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

VOL. XXXVI.

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA, JULY 20, 1901.

No. 530

The Grasshoppers.

Dominion Entomologist Dr. Jas. Fletcher, accompanied by the Rev. Mr. Burman and Chief Clerk McKellar, made a careful investigation into the present condition of the grasshoppers in this Province during the first week of July. They visited the districts from Rosenfeld Junction to Morden and Rosebank, from Fairfax to Hartney, and from Sewell and Douglas, south to Stockton. Grasshoppers in considerable numbers were found at all points visited, and, as a general thing, they are in greater numbers than last season, but they do not seem to have developed as early as last year, and owing to the luxuriant vegetation this year, the perceptible damage done is comparatively small. Of course, all the grasshoppers are not the voracious Rocky Mountain locust, but almost everywhere specimens of the two worst varieties were found, and at one point, near Fairfax, nearly all the hoppers were the *spretus*, the worst variety of migratory locust. In every case they were found to have hatched out on stubble land left over for summer-fallow, and from these fields were attacking the crops.

In some localities little or no effort has been made to fight them, but in others effective work was being done by the use of Paris green, and by its use crops were this year being saved, where last year everything had been swept bare by these insatiable pests. After testing many ways of applying the poison, those that were most successful had adopted the following plan: One pound of Paris green and one pound of salt was thoroughly mixed with about half a barrel of pure fresh horse manure, and this bait dropped in bits about the size of a hen's egg along the borders of the crop. Bran has been generally recommended for this use, but it is claimed that the horse manure was even more tempting to the hoppers, and has the extra advantage of being cheaper. Where this toothsome bait had been used, millions of hoppers had "bit the dust," and the furrows were literally filled with their festering carcasses.

Dr. Fletcher urges all farmers in infested districts to plow all their stubble land this fall or early next spring as the surest preventive of a further plague of grasshoppers.

The Cowboy and the Range.

However entrancing to the tenderfoot the profession of cowboy may seem, it takes some time before the raw recruit becomes the matured expert. Few of them withstand the vicissitudes of the weather beyond the age of forty, the stiffening of the joints with rheumatism, due to exposure, causing them to quit the saddle for the small farm or ranch. The remuneration is not big, running about \$35 a month and board, the employee furnishing his own saddle and bedding, the employer the horse. The gradual fencing of the ranching country is tending to abolish the long drives of olden days. In those times a greenhorn could lose big money for his employer, especially if driving a beef herd to a shipping point, sudden movements or poor generalship tending to unsettle a drove of cattle quickly, with the consequence that they would be uneasy and ready to stampede at a moment's notice. Let such happen and a few hours' run would melt off beef enough to mean a difference of hundreds of dollars in a short time in a herd. Should cattle be inclined to go the wrong direction, the expert cowboy never rides up to the leaders to turn them off; if he did so a stampede or a turning back into the head of those leading would result, with great confusion. Instead, he rides out at right angles—some distance, and then gradually works toward until the leaders see him, when they immediately bear off in the direction required, grazing as they go. Many of the ranchers on the plains today started

life as cowboys, investing their wages in a few head from time to time, and then let them out to a friend, until after a few years they had sufficient cattle to render them independent enough to become ranchers themselves. Great Britain has furnished a large number, some of whom had considerable money, which they generally lost, owing to inexperience, a result that gave rise to the ranchman's adage "that a greenhorn had to lose his money before he could make it!" The gradual disappearance of the cowboy can be looked for as the country settles up. More people are coming into the West, consequently more fencing and small ranches, until ranching becomes a level everyday business and less of a speculation. In the past, and at present with many, even ranching is a speculation on the weather and the amount of feed on the range. If a mild winter and plenty of feed is there, the profits are big; if the reverse, the losses are heavy. The tendency is more and more to cultivate some land and grow feed for the cattle, horses and sheep through the winter; and this, although meaning greater expense, will ensure the profits being regular.

The Crop Conditions of the West.

