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EDITORIAL.

Our Show Reports.

We have no hesitation in believing that the FARMER'S ADVOCATE occupies a specially unique position among agricultural and live stock journals in the character and completeness of its exhibition live stock reports. The work of reporting has been done by competent and careful men, whose efforts we are pleased to know are being appreciated. We wish here to express our thanks to our numerous friends who have already expressed to us by letter their appreciation of the correctness and fullness of the reports of Toronto and Winnipeg exhibitions in late issues.

Shall We Sell Our Wheat?

The question whether it is wiser to sell wheat at the present price or to hold it for the chances of a rise is one which interests a great many farmers just now. We do not presume to give advice, but will say that so far as one can judge, the outlook is favorable for steady if not advancing prices for good sound wheat, so that we think there is little risk in holding first-class wheat, but there is no use in concealing the fact that owing to the wet harvest quite a percentage of the wheat in many sections of Ontario was more or less sprouted, and hence its market value for milling purposes is considerably depreciated. While no doubt buyers will exaggerate the extent of this depreciation in order to buy such wheat at low figures, we are assured that wheat slightly damaged by sprouting, and in which a large proportion is perfectly sound, will produce fair bread-making flour and should not be rated as low as badly sprouted samples, and for this reason fair prices should be paid, but it is nearly certain that badly sprouted wheat, or even such as is only slightly damaged, will not keep well during the hot weather of the spring months, but will be liable to turn musty, and will then be unsalable for the purpose of human food. We therefore counsel farmers to dispose of this sort as soon as they can secure a fair price for it. It should all be sold and shipped early in the winter, if not immediately, while a fair price can be obtained, and this will help the price of sound wheat during the winter and spring months.

Manitoba wheat was harvested under perfectly favorable circumstances and is of first-class quality, and the samples of new wheat from this Province shown is so much superior to the average of Ontario wheat that the price to Manitoba farmers will be nearly equal to what Ontario farmers will receive for their best fall wheat. The superior price it will bring in the markets of the world will nearly command sufficient premium over Ontario wheat to pay for the difference in extra freight charges to take it to the markets of Europe. The Manitoba farmer is now getting a good price for his wheat, perhaps as much as he can reasonably expect, and it may be wise to dispose of a large proportion of it while good paying prices are obtainable, as there is always a considerable amount of uncertainty about the markets for wheat, and there is a good deal of wisdom in the proverb, "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush."

Unfavorable Prospects for Next Year's Wheat Crop.

The excessively dry and hot weather prevailing for the last two months has seriously damaged the prospects for next year's crop of fall wheat in nearly every section of Ontario. Much of that sown has come up very unevenly, and is making so little headway that it is hardly possible that it will be in good condition to stand the effects of the coming winter, while a large proportion sown has failed to make an appearance, and late sown wheat in sections where no rain has fallen since can

hardly prove anything but a failure. These facts, while they are discouraging so far as the next crop is concerned, will have an influence in stiffening the price of the crop now in the hands of the farmers. In this connection we desire to emphasize the soundness of the principle we have urged repeatedly during the past summer, that in the preparation for fall wheat it is of the utmost importance that the plowing should be done as early in the summer as possible, preferably in July, to be followed by shallow cultivation, especially after each shower, to retain the moisture in the soil. Our observations confirm the wisdom of this advice, the only really healthy and vigorous crops of fall wheat we have seen being on land thus treated, and these are promising well for good return for the labor expended, with a hopeful prospect of a profitable harvest.

The Depression Has Lifted.

