

## FROM REPORT OF 1889.

December 29.

'The year just passed has been one of extremes. Last winter was one of the mildest on record and March was so very fine that thousands of acres of grain were seeded from the 15th to the 31st, and at no time in the history of the country has the ground been in better condition for the reception of the seed. Immediately after seeding, however, exceptionally high winds set in, followed by extreme drought during the entire growing season. In many places the crops were injured by the winds and finally almost ruined by the succeeding dry weather. In some localities, however, where the farming has been done in accordance with the requirements of the country, the crops did fairly, and considering the excessively dry weather, remarkably well.

'The Experimental Farm suffered in company with every other farm in the country. Perhaps very few suffered as much from winds, but the dry weather, though reducing the yields, did not prove so disastrous as to many others. In this portion of the Territories at least, every settler knows the importance of properly preparing his land. For several years after the country became open for settlement every one imagined that grain would grow, no matter how put in, but now the man is devoid of reason who thinks he is sure of a crop without any exertion on his part. It is true that since 1882 we have had one year in which the land required little or no preparation for the production of an abundant crop but only too many realize the loss of the remaining years from poor cultivation.

'Our seasons point to only one method of cultivation by which we may in all years expect to reap something.

'It is quite within the bounds of possibilities that some other and perhaps more successful method may be found, but at present I submit that 'fallowing' the land is the best preparation to ensure a crop. Fallowing land in this country is not required for the purpose of renovating it, as is the case with the worn-out lands in the East; and it is a question as yet unsettled how much or how little the fallows should be worked, but as we have only one wet season during the year, it has been proved beyond doubt that the land must be ploughed the first time before this wet season is over, if we expect to reap a crop in the following year. The wet season comes during June and July, at a time when every farmer has little or nothing else to do, and it is then that this work should be done. Usually seeding is over by the 1st of May and to secure the best results the land for fallow should be ploughed from 5 to 7 inches deep as soon after this date as possible. Land ploughed after July is of no use whatever unless the rains in August are much in excess of the average. A good harrowing should succeed the ploughing and all weeds or volunteer grain be kept down by successive cultivations. A good deal of uncertainty is felt with regard to a second ploughing, some holding that it is useless; others maintaining that it is an injury; while others again have found it to give from five to ten bushels per acre more than one ploughing. So far the experiments on the Indian Head Experimental Farm have shown that by far the best returns have been received from two ploughings; and more noticeably was this case when the first ploughing had been completed in May or June. Without doubt, two ploughings cause a greater growth of straw and consequently in a wet year the grain is several days later in maturing, causing greater danger from frost; but taking the seasons so far passed, 1884 excepted, two ploughings with as much surface cultivation as possible in between, may be safely recommended.

'Above all it is of the greatest importance that the first ploughing be as deep as possible, and that it be done in time to receive the June and July rains.'

After seventeen years' further experience and observation, the following was written on this subject in the Annual Report of the Experimental Farms for 1906.