

MY OPINION ON SOME MATTERS NUMBER 9

I HEAR FARMERS' GRIEVANCES MAGNIFIED.

I agree in the main with those who complain about the way farmers in the Canadian West have been imposed upon by divers interests—I mean I agree that there is ground for the complaint, but I cannot agree that it is wise to air grievances on all possible occasions. It has always been thus in a new country or in a new line of work. When farmers came to this great prairie country their minds were too much employed with doubts of a crop or thoughts of a failure to allow them to give careful consideration to marketing their product or to join in an attempt to prevent shrewder men with lesser inclinations to toil with their hands, from getting too big a share of the returns. It required many years to arouse the people to action. The same situation developed in live stock. Ranchers could produce choice animals, but they scarcely knew what they were worth, and as long as they made something worth while were easily made believe that their steers were not choice and that big allowance must be made for hauling them to a big market centre.

Everyone admits that these grievances have been such as to warrant the one most closely interested in complaining. But what is the use of "kicking"? The main thing is to work out a remedy. Conditions now are quite satisfactory in connection with the marketing both of grain and live stock. It would have been thus years ago if there had been more action and less complaining. The trouble was that grievances were so magnified and so paraded by those who claimed to have the interests of the farmer producer at heart that many imagined they had grievances whether they existed or not.

It is true that improved transportation facilities have had much to do with bettering market conditions. However, organized, intelligent and reasonable action has been the chief factor in bringing desirable changes.

Just the other day I had a talk with one of these magnifiers of grievances. He was tongue-lashing those "sharks" in the grain exchange and bemoaning the fact that they did not know how to treat the farmer fairly and honestly. He told about being "done" out of three cents a bushel on his wheat—and said that the same thing had occurred other years.

Now such men should not forget that there are honest and honorable men in the grain business. In the particular case referred to it was the farmer who was wrong. His wheat was of a low grade and contained wild oats. He thought he should get as much per bushel as a neighbor who farmed better and was given a higher grading. However, he could not be persuaded that there are honest men in the grain business. He had heard "Mr. So-and-So" say there were not, and he knew what he was talking about.

It must be admitted that years ago certain grain dealers took undue shares of the returns from the labors of the farmer. Gradually such extortions have been growing fewer. Under present conditions there is no reason why any man should not receive fair treatment. There are many firms only too anxious to do business on a reasonable basis and to pay standard prices according to honest grading. In addition there is a grain act that will protect all concerned if they go about it intelligently.

Grievances of years ago should be allowed to drop. The world hates a "kicker," and weaknesses or wrongs can be made right much more satisfactorily by united action along rational lines.

—"ARCHIE McCLEURE."

The Farmer Suffers Least

Who is most interested in a good crop and a sure crop: the farmer, the manufacturer, the railroad man, the merchant or the banker? The more I study the problem the more it looks as though the farmer is the best fixed to stand a

poor crop, and that it hurts the others more. The farmer loses less sleep over it than any of the others, and proportionately fewer farmers fail than any of the other lines of business mentioned in a time of poor crops. The farmer can get his living from the farm, can reduce expenses and economize in a way that the others cannot. From this it is plain that it is of vital interest to all that good crops be a sure thing for each year, and each of these industries which has really grown out of the farm ought to put forth their best effort to see that the farmer handles his farm according to the best that we know of farming.

A most wonderful change has been brought about in the last two generations. Then nearly everybody lived on the land. Now less than one-third of the people get their living directly from the soil, and the other two-thirds are in one sense working for the people who live on the soil. They make machinery. They make clothes. They manufacture their grains. They build railroads to transport these grains to the factory and other products back to the farm. So that while industry has developed into this complicated system, the farm remains at the foundation of it, and as this development goes on it becomes more and more necessary that the soil shall be made to produce up to its capacity.

A vast fund of information has been worked out during the last sixty years on how to manage farms, and institutions are now at work digging out more of this kind of information. Other institutions are at work giving this to the farmer and these need every support, as the products of the soil are going to depend upon how much of this information is made use of by those who do the work, and as we have seen before all lines of industry are conditioned on the amount of crops produced, so that such institutions as experiment stations, agricultural colleges, farmers' institutes and the extension departments are advancing farming as fast as their means will allow them, and in advancing farming they advance all forms of industry. So that they might in one sense be called "the prosperity makers of the nation." The wise men of this country have realized that and support these institutions from the national treasury to some extent, but do not furnish sufficient funds for them to develop to their full capacity, so that they have been left partly dependent upon the state. The railroads are anxious for more traffic and they realize the agencies that bring it about. They were the first to furnish money to run demonstration farms. This last year the Northern Pacific

Railroad placed a train at the service of the North Dakota farmers' institute and agricultural college, that they might put apparatus, appliances and instructors on the train and in this way bring the teaching of the agricultural college to many people who would not otherwise have the opportunity of getting such instruction which would enable them to grow larger crops and to diversify their farming more. The Great Northern Railroad at one time gave away large numbers of purebred cattle and hogs that the farmers along their railroad could produce a higher quality of stock and stock that would give them a larger return for the feed. In all these cases it was a business proposition with the railroad to increase the traffic along its lines.

