

It is not generally known that corn is the greatest cereal crop grown in the United States, both in regard to quantity and value. Indeed, as regards the latter, it exceeds all other natural products. A would-be wise acre interrupted the writer a few days ago in making a statement similar to the above, with the remark that it was nonsense to talk about corn being the leading crop of the United States. "Why," went on this know-it-all, "Isn't wheat called the leading cereal? And doesn't everybody know that wheat is the great crop of the continent?" Now, what are the facts? According to the United States Bureau of Agriculture, the value of the corn crop of that country is \$927,000,000 annually. This is nearly one-third more than the annual value of the wheat crop, which is placed at \$440,000,000. Moreover, it must be considered that corn has a sort of double value, as it appears again in the shape of pork, which latter stands sixth on the list in value. Dairy products come third, or about three-fifths of the value of corn. Hay stands fourth, beef fifth, cotton seventh and poultry products eighth. Now as to quantity, the corn crop of the United States for 1887 is estimated at 1,590,000,000 bushels which is 282,000,000 bushels below the average. An average corn crop for the United States would therefore be 1,872,000,000 bushels, against an estimated wheat crop this year of about 430,000,000 bushels. The number of bushels of corn grown in the United States is thus seen to be about four times greater than wheat.

THE Manitoba railway situation is now doing service as a subject for illustration by the comic papers of New York. A late issue of *Puck* contains a cartoon showing a Red River cart loaded with bags of grain labled Minneapolis, St. Paul & Chicago. The cart itself is supposed to represent Manitoba, drawn by the sturdy horse of public sentiment, and it moves steadily forward and over the blocks of monopoly, injunctions, spur track and Government interference placed in its way. The reins are held by a farmer, who evidently views with disdain the petty obstructions to his progress. The locatian is marked by a way post pointing to Canadian markets 700 miles of wilderness, and United States, 60 miles. Of course *Puck* is a "little off" in some of its features. The idea of a Red River cart drawn by a heavy horse, and driven by a white farmer, will be somewhat amusing to people here, who now consider the cart an obsolete institution, or at best only a relic of the old days, when the half-breed, now a comparatively insignificant factor in the population, ruled the roost. *Puck* is also a little astray on the trade aspect of the case. The idea that Manitobans are fighting to gain an opening to United States markets has no doubt been engendered from reading Eastern Canadian papers, such journals having put forward this feature as an argument in favor of monopoly. What Manitoba wants is free railroads and reasonable freight rates on her exports to the seaboard, east and west or wherever else they may go, as well as less exorbitant freight charges on her general merchandise trade. The cartoon, however, expresses the situation in some respects more

forcibly than it could be given in words, and will be appreciated by those familiar with the subject.

MANY Manitoba settlers have in times past seriously handicapped themselves by purchasing extensively expensive agricultural implements, which their circumstances did not necessitate. A few years ago it was the rule to commence farming by investing heavily in implements, whilst as a matter of fact, in some instances many of these implements should not have been purchased for a few years. This heavy investment in implements will account for a good many failures on the part of settlers. In fact, the majority of our settlers of a few years standing have placed themselves in straightened circumstances by purchasing machinery in advance of requirements. The foregoing remarks apply more forcibly to settlers who located here during the times of inflation, when settlers expected to get wealthy in a year or so. Still, even yet there is a tendency to assume liability for machinery which could be dispensed with for a year or two longer. If the farmer have cash to invest, he may safely discount the future by going in a little steeply for implements which he could get along without for a year or so. But when these articles are purchased on time, as is the case in a majority of instances, it is undoubtedly an unwise plan for the farmer to burden himself with machinery which he could have managed to have got along without for some time in the future. It would be better for him to put up with inconveniences rather than tax himself in this way. Unless the ready cash is at hand, the purchase of implements should only be made as the development of the farm actually requires, and allowance should be made for an occasional failure of the crops. Many farmers are now struggling along under a heavy load of debt, contracted by purchasing implements a few years ago, which are hardly yet an absolute necessity to them. The farmer with less than fifty acres in crop had better hire his cutting done than go into debt for an expensive binder. The prosperous farmers are those who have worked along gradually but steadily, and who have not gone into debt too heavily on future prospects. The implement dealers thoroughly understand the situation, and of late they have as a rule refrained from pressing their implements upon farmers whom they considered not actually in need of the articles.

WHILST considering the great richness of the virgin prairie soil of Western Canada, it has frequently been a matter for conjecture as to the length of time which this soil will retain its strength under successive cropping and without fertilizing. The custom in vogue among many farmers of burning the straw, has frequently been condemned as wasteful, and one which in course of time would tell severely upon the fertility of their lands. There is no system of manuring the land on an extensive scale practicable here, other than returning to the soil a portion of the strength taken from it, represented in the vegetable fibre. It is well known that lands in the Red River valley in the vicinity of Winnipeg, have been cropped for a long series of years without any apparent reduction

in the fertility of the soil, though nothing in the shape of artificial fertilizers had been used. The result of successive cropping on the Dalrymple Farm, in Red River valley in Dakota, as published in the *Northwestern Miller*, of Minneapolis, will be interesting in this connection: "In answer to the question whether successive cropping caused a decreasing yield, the yield per acre for ten successive years was taken and an average struck, which is herewith appended:

Year.....	1877	'78	'79	'80	'81	'82	'83	'84	'85	'86
Bushels..	20½	16½	19½	23	17½	17½	17½	19.2	16.2	22.2

It will be seen from this that an average crop of 18 bushels and 55 lbs., or nearly 19 bushels per acre has been gathered for ten years. In the matter of oats the yield varies much more, but with a good average, as follows:

Year.....	'77	'78	'79	'80	'81	'82	'83	'84	'85	'86
Bushels.....	68	42	25	62	51	42	42	43	41	51

Average of oats for ten years, 47 bushels to the acre." The above does not show any apparent deterioration in the fertility of the soil, though it has been the custom to burn the straw, and nothing in the direction of fertilizing has been done. Still it does not prove that in a few more years the land may not show signs of failing. It has been the custom on the Dalrymple farm to summer fallow at regular intervals. There are objections to straw fertilizers, on the ground that it assists in propagating weeds, whilst the summer fallow is the best means available of destroying the weeds. If the latter will therefore answer to keep up the fertility of the soil, it will undoubtedly be the means adopted to secure this end.

THE Regina Leader has made a most wonderful discovery. The Leader believes that the Minneapolis millers are at the bottom of the "Winnipeg agitation." Hear it: "The Yankee millers are shrewd enough to see that if the Northern Pacific gains admission into Manitoba, they can get hold of our superior wheat. It is true they have a surplus of wheat of their own, but only of ordinary quality, and they are willing to pay a big price for our hard wheat. Let the Manitoban Government accomplish its object, and American Railways, American millers and American dealers will reap the benefits of its abundant harvest. In opposing the agitation, the Dominion Government is simply doing its best to keep the wheat trade in the hands of our own millers and our own carriers." What a precious piece of logic is contained in the above paragraph. The Minneapolis millers "are willing to pay a big price for our wheat," but we must not sell it to them. We would deprive our monopoly railroad of its exorbitant profits upon our wheat, to the detriment of a few Eastern millionaires, and that would certainly be a crying disgrace to Manitoba. It would certainly never do to allow our farmers to avail themselves of these "high prices" which the Minneapolis millers are so anxious to pay for our wheat. They would be becoming bloated capitalists and our merchants would get wealthy selling them goods, and we would be driven to the necessity of forming anti-capitalist societies, and perhaps be obliged to import Henry George and Dr. McGlenn to agitate against the accumulation of wealth. The welfare of the country demands that the farmers