

# THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE.

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AND N.-W. T.

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## Crop Conditions.

An unusually late seeding, followed by a cold, wet, lingering June, throughout which there was comparatively little growth, except of grass, gave the pessimist a chance to croak. July, however, opened, after a few smart clearing showers in the wheat sections, warm and sunny, and vegetation responded with a rash. At this writing, grain is but little behind its average advancement, and with favorable weather from now on, harvest will be in good time. Reports from our correspondents in almost every district indicate that the crop will be a magnificent one. The straw is not as heavy as one would expect from so moist a spring, and the stand is, generally speaking, strong. All kinds of grain seem to be equally good and uniform. The acreage injured by wet will be very small, only very low-lying, undrained lands and river bottoms being seriously affected. The hay crop is abundant, all cultivated grasses having done remarkably well. Some wild-hay sloughs are, of course, flooded, and will not be available this season. Hay has fallen in a few localities. If we get extreme heat there will doubtless be damage done by hail. Insurance can, however, be obtained at reasonable cost now, and those in districts subject to such visitation should protect themselves.

Stock have done well. There has been little trouble from flies, and with the cool weather, abundant grass and no lack of water, cattle have had an enjoyable season so far. The range cattle are now running pretty freely and their condition is good.

## Cultivating the Prairie Sod.

It is reported that a rancher near Calgary has succeeded in growing a special prairie cultivar of sorghum by growing up the sod-bound prairie and then stimulating the grasses to grow more luxuriantly. It is also said that the McCormicks have made up the patent and purpose mandarin and other varieties. The work is not a new one, but it is being done for the first time. The Experiment Station, however, experimented with the hard-panned sod, and also sowing various varieties of sorghum on disked sod, but none of these have been proven satisfactory.

## Farm Siftings.

Those of us who take an interest in agricultural education have been patiently waiting for the report of the Royal Commission appointed twelve months or more ago to look into the question of an agricultural college for Manitoba. Probably the commissioners have been too busy with their summer-fallows to bother with affairs of state.

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One thing certain, there will be no Manitoba College of Agriculture for a year or so yet. Better send some of our boys to the Ontario Agricultural College in the meantime. As that institution is growing in popularity, it will be necessary to make application early to obtain entrance.

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There have been a good many picnics this summer, but very few Farmers' Institute meetings. The season has been much against the holding of farmers' meetings, what with the wet weather, late seeding, bad roads and delayed farm work generally. However, let us hope the authorities will make extra preparation for a good strong campaign next winter. We want men who can talk on subjects of interest in the localities to which they are sent and who know what they are talking about. Send the right men and there will be big audiences.

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It's time now to overhaul the binders, secure any needed repairs, see that the canvases are all in order, buy good quality of machine oil and a first-class binder whip.

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The following item from an exchange is pertinent—

"The constant buying of new farming implements keeps many a farmer's nose on the grindstone, and has sent many into bankruptcy. Some farmers seem to be unable to resist a windy agent, and buy what they do not need. Thousands of half-worn tools are thrown aside for new ones that are no better. This is one of the greatest wastes on the farm. Buy good implements, and take the best care of them, and they will last nearly a lifetime. It is always best to bring every implement home at night that is used during the day, and house it if the weather is the least suspicious. It takes but a minute to run an implement under a shed, and if a rain should come on during the night it will be kept dry. Rain rusts iron and swells wood. Rust soon destroys iron and steel, especially the threads of bolts and the more delicate parts of a machine, while the swelling and shrinking of wood checks and rots it. All the most successful farmers I know most invariably bring in the tools at the close of the day's work. When an implement is taken apart and stored away for the season, it should have a new coat of paint. The paint should be thinned with oil, then it can be applied quickly."

## The Cut Arm Plowing Match.

The second annual plowing match of the Stirling Agricultural Society was held at Cut Arm, a few miles south of Saltcoats, on June 26th. Mr. and Mrs. Mess, on whose farm the match was plowed, entertained the plowmen as well as those who came to witness the contest. The thirteen contestants started promptly at nine o'clock, upon the hoisting of the signal flag by the Secretary, Mr. Hugh Porter. (This is a point that could, with profit, be taken note of by other societies in conducting plowing matches.)

