

Tendencies in Grain Growing

Continued from Page 31

plant. With ordinary annuals, however, it is well to let the summerfallow get somewhat green. The growing plant exhausts the seed and once it is turned over or cut off, the plant is killed. It does not do, therefore, to cultivate land infested with weeds such as wild oats too often, but as soon as the weeds are up get after them. With some of the weeds such as Frenchweed it is imperative that the summerfallow be cleaned off in the fall or early in the spring. We know that this weed will live through the winter and even if it has come almost to the flowering stage will sometimes survive and bear seed early the following year."

On the whole Prof. Bedford believes that more damage occurs to the western crop from drought than from frost. A crop badly hit by drought may be almost entirely destroyed, while as a rule frosting a crop merely reduces the grade. Then the slowness in ripening of a frosted crop tends to keep the yield up and this may be satisfactory though the quality is deteriorated. Frost, he says, is becoming less and less a factor in western agriculture, while in southern Manitoba, for instance, they have had for the four or five years a series of dry seasons such as was never heard of before in the history of those districts.

The Big Swing to Marquis

With regard to the varieties of grain grown and the changes in these varieties during recent years, the most remarkable thing is the almost complete turnover from Red Fife to Marquis wheat. This statement was in accord with that made recently by a prominent grain trade official with whom I was talking. He said that it is very seldom that a car of Red Fife wheat now passing through to the terminal elevators. There are a few cars of the Stanley, Preston and other soft wheats which are grown, no doubt, by farmers who do not take interest enough in the kind of wheat they sow. Red Fife was a grand old standby for 25 or 30 years, but it has almost completely disappeared from western agriculture. "This is due," said Prof. Bedford, "to the earlier ripening of Marquis wheat. Regarding the question of earliness as compared with Red Fife this depends on conditions, including the elevation. At the Brandon Experimental Farm, for instance, experiments conducted over a period of ten years showed that Marquis on the average ripened seven days earlier than Red Fife, while at Indian Head, which is considerably higher in altitude, a difference of 11 to 12 days was noted. The difference will also vary as to the season, but on the whole, Marquis is from seven to ten days earlier than Red Fife. The vast importance of a few days in earliness has had the result of bringing the country over to Marquis wheat almost entirely within the last few years.

"For considerable time the Abundance variety of oats was the favorite. This was due to the fact that it is a great show oat, being heavier and plumper than Banner. About 15 or 20 years ago they began forsaking the Banner variety and going over to the Abundance. For a while it held first place in the estimation of farmers. Later, however, they found that it was not equal to the Banner variety as a yielder and this variety is now the favorite again, especially in the strictly oats growing districts. It is not a showy oat, but for quality and yield it is the superior of the two varieties. It is much more prolific than the Banner.

"There has been no change in the varieties of barley which hold the

popular favor. The Mensury or Manchurian, has been the favorite for many years. Many of the varieties now growing under different names are in reality selections of Mensury barley. O.A.C. No. 21 is one of these. The Mensury varieties are the most vigorous and the greatest producers, being free from damage by drought or other injuries than other varieties known here.

"The cultivation of fall rye is advancing rapidly. It has, however, received a setback this year. This, though, should not discourage farmers, as the fall wheat situation in Ontario is even more serious than the fall rye situation in the west. There, in most districts they did not succeed in saving more than 25 per cent. of the fall wheat crop. It is hardly likely, however, that they will drop the sowing of fall wheat altogether on that account. They know from experience that this is an exceptional year. The same attitude should be taken toward fall rye in the west. A severe winter and heavy spring frosts have set it back. Fall crops, as we know, are tender in the spring.

"Regarding alfalfa, it is a splendid crop but it is being neglected. It is one of the intensive crops and is not, apparently, as generally favored as it might be. However, the prospects for alfalfa growing in this country are promising."

Corn or Summerfallow

The extent to which corn growing can be substituted for summerfallowing is a question engaging the attention of many farmers. Prof. Bedford favors corn but realizes the difficulties involved in extensive corn raising. "It is hard to substitute corn for summerfallow," he said. "Where soil moisture is prevalent it comes up in the hill, where you cannot get at it. Many annual weeds, however, can be held down in the corn field. Corn land is better than summerfallow for growing a wheat crop on the next year. One of the best fields of wheat I have seen this year is owned by James Carr, of Warren, not far from Winnipeg. It is growing on corn land which was not even plowed after the corn. Of course corn got a bad set back last year and also three years ago when it was hit pretty hard by the summer frosts. Many who grew corn through this period found that they only had one good crop out of three. It cannot be grown universally. There should, however, be more of it grown. One difficulty is that of the labor shortage. With corn growing as with other things, we have of course to be reasonable in what we recommend. When, for instance, an old man is left alone on a large farm you cannot insist on advising him to follow the best methods when these entail more labor than he is able to devote to his land. In such cases we make other suggestions. For instance, the other day I was talking to such a man who had 140 acres to summerfallow. I advised him to summerfallow this during the early season and up to September 1. Then 70 acres might be sown to fall rye and the work on that acreage would then be discontinued. The other 70 acres could be cultivated in the fall, making a complete summerfallow. This would divide the fall work. It would also divide the spring work and the harvest work next season."

"From your observations, do you think farmers are paying more attention to good seed selection than they used to?" I enquired.

"They are paying much more attention to the varieties of grain they grow than formerly," he replied. "However, a great deal more attention should be paid to the selection of better seed."—R. D. Colquhoun.



Mention the Brand. Then There's No Mistake

All Round Utility

SHORTHORN steers are preferred to all others by the largest buyer of feeders on the Chicago market.

On June 10, a carload of Shorthorn steers sold on the Toronto market for \$17.15 per cwt., the highest price ever paid in Canada for a straight load of steers on an ordinary market.

Shorthorn steers dressed a higher percentage than steers of any other breed at the Chicago International Show in 1917, and a Shorthorn steer outdressed all competitors at Fort Worth Show, Texas, in 1918.

In the Canadian Record of Performance, 86 mature Shorthorn cows show an average year's production of 8402 lbs. milk, and 329 lbs. butterfat, the highest Canadian Shorthorn record being 17,723 lbs. milk, and 636 lbs. butterfat.

At Canadian sales no boom prices have been paid for Shorthorns, but the high general average of prices is the best evidence possible of the strong, healthy demand for these cattle.

For the Breeder, the Farmer, the Feeder, and the Butcher, the Shorthorn leads the van.

Write the Secretary for free publications

Dominion Shorthorn Breeders' Association

W. A. Dryden, Brooklin, Ont., President
G. E. Day, Box 285, Guelph, Ont., Sec.-Treas.

KINMEL SHORTHORNS



"MISSIE'S PRINCE"

Herd headed by the \$20,000 bull "Missie's Prince," one of the greatest sires of the breed. He is got by that great bull, "Prince Imperial," which sold at Chicago for \$10,000. My herd is one of the best and largest in the West and represents some of the finest Scotch breeding. I can supply outstanding herd bulls and females, all ages.

WRITE ME FOR FULL PARTICULARS OF BREEDING, ETC.

T. Bertram Ralphs

CALGARY, ALBERTA

Phone Rural 811

Box 2311

If you do not see what you want advertised in this issue, write and let us know, and we will put you in touch with the makers.