

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE

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Indian Head Experimental Farm.

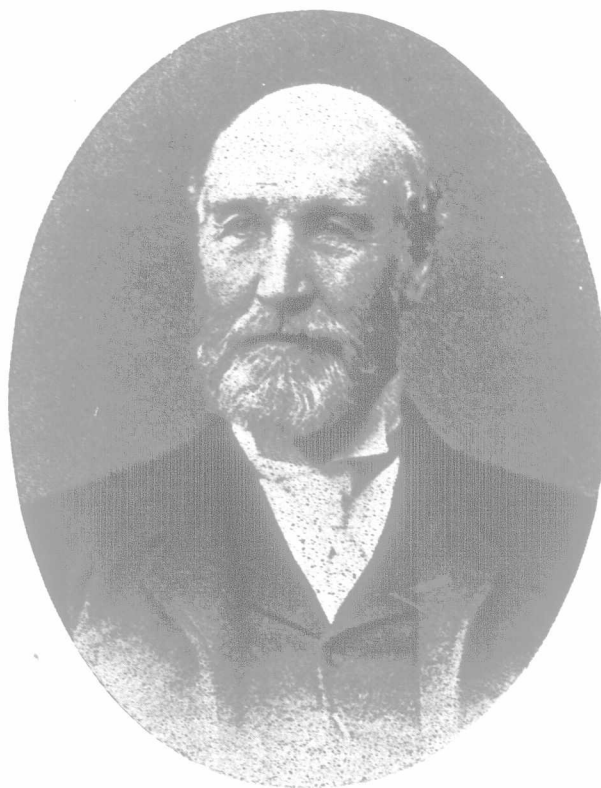
On the posters advertising the Indian Head Fair equal prominence was given to remind people of the opportunity afforded of visiting the Experimental Farm, and rightly so, for undoubtedly the Farm forms one of the best possible attractions, and as an educator in agricultural and horticultural matters cannot be surpassed. This season the Farm looks better than ever it did. The trees have made a wonderful growth, and the grain plots could not look better. With a staff of fourteen men during the summer months, Supt. Mackay is able to keep everything in model shape. Approaching the Farm, one cannot but be impressed with the transformation that has been wrought by the growth of trees and shelter belts in comparison with the bare, treeless farms in the neighborhood. In addition to the large blocks of trees along the western and northern boundaries of the Farm, there are, besides the large nursery plots, ten miles of avenue trees and hedges, all of which are kept trimmed and cultivated. One of the great secrets of successful tree-growing in this country is thorough cultivation and frequent stirring of the surface to keep the moisture in the soil and the weeds and grass in subjection. Insects or disease seldom attack trees that are making a healthy, vigorous growth. Since the shelter belts and hedges have become established, the ornamental shrubs and small fruits are making marked progress, and in many of the sheltered plots beautiful things are growing nicely that were until recently considered not hardy. The winter of '98 and '99 proved very trying on some of the more tender things, even the American cottonwood being badly damaged: so much so that Mr. Mackay considers them unfit for single planting, and proposes replanting the avenue of cottonwoods with maples or elms. Some of the sample hedges are very beautiful. One of the best small hedges for bordering a flower garden is the native snowberry, which makes an even, compact hedge. The Asiatic maple is one of the most beautiful, and seems perfectly hardy. The Caragana, or Siberian pea, is also a standard and perfectly hardy. The native buffalo berry also makes a fine hedge. Small fruits, as a rule, were bearing well, raspberries being a very fine crop, with the Dr. Reider, a red, again well ahead of all others, both as to hardiness, yield of fruit, and flavor. The flower beds, both annuals and perennials, were a mass of bloom, and the holiday-makers could hardly resist the temptation of carrying off armfuls of the lovely blossoms.

Owing to the unfavorable spring, field roots are not as fine a crop as last year. The grain plots are simply magnificent, and the scores of varieties of wheat, oats and barley give promise of record yields. The hay crops are excellent, Brome and native rye grass surpassing all others in yield and quality. These grasses were well harvested by August 3rd, and one plot of Brome that had been weighed yielded five tons of hay per acre. The small herd of cattle that is maintained on the Farm had free access to some Brome grass at one end of their pasture, and the herd was in splendid condition.

Some Brome grass sod was being backset at the time of our visit, and was turning over nicely rotted, breaking up mellow and fine, with the soil filled with root fiber, just the thing to prevent light land from drifting and heavy land from running together and baking. Almost everywhere this Brome grass seems to do well, giving good results as to yield of hay and pasture.

An Object Lesson from a Farmer's Life.

The recent advancement of a lifelong farmer to the highest position in the gift of the Canadian Parliament is an object lesson to every young farmer and farmer's son in the Dominion. It discloses the possibilities that are within reach of any worthy young man in this truly democratic country, and proves that no youth need leave the ranks of agriculture to find the path to eminence in public life, if his ambitions run in that direction. A few days ago, Mr. Thos. Bain, M. P. (now Hon.), was the unanimous choice of the House of Commons for the position of Speaker, left vacant by the death of that distinguished parliamentarian



HON. THOS. BAIN, M. P.

