

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE

AND HOME MAGAZINE

* AGRICULTURE, STOCK, DAIRY, POULTRY, HORTICULTURE, VETERINARY, HOME CIRCLE. *

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Guard Against Prairie Fires.

If you have not already done so, take every precaution to guard your property against any possible danger from prairie fires, and take that precaution at once.

Prosperity in the West.

With a population of some 35,000 farmers, the little Province of Manitoba produces about 60,000,000 bushels of grain this year, nearly all of it of extra quality and saved in good condition. The population engaged in farming in Assiniboia, Alberta and Saskatchewan will produce per capita almost as much. No wonder every prominent business man, manufacturer, banker, merchant or scientist who visits our wheat fields and sees the rapid growth of our towns and cities is impressed with the possibilities of our future greatness. But it is, after all, not the impressions, but the actions, of these men that tell. In Winnipeg this year over a dozen magnificent wholesale business blocks and bank buildings have been erected, and on every hand are evidences of the growth and progress of the West. Bank managers are usually most guarded in making statements relative to the country's trade. Here is what the manager of the Bank of British North America, at a general meeting recently held in London, England, says of the situation:

"A bountiful harvest in this region [Manitoba and the Northwest], if garnered in good condition, means prosperity to Canada, for although we watch with interest the steady growth of subsidiary industries, the harvest in Manitoba must, for a long time to come, be the mainspring of Canada's trade. * * * The result of this bountiful harvest in stimulating trade, both wholesale and retail, throughout the entire country cannot be overestimated."

It is frequently said now that Winnipeg will soon become the second or third city in size and importance in the Dominion, which seems likely enough, for this year's sixty million bushel crop results with little over 2,000,000 acres of land under cultivation, and there are yet some 70,000,000 acres of land in the Province fit for settlement, to say nothing of the vast resources of the Territories for grain and stock raising.

While it is a fact that wheat makes money easier and faster than any other branch of farming, still wheat-growing alone is a risky business, depletes the soil of its fertility, and is not conducive to the development of the best interests of the young men growing up on the farm, for it leaves them with a good deal of idle time on their hands, which is apt to be spent to no good about the small towns, and "money that comes easy goes easy." Whereas the breeding, feeding and care of good live stock has an elevating and refining tendency, and affords profitable and interesting employment at those seasons when the grain farmer is idle.

Very many farmers will this year have a good big cash surplus after outstanding accounts and current expenses are all paid off, and there is no doubt that, profiting by past lessons, it will be carefully invested, either in more land where this is necessary, better and more comfortable buildings, or in improved live stock. Money invested in improving the farm should as far as possible be made with a view to permanency, and it's well to bear in mind that even the very best of wheat land won't last forever, and that at its best it's none too good for producing good, profitable live stock.

Provincial Competition in Grains and Grasses.

Last year we took occasion to urge upon secretaries and managers of local agricultural societies the desirability of making good collective exhibits of grains and grass seeds at the Winnipeg Industrial. In order to encourage such an exhibit the Exhibition Association offered a much larger amount of prize money than previously, viz., \$150,

divided into three prizes of \$75, \$50, and \$25. One would have expected such liberal prizes would have stirred up some interest and brought out a good big list of entries, but, unfortunately, only one agricultural society competed. However, this cannot be put down as entirely owing to apathy on the part of the local societies, but owing to the peculiar conditions of the fall of 1898 it was very difficult to secure good samples of any kind of grain. This year, however, it is entirely different; grain of all kinds can be got of the very highest quality in almost unlimited quantities, and as the season's work is well in hand there will be more time and much better facilities for securing good collective exhibits. In strong competition the advantages of winning prizes in a provincial competition such as this are too apparent to need any reference here, and apart from this the uses such collections would be put to by the Exhibition Association for immigration purposes would be of great benefit to the district represented and great satisfaction to the individual growers. What we would suggest is that each agricultural society appoint its secretary or some suitable person to undertake the collection, preparation and care of the exhibit; that expenses of shipping, etc., be born by the society; all cash prizes won to go to the party making the collection. In order to bring the conditions and particulars of the competition before those interested we herewith reproduce them from the Winnipeg Industrial prize list of 1899, presuming that the directorate of 1900 will not make any material alterations in them:

Collective exhibit of grains and grass seeds—Open to all agricultural societies in the Province and Territories.—Best collective exhibit of grains and grass seeds—1st \$75, 2nd \$50, 3rd \$25.

All samples must have been grown in the district represented by the agricultural society making the exhibit.