The judges were Messrs. Kaywood and Melville, while Messrs. John Meal and Wm. Sangster placed the awards on the competitions for the prizes offered for teams, etc. In addition to the teams, a number of specials were given with the object of making some fun. The list of winners is given below:

Plowing—1st (cup winner)—W. T. Thompson; 2nd (\$7)—Thos. Muir; 3rd (\$6)—Jno. Green; 4th (\$5)—W. B. Thompson; 5th (\$4)—R. Green; 6th (\$3)—A. Capling; 7th (chain)—G. Mess; 8th (chain)—A. Hamilton.

Best teaming—R. Green. Best finish—T. Muir. Ours and his—J. Ritchie.

Plowman doing his work in most workmanlike manner—A. Hamilton. Best working plow—T. Muir. First to finish and in prize list—W. B. Thompson.

Plow Teams—Best mated team—W. B. Thompson. Tallest team out—H. Porter. Best kept team—T. Muir. 2nd—W. B. Thompson. Best kept harness—J. Ritchie.

Steepest Last married man—T. Muir. Oldest plowman—A. Hamilton. Youngest plowman—J. Ritchie. Man with largest family—G. Mess. Best dressed team—W. B. Thompson. Oldest plowman—A. Moore. Smallest plowman—A. Capling.

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## Showing and Judging.

The benefits derived by breeders and manufacturers from exhibiting their products, the result of their enterprise and skill, at agricultural and industrial exhibitions, were in part set forth in an article in our last issue. We purpose now to pursue the subject a little further, and to advance some ideas that from experience and observation have occurred to us as being of interest to exhibitors and judges. Success in exhibiting live stock depends primarily on the production or selection of superior animals, and, secondarily, on their proper feeding and preparation for the show-ring, in order that they may show for all they are worth and make the best possible impression on the eye and mind of the judge. To make the best showing, the special feeding and fitting should not be limited to a short period, but had better be a gradual process, so that there may be no forcing, which is always liable to produce indigestion or other ailment, and thus defeat its purpose. An overfed or excessively fat animal, especially if from lack of sufficient exercise its legs have become stocky or crooked and its action clumsy and awkward, almost invariably makes an unfavorable impression on a competent judge, and leads him to seek for something more useful looking in the competing list. Heavy feeding with heating, concentrated foods is liable to put on rolls of hard-feeling fat instead of an even distribution of springy flesh and the quality of hide and hair that is pliable and pleasant to handle and is the result of the feeding of properly-balanced rations of mixed grains and oil cake. This, together with plenty of exercise, blanketing and hand-rubbing, and the polishing of horns, where there are such, the trimming of inequalities, and the training to walk gracefully and stand in the best positions, are parts of the needed preparation that may prove to be essentials in a close competition. But, back of all this, there must be the proper type of animal in conformation and quality to catch the trained eye of the expert judge, for no matter how large nor how smooth and well fitted the animal may be, if it be not of the approved type that meets the demands of present-day markets, and if a male lack the quality known as character, which indicates probable prepotency as a sire, or if a female fail to show a proper degree of femininity in head and neck and in general appearance, its chances to win are at once discounted. Size with quality and approved type is all right, but without these latter qualities it may be regarded as a disadvantage; indeed, abnormal size is not desirable in either breeding or show animals, while the happy medium in this regard, in either meat- or milk-producing animals or horse stock, is more likely to please the taste of an up-to-date judge.

When it is considered, as we believe is generally admitted, that the judges by their decisions, to a very considerable extent, set the standard of desirable type in the various breeds and classes of live stock, the need for care in their selection becomes clearly apparent, as their position is one of great responsibility, requiring a cool, clear head, careful consideration and discriminating judgment. It is not the purpose of this article to discuss the perennial question of the advantage of employing one judge or more than one for a class, though we do not hesitate to proclaim our preference for the single-judge system as the one most likely to impress a man with a due sense of the seriousness of his responsibility and the one most likely to bring about uniformity of type in the various breeds, a consummation, it seems to us, very desirable, if it means a uniformity of usefulness and excellence combined with attractiveness. Without presuming to lecture judges, we may be permitted to suggest that, from watching the work of those officiating, it has appeared to us that the work is simplified and made more satisfactory to both judges and spectators if the animals in classes shown on the halter are passed around the ring in procession, and a few of the best drawn out, from which the final selection of the winners is made, these being placed in the order of the judge's rating; and the educative value of his work to the on-lookers is enhanced by his placing the whole class in order of merit, according to his judgment. By this means the distinctive type he aims to mark with his approval may be seen in so far as it can be shown with the material at hand and the consistency of his work be made manifest.