Newly-chosen Speaker of the Canadian Parliament.

and literary man, Sir J. D. Edgar. The leader of the Government, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, in proposing Mr. Bain for this responsible office, pronounced an eulogium upon his character, his attainments, his special qualifications for the office, and his experience that would have been "elevating" to a less modest man, particularly when that old statesman, Sir Charles Tupper, in approving the choice, said he desired heartily to endorse every word the Premier had uttered. On both sides of the House the selection was received in the most kindly manner. Truly we may say in these days, as the old song puts it, that "the farmer is the man." The son of a Scotch Presbyterian farmer (Walter Bain, of Stirlingshire), Hon. Mr. Bain has followed farming as his business all his life, and never lived anywhere else till about twelve years ago, when he retired to the town of Dundas, Wentworth Co., Ont., within two miles of his old home farm he had lived on from 1847 to 1851, his later farm being in the same township (West Flamboro), but a few miles further off. He was but three years old when he came with his father to this country, so that he encountered nearly all the circumstances of the pioneer farmer's life. From early years he was an omnivorous reader of good books, acquiring a sound education and a ready command of pure and forceful English. The father served as a municipal councillor, and the son followed in his footsteps, finally becoming Warden of Wentworth County, entering Parliament in 1872. There his gifts naturally brought him to the front. He was identified with the Agricultural Committee since 1873 and Chairman of it since 1896. Its labors for the session just closed were practically concluded

when Mr. Bain was chosen Speaker, so that his final report was handed over to Mr. John McMillan, M. P., to present to the House. A prudent but progressive statesman, his practical knowledge of farming has been of very great service upon that committee to the agricultural interests of the Dominion. A man of capacity and resource, with reserve power, self-possessed and impartial, his face, as shown in the engraving which graces the place of honor on this page, discloses the frank and genial gentleman that he is. It affords the FARMER'S ADVOCATE much pleasure to extend, on behalf of our farmers and stockmen, hearty congratulations to Mr. Bain upon his well-deserved advancement.

Indian Head Summer Fair.

The third annual summer fair held by the amalgamated agricultural societies of Fort Qu'Appelle, Qu'Appelle Station and Indian Head was held at the latter place on August 2nd and 3rd, and was, from the standpoint of attendance, at least, a decided success. Excursions were run from Moosomin and Moose Jaw that brought in large crowds to visit the Experimental Farm and attend the fair. The local attendance was also good. The big circus which preceded the fair but a few days did not prove sufficient attraction to the majority of farmers, and did not prevent them from attending their own show. President Mr. Angus Mackay and Secretary A. W. Sherwood, assisted by an able board of directors from the amalgamated societies, spared neither time nor energy in making the affair a success. A good programme of sports, races and acrobatic performance was given each day. Lieut.-Gov. Forget, in opening the fair, was presented with a very neat address, to which he replied in a few appropriate words. The prize list was well arranged, and the money prizes offered were liberal, but the live stock and several other departments were much smaller than they should have been had not the farm work been so far behind, owing to the exceeding backwardness of the past spring.

The horses were judged by Dr. Burnett, V. S., of the Mounted Police Force, Regina. The competition was very limited, except in a few sections. The farmers of the district are too much engrossed in growing wheat to give much attention to raising horses, and the season had been very hard on the work horses. J. McLean, manager of the Sunbeam Farms, showed several good young things in the draft classes, also a fairly good draft team. Jonathan Booth, Geo. Lang, of Indian Head, and A. Geddes, of Sintaluta, also showed draft teams of fairly good merit. John Boden had in the Clydesdale stallion, Sir Arthur's Heir, bred by John E. Smith, of Brandon, and a son of his well-known Sir Arthur, a horse of good scale, clean, hard bone, excellent feet, and good quarters. Unfortunately, he had no competition, as it would have taken a good one to beat him. Reeve Stephens showed the Standard-bred stallion, Brix, and a number of his get were also shown.

The immediate vicinity of Indian Head cannot as yet be called a cattle country, and the stockmen of the outlying districts must have considered the distance too great to drive in their stock. As it was, this department was very poorly filled, and the judge, Mr. John A. Turner, of Millarville, Alta., had very little to do. F. T. Skinner, Katepwe, had forward several entries, among them some nice things, but all in field condition. Geo. Solton, Indian Head, entered one bull. The aged cow class brought out the strongest competition, and among the lot were several really fine animals, straight, level, thick-fleshed cows. R. Smith, Fort Qu'Appelle, was first with a cow of John Gardhouse's (Highfield, Ont.) breeding; F. Puxley, Indian Head, second; and T. Skinner third. A very handsome Holstein cow and bull calf were shown by A. Davidson, Indian Head.

The grade class was throughout fairly well filled, mostly from the Fort, the principal prizewinners being Geo. Reid, J. A. McDonald, and N. Foster, all of Fort Qu'Appelle.

Two very nicely fitted pairs of Shropshire grades were shown by Frank Shephard, manager of the Bell Farm. J. Fessant, Edgeley, also showed some grades.

There was a small exhibit of swine, mostly in the grade classes. A much better poultry exhibit was made than is generally seen at the local fairs.

One would expect to find a big exhibit of grain in such a celebrated wheat section, but it was not!