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EDITORIAL.

Seed-time and Harvest.

A careful and practical consideration of sowing and reaping in all operations, individual, commercial or agricultural, shows that, on the average, much depends on the precautions taken in connection with work done in the early stages. It is so with seeding. Now, when the husbandmen are busying themselves with seeding operations, the importance of thoroughness in all details cannot well be over-impressed. Low-grade seed and slipshod cultivation may give a fair crop, if Providence is kind with rain and other weather conditions. But the thrifty farmer so prepares his land and so selects his seed that he attains fair returns when the elements have not been so favorable—he has concluded that the cheapest insurance in farm practices is strong, clean seed, planted seasonably in a rich, mellow seed-bed. Continuous cropping, too, without returning plant food to the soil, brings certain disaster. For the next few weeks, however, special attention can be given to the quality of seed used, and the soil conditions furnished. For late-sown crops, it may still be possible to apply manure where it is needed.

Specific instructions cannot readily be given for seed-bed preparation. If such were the case, farmers could proceed mechanically, without making use of the brains with which they have been endowed. Experience on the fields reveals to every observant cultivator a certain condition of the soil that gives best results. On many farms this condition can be brought about only by different treatment in different fields, and sometimes in different parts of the same field. In some cases a double stroke of a disk harrow may be necessary, while in others a judicious use of spring-tooth cultivator will give just as good results, with much less labor of men and teams. Many implements are provided for the work. A selection must be made, depending on the nature of the soil. In some cases it may be advisable to have a variety of implements for cultivation purposes to meet soil conditions brought about by changes of weather.

Lose no time after the land is in fit condition to be worked, but put forth every effort to have thorough work done on every acre. On heavy, rolling land, time may often be saved and a more favorable condition of the seed-bed insured by giving one stroke with the harrow on the high parts, which dry first. This conserves moisture, prevents baking, and expedites the work of preparation when one is ready to go ahead and fit that field for the drill.

The question should not be, "How often should I harrow?" but, "In what condition is the seed-bed?"

Tripod of Successful Seeding Practice.

Timeliness, thoroughness and despatch are the tripod of successful practice in spring seeding and seed-bed preparation. In regard to earliness, experiments conducted by Prof. Zavitz at the Ontario Agricultural College indicated that, for every day's delay in seeding after the first week in which seeding took place, there was an average decrease of approximately one bushel per acre in the yields of spring cereals harvested. There is each spring a certain period, sometimes early and sometimes late, but always observable, when all life is quickened into activity, and vegetation bursts forth from the earth. That is the time to sow most of our spring grains. Spring wheat should come first, then barley or oats, and finally

peas and corn. The wise farmer will have all in readiness betimes to rush the seeding operations when the crucial moment arrives. It looks bad to see a man starting out to spring-plow for oats when others are using the drill, and the usual result of such tardiness is a meager crop.

But an early start is of only moderate avail unless the work be then despatched with all practicable speed. This demands fast-working implements drawn by at least three—better four or more—strong, well-fed, judiciously-conditioned horses. Economy of human labor demands this. Those who haven't such implements may sometimes double up to advantage by attaching a harrow behind the roller, and hitching four horses to the roller tongue. This is better than compelling a wife or daughter to tag around after one of the teams. We must study to save time and wages. One man can, in most cases, drive four horses as well as two, and, if riding, he usually has a snap at that.

Thoroughness we have elsewhere endeavored to impress. On refractory or weedy lands, particularly, it is of the utmost importance, and should never be sacrificed to speed. Upon the nature of the seed-bed largely depends the start obtained by the baby plant, and the start is half the race.

The Clydesdale Authority.

