

To many in Manitoba this will be the first intimation that the administration of seed fairs has been separate from that of agricultural societies. Most people do not care who administers so long as it is well done, but every one objects to officials refusing to pull together and bungling their work. There will also be some disappointed societies who have dropped the proposal of the one Department to take up with the other when they find they were not among the "Lucky Ten." Why Ten?

The situation in connection with the seed fair management in Manitoba is given here at some length for the reason that other provinces are expected to take over this work in the future, but in doing so, it is hoped the transfer will proceed harmoniously and in a business-like manner.

The Concentration of Farm Products.

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

It would be hard to give too great emphasis to the need of modifications of a general sort in our system of agriculture. Apart from the feelings of the individual there is a fashion of a larger sort to which individual farmers, good and bad, largely conform.

The chief trouble with western farmers is that they have been stirred too deeply with the fever for expansion. This is not a bad thing. There are many fellows who have done well in the West because they have come out of conditions where opportunities were limited into conditions where there is every inducement and encouragement towards eager effort. There has been no elementary pastoral stage in agriculture in the West except in the country that was formerly called the ranching area. The homesteader began with his patch of grain, and his interest, since the first patch was harvested, has been chiefly to spread his grain over larger area; that is, his ideal has been extensive rather than intensive.

We must not make the mistake of thinking this is all wrong. It is, in the contrary, quite right, both in the light of opportunities and economy. Though it is the case that most land is not yielding all it might, the additional labor that should be applied to it to secure the ideal absolute return, may be often better applied to the new and undeveloped areas. There is a point of diminishing returns in the application of labor to land and more can often be got from a simple cultivation of even inferior areas than can be got from intensifying effort on good lands already cultivated. It is not at all strange in a prairie country, where the cost of putting in the initial crop is not much greater than the cost of any other, that the cultivator should be seeking to control as large an area as possible. This is legitimate and natural.

The trouble is that this is regarded as about the only kind of expansion and that the impulse to cover new areas leads to a neglect of those first brought into cultivation. In the continued pursuit of either grain growing or stock growing there is a decided growth in care and complexity if the productivity and usefulness are to be maintained or conserved. There is nothing remarkable about a virgin soil yielding good crops for a decade, but there is usually a difference in the health and stamina of the crops taken off the same land for a generation without rotation or without any return of crop food to the land. Besides this, the opening of the prairie soil is the beginning of the introduction, not only of the useful crops, but of weeds that are harmful to crops and that increase in harmfulness unless systematically fought. Dirty fields and soil robbing are two of the undesirable results from following too strongly the impulse to expansion. The diminishing returns from the land already broken may be the result of the continued application of labor to land, but under our system there is a species of diminishing returns coming from the neglect to apply labor to land. Carelessness in seed selection is another cause of poor returns together with neglect of following and seeding down.

There has been a great transforming of agriculture by the increased use of labor-saving machinery. There is always a certain amount of hand labor necessary, however, even with those crops which are most helped and harvested by machinery and the cost of labor has had something to do with making operations extensive. The necessary harvesting machinery for one quarter section will just about as well do the work on the land under crop in a half section.

But whether a man has one quarter or four there are certain times when he must have labor.

The price that the Westerner pays for labor is greatly above its actual value. Owing to the fact that there is only a short run of work, the producer has to set a new price which includes the value of the labor and cost of transportation added to this.

There are then two features that stand out in our agricultural interests. One is that the farmer does not use enough labor on his land; the other is that he pays too much for what he does use. It goes without saying that the remedies to be sought are the application of more labor to land and a reduction in the cost of labor.

For this purpose another sort of expansion is necessary. This is an expansion on the side of complexity in products. The second step of the evolution of our system will be towards larger livestock growing. We hear much about Western wheat lands. Outsiders regard us as wheat growers. We are a considerable factor in the bread supply of the world. But we can grow oats equally well and no other single grain can take the place of oats in meat production—not even corn—in the light of modern taste for meats that are not over fat. The value of wheat relatively to oats makes it a more profitable shipping grain, but the character of our traffic in farm products, as they are of a raw sort and not worked up, means more for the transportation companies than for the producers. The greater advantage to the farmer will accrue through the larger concentration of farm products in the shape of meat animals and the oat route seems the obvious one.

The utilization of coarse grain products involves of course an accompanying increase in fodder production and of pasturing which is the first step towards the cleaning of dirty farms. It certainly seems to be reversing things with a vengeance to see people of the three prairie provinces and of British Columbia eating United States pork and Australia mutton and Ontario poultry when we have such millions of acres of wasted grass and such abundance of oats. We should be producing in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta a surplus of these to flow to markets both east and west of us. Our system looks like an expensive way of self-sustenance.

