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Editorial.

Progress in Stock Breeding.

That there is progress in stock-breeding in Manitoba and the West is evident to all who take an intelligent view of the subject, but the whole extent of that progress, and the many new conditions which it is producing, is known only to those who are immediately affected by them.

Though the change is taking place quietly and almost imperceptibly, it is nevertheless proceeding with a steadiness and thoroughness which, to the observant mind, dignifies it with the name of an evolution. Stock-breeders are yearly becoming more plentiful and the stock in each herd is always increasing. Individuals are added from outside, and new blood is infused into all our well-managed herds. That is not all, however, for the every-day farmer of the country, whose attention used to be occupied with wheat-raising and little else, is now paying some attention to his stock. In would surprise most people if a list of farmers who own registered animals were published. Large herds are usually well known, but the number of farmers who own a nucleus of three or four animals of blue blood can scarcely be guessed at. The introducing of pure-bred stock to a farm has a great influence on the other cattle bred and cared for there, apart from the diffusing of new and approved blood. When a farmer awakens to the benefits to be derived from introducing pedigree cattle, and takes action in the matter of buying a foundation of good blood, he recognizes that he has now acquired something which it behooves him to take good care of, and the better care he takes of it the more profit will it bring him. He finds he has now something which his neighbors admire, and he, not unnaturally, strives to maintain and increase that admiration by improving and increasing his stock. The result is that all his animals are better fed and better cared for, for he reasons that what is good for the pure-bred cattle must also be good for the grades, with the result that his stock has the double influence of new blood and increased attention bearing on their improvement. Nor does the matter end there. The neighbors, seeing the improvement and increased prices, instead of regarding what they contemptuously called "scrubs" as necessary appendages on the farm for producing milk, beef and pork, begin to regard their animals as raw material which can be manufactured into valuable property. Now, all this may be regarded as armchair theorizing, but it is not so. Such a view is arrived at from the study and observation of facts as they are proceeding in Manitoba to-day. All far-seeing farmers are recognizing that the way to keep their land at a high standard is to keep a fair number of live stock on it, and to keep that stock in the best condition. Robbing the virgin soil will end only in its poverty, and the only way to prevent that with profit is to keep good stock and keep them well.

Grain shippers in New York have declared the action of the Canadian Northern in lowering grain rates as unwise and deserving of condemnation. It must not be forgotten, however, that they are, as usual, considering their own pockets only. In order that the usual amount of wheat may go their way, they have induced the New York trunk lines to reduce the carrying price one cent per bushel. This has been made necessary owing to an increased amount of wheat from Chicago and Duluth going to the seaboard via the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence route.

Siftings.

The question is often asked by intending immigrants, which is the larger, the United States or Canada? Canada is the larger. It has 3,653,946 square miles, and the United States, including Alaska, has 3,561,114.

Have you plowed that fire-guard yet? If not, delay is dangerous. Scores of people in this country have lived to regret that they didn't do it yesterday.

A great many practical farmers who raise good crops are planning to do all the plowing they can this fall, and some already have many acres turned. They are preparing well for another big yield.

At the meeting of the Dominion Millers' Association, held in Toronto a few weeks ago, a resolution favoring preferential trade with Great Britain was carried, about two-thirds of those present voting for it.

Considerable speculation is being indulged in in certain quarters regarding the advisability of holding wheat for a higher market. When a man has financial obligations to meet within the next six months, or has not abundant storage capacity, he had better rush it to market. Those who practice holding wheat don't always make money.

Down in Wisconsin a farmer recently held up an automobile with a rifle, and it is said compelled the driver to moderate his speed to a point at which it was not dangerous for pedestrians and other vehicles. The farmer is a mighty force in the land, if he could always realize it.

Rural telephones are admitted to be the most valuable addition to home life on the farms of many localities where they have been tried. Talk them up.

A number of cattlemen of the Western States have formed a company for the purpose of building a packing plant sufficient to establish competition with the large packing houses now supposed to be combined. In this way they hope to receive a better price for their cattle.

As an outcome of foot-and-mouth disease in New England, and the subsequent closure of the ports as shipping points for cattle, some Montana ranchmen are driving their cattle for export northward across the prairie, and loading them at Dunmore Junction and other points on the C. P. R., for shipment to Montreal.

A few prominent ranchmen in Alberta, who have not been satisfied with the price paid for cattle, have shipped their own stock this year to the British market.

In the State of Minnesota No. 1 Northern spring wheat was, heretofore, regarded as being composed equally of hard and soft varieties, but at a recent meeting of the board of appeals in Minneapolis, it was decided that in future it must contain more hard than soft.

It is estimated that the crop of wheat in Great Britain is one of the smallest on record,

and unless the crop is favored with better weather in France, that country will be also a liberal importer.

As a pointer on immigration, the Chronicle, Raymond, Alta., suggests that if the birth-rate of Canada were Raymondized there would be no need to pay immigration agents.

Medicine Hat can boast of a splendid new flour mill, with a capacity of 100 barrels per day. Storage capacity is provided for 10,000 bushels of wheat, and a 60,000-bushel elevator will be built at once.

The Methodist body are taking time by the forelock in establishing "Alberta College" at Edmonton, with Prof. J. H. Riddell, of Wesley College, Winnipeg, as principal. Mr. C. E. Race, of Cobourg, Ont., Collegiate Institute, has also been appointed on the staff. It will be open to both sexes, and have a building for academic and residential purposes. Mr. R. I. Joliffe, of Owen Sound; Rev. S. G. Bland, Ottawa, and Geo. H. Ball, of Petrolea, have been appointed to the staff of Wesley College.

Good Cultivation Tells.

In the management of prairie farms for the production of grain crops the advantages of good cultivation are yearly becoming more apparent. There is probably no question upon which those interested are in theory so much a unit, but which in practice they show greater variation.

It is seldom that the benefits to be derived from good cultivation are more clearly shown in a general way than they have been this year. In sections of the country where the drought was most felt it was very easy for anyone to select the fields which had been sown in haphazard manner upon soil that had received little, if any, previous cultivation. From these fields almost altogether came the reports of grain being plowed up, and from them still, as the threshing is being done, comes the only reports of very light yields. This should, and undoubtedly will, be an incentive to better cultivation. In Southern Manitoba the men who pay the most attention to having their soil in good condition, and who bend every energy to have the seed in early, have this year suffered least from lack of rainfall. Another feature more noticeable than ever before is the falling off in yield from fields that have been repeatedly growing the same grain. Notwithstanding all that has been said, and worthily so, of the great fertility of our prairie farms, it is evident that a time must come when the history of other fertile areas will be repeated, and the abundant supply of plant food will begin to diminish. Dry seasons are the first to show what may be expected, and it is well to prepare for that which will surely come if the system is not changed.

In another column the opinion of a few farmers in Southern Manitoba is given on the question of fall and spring plowing. The latter may have some advantages, but in Manitoba, perhaps more particularly than in the Territories, all the fall plowing possible should be done. Where it can be done before the growth stops, it is undoubtedly a great weed destroyer, and in any event it at least makes it possible to get the grain sowed early, which is very important everywhere. The day is fast approaching, if it is not already here, when the land will be too valuable to admit of improper cultivation.