Perhaps never before in the history of Canada has the condition of the business of the country in general shown itself to be more directly influenced by the agricultural situation as during the last few weeks. In every city and manufacturing town a decidedly improved condition is being felt. Wholesale houses have not for years had such liberal orders as of late, while piano, stove, implement and other factories can scarcely keep up with their orders, and chiefly because the farmer is having a profitable year. The present wheat situation, which is decidedly favorable to all exporting countries, particularly Canada, is having a marked influence on the price of other food products. The increased value is fortunately not confined merely to those lines of which we have a shortage, such as apples and potatoes, but also to those branches of which we have an unusually large supply. The results from the crop and price of wheat in Manitoba and the Northwest Territories are to set many a hard-worked struggler on his feet and to enable many who have bought land within the last two or three years to in many cases pay off the entire indebtedness upon it. It will enable others, too, who have anxiously desired to undertake more general agriculture to build barns for live stock. In these and various other ways our Northwest rural population will have arrived at a position more to be envied than pitied. The advantages to Canadians from the advance in wheat are not confined to the "Prairie Provinces," as not for years have such yields of fall wheat been harvested in Ontario as during the past summer. From thirty to forty bushels per acre have not been uncommon on thousands of acres in the western part of the Province. But wheat is only one of the smaller products with which our people in Eastern Canada are making money. The dairy industry, which forged ahead so tremendously in several of our Provinces, has gone beyond other lines in the way of healthy financial progress. The total shipments of cheese from Montreal up to September 4th were 1,215,900 boxes, against 971,121 boxes for the same period in 1896, an increase of about 24 per cent., and this at prices considered high in any year. Besides this there is going on a very heavy fall make, as every farmer has an abundance of feed, even though the pastures have failed in many localities during the last few weeks for want of rain. It is estimated that the gross value of Canadian cheese exported this year will reach \$12,600,000. In butter the shipments have been unusually heavy. From Montreal the exports for one week during September reached 30,897 packages, being 17,147 packages more than during the previous week and 23,083 packages more than in the corresponding week of the previous year. The advance in price, too, must be considered here. The season opened at 14 cents, and now stands about 20 cents per pound, which has been equally good for dairymen and dealers.

In pure-bred live stock many feel that we are on

the verge of decidedly better times. Not in many years has there been such an active demand for good animals. Buyers have not been so numerous at the big shows for a long time; in fact, the supply is not equal to the demand. If breeders have good pure-bred stock for sale left on their hands this fall it is because the public do not know about them. In some of the breeds of cattle this is precisely the situation, while the demand for really good sheep and swine cannot be supplied with the present stock of the country. Perhaps no class of animals is in greater demand than good feeding cattle. Just in a season when we have an abundance of food we have allowed that to be taken away, even that which we seemed to have. This is especially true of some classes of our coarser feed, which, without stock to eat it, there is no profit. While this condition has a discouraging side to it, the gain many will receive in having their stock come out of winter quarters in blooming condition, instead of having to be lifted in the mornings, will compensate for other disadvantages. The situation in live stock is precisely similar in the United States, as indicated by our Chicago market correspondent. The state of our horse market, too, is fairly well pictured in our Chicago letter. The regrettable feature of this trade is that we have so few good animals with which to supply the market, as many of the horses that are going forward of late are thin and ordinary; in fact, the supply of salable good ones has been about exhausted. Well-fitted good exporters are bound to command a good figure for a number of years, or until a large new supply has been raised.

This bettered condition of the times may well be considered a "godsend," as for too long has forced economy (?) held sway. It is not to be wondered at that all mercantile business has picked up, because throughout the country hundreds of town and village merchants have been compelled to carry thousands of honest farmers' store bills from year to year, with a hope that a time would come when all would be straightened up, and now that time has come, to the advantage of all, from the farmer, who grows the nation's food, to the manufacturer, upon whose business the industrial commerce of our country depends.

Fair Management.

The comparative success of a fair depends so much on its management that we think it is well to review the fairs of each year and to resolve to profit by the experience of the past. Among the lessons which it appears to us may be learned from this year's experience is that a better arrangement should prevail in the selection of dates for holding the four principal exhibitions in Central Canada. As far as favorable weather is concerned all these, except that at Montreal, were exceedingly fortunate this year. Of course, this is a contingency which cannot with any certainty be provided against, since rain may come at any season, but as the harvest is generally later in Quebec than in Ontario it would seem to be a better arrangement for all concerned—exhibitors, visitors, and fair boards—if the dates in future were so arranged that the Toronto Exhibition should come first, to be followed by London, Ottawa, and Montreal in the order named.

Assuming that the Toronto Exhibition, on account of the larger prizes offered, is considered the leading show, it is natural that exhibitors of stock especially prefer to make their first show there, and if fairly successful they are likely to follow the circuit. We are fully persuaded that such order would result in a much larger and more uniform show of stock at the Eastern fairs in the circuit under consideration, as well as a larger attendance of visitors and greater success all 'round. It is clear that the date of the Montreal show this year was too early, and we believe that