The evolution of our system of agriculture towards mixed farming carries with it the evolution of the labor problem. At present our employment of labor is crowded into the sowing and reaping and threshing seasons, but more particularly the last two. The growing of livestock involves a steady employment of labor throughout the year. With a steadier market for labor we will have steadier and lower prices. Labor has been riding high for the past few years owing to the great industrial expansion in the country. During the past few years this high riding has become such a habit that in itself it has reached against expansion owing to the uncertainty of labor prices. The crimp has come to the industrial expansion, however, from a wider and greater influence, namely, a world-wide stringency in capital and the time is coming near when a year's steady employment in healthful farm work will look good to some of the roaming, sight-seeing working-men who have been helping the walking bosses and agitators to draw fat salaries at the expense of the undertakers in legitimate industrial enterprises. The time seems opportune for the decided swing towards greater complexity in farm operations. Some of our wheat money should be turned into good fences, good farmsteadings and good stock.

The uncertainties of farm operations due to their partial and considerable dependence upon climatic conditions makes it advisable to increase and diversify the sources of income for the farmer. Our wheat goes out with a rush, our beef and mutton goes out with a glut, in the fall chiefly which puts the producer more and more at the mercy of the buyer. The taste in meat nowadays favors a condition not over-ripe and an age below maturity which makes it possible to choose a time of sale within fairly easy limits and under it possible to take a present or wait for a late market. This is possible where feeding is carried on but not where the bulk of meat produced is sold off the grass. The best market for a farmer should last for twelve months in the year.

L. McC.

HORSE

Lameness in Horses.

SPRAIN OF THE FLEXOR TENDONS.

Sprain of the flexor tendons (usually called sprain of the sinews) is a frequent cause of lameness in both fore and hind limbs. These tendons extend from the knee to the foot, and from the hock to the foot, on the posterior aspect of the limbs. This lameness is more frequently seen in horses used for drawing heavy loads, but it is not by any means unknown in light horses.

Symptoms.—The symptoms of this lesion are easily recognized. Lameness, more or less severe, according to the severity of the lesion, will be noticed, the patient going principally on the toe, not wanting to let the heel come to the ground in severe cases. Examination discovers the tendons swollen and hot in some part between knee or hock and foot. In severe cases they are swollen their entire length. Pressure upon the swollen part causes pain, manifested by the patient quickly lifting the foot, and, if pressure be continued, he will rear on his hind legs.

Treatment consists in shoeing with a high-heeled shoe, so as to throw the tendons in a position of partial repose. Give rest and low diet, bathe with hot water several times daily, and, after bathing, apply an anodyne liniment, as one composed of two ounces laudanum, one ounce chloroform, one ounce acetate of lead, and water to make a pint. When the acute soreness and inflammation have subsided, change to cold water and a stimulant liniment, as one composed of two ounces oil of turpentine, two ounces tincture of arnica, four ounces alcohol, and water to make a pint; and, in an hour after applying the liniment, apply a bandage that has been soaked in cold water (commonly spoken of as "a cold-water bandage"), to be left on until time for next bathing. If a thickening of the tendons remains or lameness continues for longer than two or three weeks, a blister should be applied. In some cases repeated blisterings are necessary, but, unless the lesion has been very severe, the case is likely to yield to ordinary treatment.

SPRAIN OF THE SUSPENSORY LIGAMENT.

This is a ligament that extends on the posterior surface of each cannon bone, in front of the flexor tendons, and close to the bone, from knee or hock to the pastern. It is attached superiorly to the bones of the knee or hock, is flat and thin, passes down close to the flat, posterior surface of the bone to near the fetlock joint, where it divides; one portion passes outwards and downwards, and the other inwards and downwards to the anterior surface of the limb, where they join the extensor tendon of the limb at about the pastern joint. The edges of the ligament can be readily felt in the healthy limb, and in highly-bred, clean-limbed horses can be readily seen. Severe sprain of this ligament, with rupture, is often seen in race-horses, and is called "breaking down." In these cases lameness is very acute, the fetlock pad descends, sometimes as low as the ground, and the toe of the foot turns upwards when the animal walks. Horses that have suffered from this severe lesion will make a partial recovery, but a thickening of the part is always permanent, and the patient never again able to stand training, but may be useful for slow work. It is not of this severe lesion we wish to write, but of ordinary sprain of the ligament, without extensive, or, probably, without any rupture. This may occur in any horse from slipping, heavy drawing, driving over rough ground, etc.

Symptoms.—The symptoms are not as easily noticed as in sprain of the tendons, as a sprained ligament does not present well-marked swelling. The lameness will be more or less severe, according to the extent of the lesion. When standing, the patient will point the foot, and during progression will stub the toe, and avoid, as far as possible, letting his weight rest upon the heel. Careful manipulation with thumb and finger will locate the seat of trouble. The course of the ligament from knee or hock to the fetlock joint should be carefully followed, and gentle pressure exerted all the way down. When the sprained part is reached the horse will evince pain in the usual way. It will be plainly noticed that there is almost an entire