Each variety of grain must be properly named, and the name of the grower and the section, township and range of the farm upon which it was grown stated.

The exhibit will be judged on the following points, the figures set after each giving the maximum per cent.: the totals of all such maximums being 100: Red Fyfe, 20; White Fyfe, 10; White oats, 15; Two-rowed barley, 10; Six-rowed barley, 10; White field peas, 10—two bushels of each; flax, 5; rye, 5; timothy, 5; Bromus grass (Bromus inermis), 5; native rye grass (A. tenerum), 5—one bushel each.

No first prize to be paid unless 80 points be scored, no second prize unless 70 points be scored, and no third prize unless 60 points be scored.

The exhibit taking first prize shall become the property of the Exhibition Association, to be used for immigration advertising purposes.

Free Distribution of Stock by the C. P. R.

The announcement has been made that the Canadian Pacific Railway Company are about to undertake the free distribution of a number of pure-bred bulls and boars to farmers in Manitoba and the Northwest Territories, with a view of improving the stock, and in the hope that the results will ultimately be an increase in the carrying trade of export cattle and animal products sufficient to reimburse them for the outlay. The report further states that one carload of Shorthorn bulls and two carloads of Berkshire and Yorkshire boars were purchased and in readiness for shipment to the West, to be distributed among farmers for free use in the neighborhood into which they are sent. Without being cognizant of the details of the Company's scheme, it would, perhaps, be premature to pass judgment; but in view of the importance of such a proposition as outlined in the press dispatches, some comment seems called for.

As to the need of the more general use of pure-bred sires, there can be no question, and as to the financial advantages that would accrue to the trans-

portation companies from larger traffic in live stock, and in live stock of better quality, there can be no question; but whether the plan proposed by the C. P. R. will effect the improvement desired is another matter. In the first place, it would seem to be a direct interference with private enterprise. The live stock breeders of Manitoba and the Northwest in establishing their herds and flocks have contributed their full quota to the running expenses and profits of the railroad companies, and now when the demand is good at fairly remunerative prices, to have the railroad company supply that demand with animals imported from the Eastern Provinces, and distributed free, does not appear to have regard to vested rights; in fact, that would be killing the men who are now doing just what the company propose doing on another scale. Of course, if the company, to begin with, purchase all the available surplus bulls and boars from the breeders of Manitoba and the Territories to include in the free distribution, then this objection may not hold.

Generally, people do not appreciate or make best use of what they get for nothing, and the class of people who will not use pure-bred sires where they can be had for the small fee usually charged will not likely sufficiently appreciate the advantages of their use to go out of their way to obtain their services even if it costs them nothing. With boars this will be particularly true, and the men in whose keeping the free-service boars are will doubtless find the expense of feeding and attending what sows may be brought in will cost more than the purchase of a boar for themselves. Many people would not only expect the free service of the boar, but free board for the sow for a week or so from the favored individual who gets the boar for nothing.

Paternalism is not generally conducive to highest results, and while all would welcome the investment of capital for the benefit and advancement of the country, still we believe that the railroad company could in other ways do more to encourage and develop the live stock industry in a natural and permanent way, which usually proves most beneficial in the long run, and at the same time not interfere with the interests of those who have for years devoted their brains, their energy and their capital in building up herds and flocks in order to supply the trade of the country.

Those conversant with agricultural matters must realize that before any marked improvement can be made in the live stock interests of a country, pure-bred methods as well as pure-bred sires must be used. One of the first things needed to improve and develop the stock industry in the Western country is better facilities for winter feeding and care of stock, and this can only be accomplished by providing better barns, and right here is where the railway company could assist by reducing the freight rates on lumber and material entering into the construction of barn buildings, as they have always done for standard grain elevators and such like concerns. The farmers of Manitoba and the Territories cannot be said to be in great need of charity, especially after harvesting such a crop as the present. Most of them could well enough afford to buy a pure-bred bull or boar, and would do so if they realized the need, and had proper facilities for keeping stock. Even the giving of a bull or a boar to a wheat farmer will not convert him into a successful mixed farmer.

Through the efforts of the breeders' associations of Manitoba and Ontario, very favorable transportation rates are now in force for pure-bred stock, which, however, principally benefit cattle rather than sheep or swine. These rates, although in comparison with ordinary freights are favorable, might be made still better, particularly on local freights, and so arranged as to benefit small breeds of stock as well as cattle.

The suggestion made by Mr. Lynch, one of the leading Shorthorn breeders of the West, who has been engaged in the business for over a quarter of