of respect, treat him respectfully. Do not breed discontent and rebellion by always asking him to take the heavy end of the log. Petty tyranny only breeds contempt, and often makes an eye servant of a good man.

Take a thorough look all over the farm, now that plant life is in full bloom, and locate all spots bearing weeds. Take the very first opportunity of killing them. "A stitch in time saves nine" in the case of weed-killing.

It is now time to have the binder out in the yard. Examine it thoroughly, and fix it up so that nothing remains to be done but to hitch up and proceed to cut down the crop.

Teach the boys to show kindness to all the farm animals. It is not only a beautiful trait to display, but it also familiarizes them with the comparative points, types and proportions of the different animals on the farm, and constitutes a grand object lesson in stock-judging, which cannot fail to be useful in after-life.

Now is the time to overhaul the wagon racks. See that all parts are entire and ready to fit in to their respective places. A little attention, and a few nails judiciously driven here and there now may save much delay and possibly the breaking of bones during haying.

See that the lines are without flaw and in a good condition to stand a good pull. There will be some pretty fast driving before the hay is all stacked, and we must not forget that we shall want the teams to stop as well as go forward. A rotten or bad line is one of those things that are worse than useless.

Encourage the children to gather the wild flowers. That is the beginning of the path that leads to knowledge of plant-life, and there is no knowledge more useful for a farmer to be possessed of, nor is there a path more pleasant for the general student of nature.

Alberta Needs an Experimental Farm.

Travelling among the farmers of Alberta no one can fail to be impressed with the great need that exists for an experimental farm, where grains, grasses, clovers, trees, fruits—in fact, everything peculiar to such an institution—may be tested as to their suitability to the climate and soil of the rapidly-developing territory immediately east of the Rockies.

The Experimental Farm at Indian Head has done a great work for the West, particularly Eastern Assiniboia, but the climatic conditions to which its crops are subjected differ almost as much from those of the chief farming sections of Alberta as they do from Eastern Canada. At Indian Head the country is comparatively bare of woods, and the winds of winter blow unobstructed across the prairie, while in the territory to the west, particularly the northern part of it, wooded lands are more common. The soil is somewhat different in texture, and showers in summer are more frequent. In certain sections of Alberta, fall wheat and clover can be grown with good success, while at Indian Head these have so far proved utter failures. The most noticeable feature of the situation is that the average Alberta farmer does not know exactly what may or may not be grown successfully upon his farm. This is by no means due to lack of intelligence, because Alberta husbandmen have evidently been endowed with at least their share, and, moreover, the atmosphere is conducive to anything but sluggishness. The fact is, the country is new and most people are slow to investigate when there are certainties at hand sufficient to occupy their time. Ask some farmers if clover and fall wheat do well in their district, and they at once tell you they are not sure, having had no experience, but they believe it will. Some are experimenting a little on their own account, and others have undertaken the testing of grains sent out by the Territorial Government through the Agricultural Society, which is all right as far as it goes, but is not sufficiently far-reaching.

It is expensive for any single individual to carry out a conclusive experiment, and there are few who can afford at the present time to devote much time or labor in that direction. Work of this nature, in which the entire district must benefit as well as the individual, should be under the supervision of the Government and be paid for at the public expense.

It may be suggested that Alberta is not yet sufficiently populated, and the total value of her farm lands not sufficient to justify the necessary expenditure, but it is now and not twenty years hence that the people need information. Experiment stations continue to be profitable concerns in older countries, where they encourage the introduction of newer and more prolific varieties of grains, etc., but what Alberta needs just now is a trial farm to determine what can be grown and how. Such an institution would be certain to prove a great education, and very soon pay for itself through the increased production of the farms. In the northern part of the territory the need is doubtless greater than in the south, owing to the latter being largely devoted to ranching, while the former is rapidly becoming one solid phalanx of homesteads with cultivated fields. The south may yet yield to the plow to a large extent, but if money is to be expended by the Government in its interest, it can probably best be done by properly conducting an irrigation farm.

The cost of an experimental farm suitable to the present needs of Alberta need not be excessive. There would be no need, for some time at least, of having it conducted on such an elaborate scale as the Indian Head station. Even a quarter section, if managed in the right way, would prove of untold benefit for a time.

It may be regarded as too much to expect that two experiment farms be maintained by the Dominion Government in a country that has not yet been admitted to the status of a Province. This, however, should be no stumbling block to the proposition. Indian Head, as the single trial grounds of the Territories, has not received any greater expenditure than has been justified; quite the contrary, and as the country is rapidly improving, and an increased outlay in this direction must be expected, let it be placed where it will do the greatest good to the greatest number. The "Farmer's Advocate" regards this as an important question, and one well worthy the earnest consideration of Alberta farmers. Nothing can be expected without an agitation in its favor. What is the opinion of our readers in that quarter?

Harvest Excursions.

Reports have been circulated to the effect that no harvest excursions to the West will be run this year. However, we are glad to be able to state that no substantial foundation can be found for such rumors.

This year, as heretofore, it will rest chiefly with Western farmers whether or not an attempt will be made to bring men westward to help harvest the product of the fields. At present the Manitoba Department of Agriculture are busy gathering information from the different municipalities, and just so soon as they get an approximate estimate from the farmers of the additional numbers required, the Government officials will freely circulate in Eastern papers a call for harvesters, and also make provision with the railway companies for bringing them out at such times as will best suit the majority of grain-growers. There is an idea afloat that owing to the heavy tide of immigration which has poured in upon us this season, little if any outside help will be required to harvest the crop of 1903. It is true that many farmers have hired help this year for eight months, who formerly only hired for harvest and threshing, and as numbers have done this there is little doubt but that the amount of harvest help required will be less than in former years. It is also further expected that a great many of the home-seekers who have actually located and commenced breaking this season will be able and ready to take part in the harvest fields. All this is true, but we must not forget that the large army of last year's home-seekers did the same, and they now have changed places, being no longer able to help others, but have themselves joined the ranks of that large army who require additional help.

Although we believe it to be true that owing to changed conditions less additional harvest help will be required this year than formerly, yet we are confronted with the fact that the number of farms has increased amazingly, and that although in many of the older settled districts, where for the last few years most of the soil has been tilled and where to-day less outside help per square mile is required, there are