It is well to stop and consider the great developments that have taken place and the new duties that this devolves on us, and also to consider what it is necessary to do in order to have this development go on and in order to bring it to its highest perfection.—W. C. PALMER, N. D. Agricultural College.

HORSE

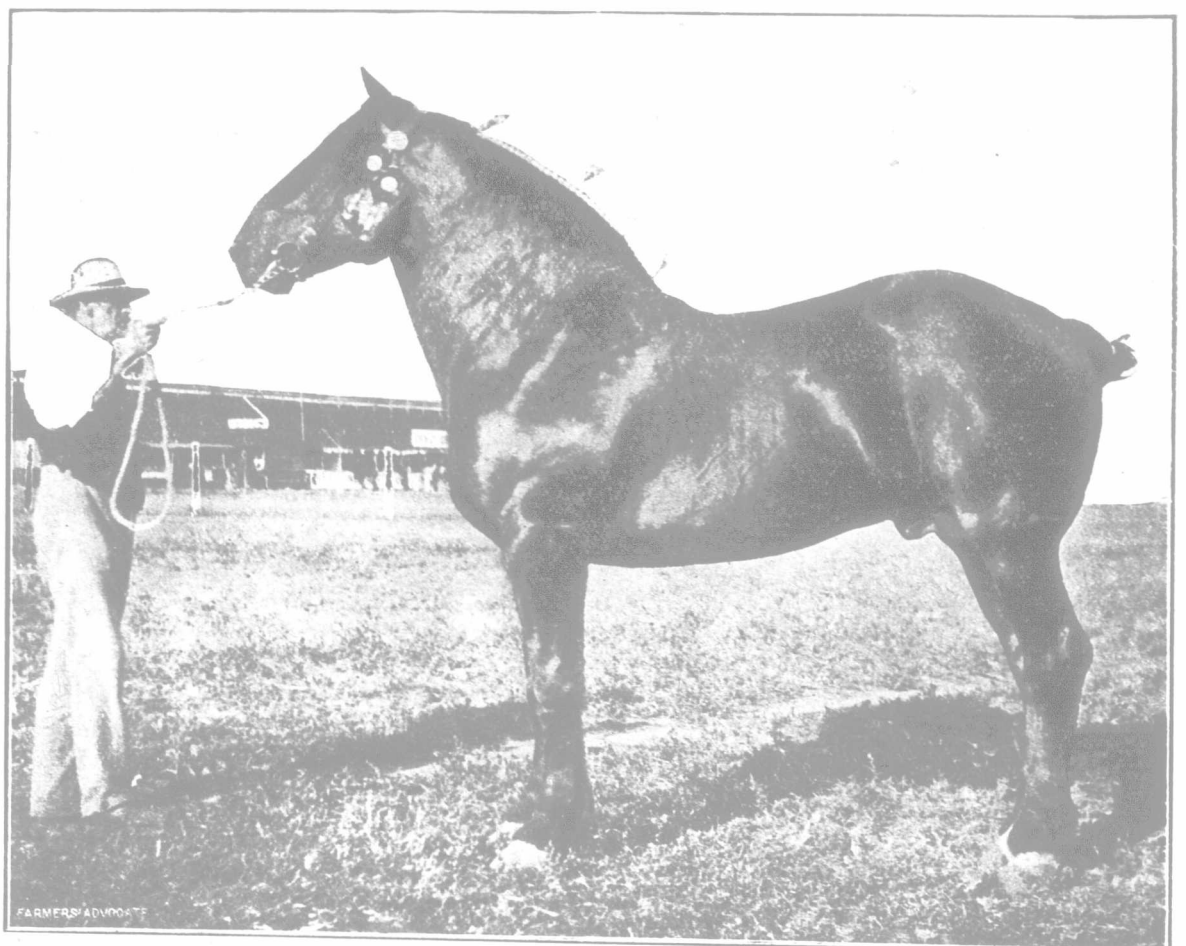
Raising Fall Foals

Discussion is invited this week on the subject of raising fall foals, whether or not it is an advisable practice for Western farmers. The letters published set forth pretty well the advantages and disadvantages of such practice, and are passed on without comment. As this question is of some considerable interest, and opinions seem to vary some, we would be glad to have readers who have had experience in the matter give the rest of us the benefit of what they have learned, or make such observations as they see fit on what is here printed. The prizes are awarded in the order in which the articles appear.

Difficulty in Foaling Mares in Fall

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

Breeding the mares to foal in the fall is probably advisable, providing one has warm stabling and the proper kind of food for the foals. Raising fall colts has been advocated at times in this country, but very few horse raisers have ever taken the advice seriously. The trouble is not that as good colts cannot be raised in winter as in summer, but in the fact that it is difficult to get the mares in foal in October, November or



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