The crop conditions throughout the wheat-growing sections of the West could not well be better. The seed went in in good time into soil that was fairly moist, and although the month of May was exceedingly dry, there was ample moisture in the soil to prevent any setback to the growing crop. In fact, in many localities, had the growth been more advanced when the June rains came the crops would have become far too rank. As it is, there is promise of a big crop of straw, and taking the whole country into consideration, never in the history of the West were the prospects brighter for a record-breaking crop of wheat. At this writing the weather is perfect, and with a continuance of bright, sunny, clear, windy weather, the straw will stiffen and the filling and ripening will not be too long delayed. Wheat is almost universally the best crop this year, oats being more uneven in germination and more patchy in stand. This crop suffered badly in many localities from the cutworm grub, and doubtless some of the failure is attributed to sowing heated or damaged seed. Speaking of seed oats, there was quite a furor over the low percentage of germination of some Western oats last spring, but farmers who sowed both Western (Alberta) and home-grown seed, tell us that the former, although much slower in germinating, was by July 1st a much better stand. On this point we shall be glad to hear from those who have experience with the Alberta oats. The rains will help the oat crops greatly, and the yield may yet be large. Barley is mostly grown for feed and used as a cleaning crop, sown late on the dirtiest land, and should serve this year both objects well.

The much-talked-of spelt is, so far as we have seen, not doing very well. Perhaps this is too favorable a season for it.

The wet fall of 1900 encouraged the growth of weeds on the summer-fallows, and many of these, such as stinkweed, shepherd's-purse, pepperglass, fleabane, bluebur, etc., that are annuals, with the faculty of adapting themselves to stand the winter when conditions favor, have made vigorous growth on fallows that were not plowed or cultivated late in the fall or early this spring before sowing.

In the Dauphin and Swan River districts, as well as in Northern Alberta, there has been an excess of moisture, but these newer sections are wonderfully recuperative, and we expect the harvest results will show most satisfactorily.

Live-stock, both in field and ranch, have had a very favorable season, and the dairy industry has been doubled over last year.

But there is many a slip between the cup and the lip, and with intense interest the question is on every lip, "What shall the harvest be?"

What Shall the Harvest Be?

WHERE ARE THE LABORERS?

This is indeed a country of extremes—from hot to cold, from wet to dry—last season practically a crop failure, this year a crop so big and so heavy that we don't know how to handle it. Travel through the country, from east to west and from north to south, and everywhere the same wonderful, luxuriant growth is to be seen. There is some patchiness and some light crops of oats, but almost everywhere the wheat is immense. The farmers have worked late and early, have sown every bushel of seed they could procure, and every available acre of land, in order if possible, to make up for last year's failure. Perhaps we farm too much in this western country, but we simply can't help it; in the spring the ozone gets into the blood and we just have to go some. But one or two men with four-horse teams can put in a deal more crop than they can take off, and the harvest is in sight, and even with most favorable weather conditions extra hands will be required. The Manitoba Department of Agriculture estimates that from 15,000 to 20,000 men will be required, and it is expected that the railway companies will do their share toward bringing in the necessary help by offering cheap rates to harvest hands. From past experience with the harvesters' excursions, nearly 50 per cent. of those coming remain in the country and take up land. Arrangements should be made early for the harvesters' excursions, and every effort made to secure the requisite number. Slowly, but nevertheless surely, the system of farming is changing, the necessity of seeding down to grass is being more generally recognized, and with the grass will come the stock, the fenced field, and gradually a more systematic method of mixed farming, with the field of labor more evenly distributed throughout the year, and less anxiety will then be felt as to what shall the harvest be?

The Improvement of the Golden Hoofed.

The sheep industry in the West is declining, looking at the matter from one standpoint, viz., the desire of so many owning sheep to sell out and go into cattle. As is the case when extremes in dealing happen, sheep are going up steadily in value, and hold out very good prospects to the person who will stay with them. In this connection it is interesting to note the satisfactory work being done under the efficient management of Mr. D. H. Andrews, of the Canadian North-West Land and Ranch Co., with headquarters at Crane Lake. When the gentleman in question took hold, five or six times the number of sheep were kept, and the profits were nil. Under the new management, the flock was reduced to 1,000 ewes, inbreeding done away with, and rams of good mutton form used, with the result that the weight of the yearling wethers has been raised from 90 lbs. to 137 lbs. apiece. The original stock were Merino grades from Idaho. A cross of the Oxford was used, followed with several crosses of Shropshire blood, with results as mentioned. The sheep are only fed a portion of the winter, a hundred tons of hay sufficing for the band. An absolute necessity to success, with sheep is, however, a good shepherd.

Good Prospects at Indian Head Experimental Farm.

Superintendent Mackay, of the Indian Head Experimental Farm, in a letter to this office, under date of July 2nd, states: "In regard to experimental work on Experimental Farm, it is rather early to say much about them. Experiments all being well, the grass, clover, trees, etc., are doing well. Fall plowing is being all put on, and a good grain on Brown and a extra one on Weibull and Brown, and extra on Weibull and Brown."