Again and again our Scottish correspondent has inquired who is our recognized official authority in matters pertaining to Clydesdale registration. Theoretically, it might be presumed that the Secretary-Treasurer of the Clydesdale Horse Association of Canada would be the official interpreter and exponent of registration conditions. Unfortunately, the present incumbent of that position has scarcely won such a reputation for reliability of counsel and accuracy of information as would justify reposal of confidence in that quarter. As instancing the habit of inaccuracy which has so often perplexed our live-stock editor, who has had to do with the editing of the Clydesdale Association Secretary's communications to the press, we quote from the latest letter to hand from that officer. Correcting a circular previously sent out from his office, he says: "Information has since been received from the Canadian Live-stock Records Office," etc. This would seem to indicate that, however the situation may nominally stand, the real repository of authentic information is the National Live-stock Records office, in Ottawa.

Grain-sheaf Exhibition.

By way of further stimulating an interest in the production of superior crops, the Ontario Department of Agriculture has made arrangements with the Directors of the Canadian National Exhibition to have a sheaf exhibit at Toronto at this year's show. The competitions in standing field crops and the display of threshed grain from prizewinning fields has proved to be of great educational value. Now, with attention to the intermediate stage—the sheaf of ripe crop—given prominence at the greatest agricultural exhibition in the world, visiting farmers should be enthused to a much greater degree.

But the value comes not only to those who compete. Others, seeing what has been accomplished, take steps to secure seed of superior quality for the following season. And so the campaign goes on. The competitions are doing good missionary work. Indications are that, in time, agricultural products will receive their share of attention at the Canadian National.

Seed-fair Features.

Features given prominence at Seed Fairs held throughout Canada during the winter months have done much to bring before the public the importance of thoroughly clean and vital seed. The presence of foul weeds disqualify an entry, and uniform plumpness is given preference. Exhibitors generally have been satisfied with the success of these efforts to popularize the use of such seed throughout the Dominion. Extensive sales, at an advance over market price, have been the reward to those who exhibit.

Occasionally, an over-zealous individual resorts to methods that tend to defeat the purpose of the seed fair—he hand-picks his sample. This cannot be objected to, provided he has the required quantity of similar grain in his granary, and is willing to exercise equal care in hand-picking what he may dispose of for seeding purposes. An interesting case came to light a short time ago at an Ontario seed fair, where an exhibitor admitted he hand-picked his sample in order to beat a neighbor. While the eagle-eyed judge was placing the awards, he was surprised to find his entry disqualified, because of the presence of wild oats. Evidently, he had forgotten to "pick" the bag.

The seed fairs are doing good work for those who take part, and also for Canadian agriculture. The general quality of the exhibits at next year's fairs can be improved, if due precautions are taken in seeding and in removing weeds during the summer.

Job Wanted.

At the annual meeting of the Dominion Swine-breeders' Association, in February, it was suggested that a delegation be sent to Denmark to study Danish methods of breeding, feeding and marketing hogs. After brief discussion, the proposition was referred to the executive. Little enthusiasm has since been manifested, although the idea was broached at a recent conference between the Dominion Minister of Agriculture and a deputation from the Association aforesaid.

The uninformed reader may feel disposed to make light of this valuable suggestion as designed merely to secure a sort of junketing trip for a few would-be commissioners who would like a trip to Europe at Government expense. The initiated, however, will readily recognize the urgent necessity of a Canadian pork commission to Denmark as a means of ferreting out the minute and jealously-guarded secrets of those intricate patented processes by which our astute Scandinavian friends and rivals are "putting it over us" in the bacon business. There can be no doubt whatever that the Danes studiously preserve the strictest confidence concerning their methods of breeding, feeding, packing and marketing, particularly with regard to that most extraordinary principle of co-operation of which we have heard such significant and curiosity-awakening allusions from time to time. Doubtless, also, they have secrets by which they cause their sows to produce three or four litters a year, and semi-digested feeds which produce unheard-of growth. These things we should by all means find out.

If some capable Canadians, such as Prof. Day, had only visited Denmark a few years ago, and published throughout Canada the result of their inquiries; if the Dominion Live-stock Commissioner's Branch, the Dominion Experimental Farms, and the various Provincial Departments of Agriculture had published reports and bulletins enlightening us concerning Danish methods of production and co-operation; if Farmers' Institute lecturers had informed us as to a few elementary