

THE weather man has been assisting nobly in the matter of fall cultivation, first with rains, and in some sections soft snow, followed by weather dry enough to make plowing possible. Now a few sections complain that there has been too much dry weather and the well cultivated land is so dry that if there is high wind and little snow during the winter and early spring there will be loss from blowing. These are, fortunately small sections. So far as accurate information is obtainable, the country as a whole is in prime condition for next spring, and with a larger amount of well cultivated land ready for seed than has been the case for very many years at least, indeed it is not likely that there has ever been such a large area fall plowed and cultivated as there is now. The warmth of the season has germinated many foul weed seeds and these have been disposed of so that whatever moisture there is in the soil next spring will be for the crop alone.

Breaking

Men with considerable quantities of unbroken land, and with reasonable equipment should, and no doubt many of them are, now laying their plans for the early breaking up of large areas. To this end might I suggest that it is a good plan to provide help right now. Without taking any undue advantage of the other man's necessity, the fact that work is scarce, and likely to be more so during the winter, means that many capable men, who have hitherto spent their winters in the bush will be out of a job this winter. Present indications are that there will be a minimum amount of lumbering this winter. While all bushmen are not desirable farm hands, many of them have had good farm training and with comparatively little practice would be back into training again. If hired now they would be used to the horses and equipment by spring.

The care of horses is no small part of the success of farming operations in either fall or spring; if there is any scrub land on your farm, which you intend ultimately to clean up, why not this winter as well as another, when men can be secured for minimum wages, provided they are well fed and comfortably housed? Farmers may say, "We do not want to keep our wives cooking for hired men all winter." But here again the necessity of the unemployed, and that in no mean or unkind sense, is your opportunity.

It will be easier to secure help in the house than it has ever been in the West before. This is especially true if your house is large enough to permit of your taking a man and wife, who wish

FARM PROBLEMS

By E. CORA HIND.

to go to the country together. The Central Bureau of Work for Women, in the Industrial Bureau, Winnipeg, has a number of such people on its lists, good people, too. Some of them have one child, none of them more than two and a considerable number have none.

A Separate House

If you have any building on your place, which at the expense of a few dollars or a few days of time, can be fitted up to be warm enough to live in, why not make the beginning of permanent farm help by fixing it up and installing some man and his wife, and giving them their food and fuel and any additional clothing which they may need for the winter and making a bargain to pay them both reasonable wages next spring? Let the wife help your wife this winter and the man help you. Help yourself and give the other fellow a chance to help himself.

Probably this could only be done in districts where there is cheap fuel, but there are a goodly number of those when they are all counted up, especially in northern Manitoba and Saskatchewan. In quite a number of these districts, there is no tough sod on scrub land and the ground scrubbed this fall and winter could be plowed next spring and if conditions were good a crop of oats taken off, though this is not a form of cultivation to be at all generally recommended. If your house is large enough to permit of your taking man and wife in with you, secure help early, test them out well and along next January both you and your wife might be able to get away for a few weeks and leave them in charge of house and stock.

"More armchair advice," I hear the farmers say. Yes possibly, but all armchair advice is not impracticable and I happen to know that this plan has worked out successfully in more than one instance in all of the three western provinces. There will no doubt be misfits and disappointments, but with a genuine determination to make the thing work, it can be done, and done to the advantage of both the farmer and his wife and those whom he employs.

The basis of success in mixed farming, especially, is permanent and reliable help on the farms, and the present is certainly an opportune moment for making a beginning.

It is not suggested for one moment that all farmers in the

West shall employ a man all winter, or that every farmer can immediately fit up a house for a man and wife or anything of that kind. It is offered as a possibly helpful suggestion to those farmers and their wives who are in a position to do it, but who may not have happened to realize that the present is a time when there is more chance of getting the required help of a good quality than has been the case for some years.

The man and wife, or the man alone whom you select and train who lives with you, and whom you grow to like and trust, will in all probability eventually settle near you, and you have provided yourself and your district with a good neighbor, one whose ways are your own and who will fall in with your schemes of advancement for the district. Think it over, but don't think too long.

Good Seed

With the danger of seeming tiresomely persistent let me once more emphasize the necessity of getting your seed grain laid by now. Most farmers know seed conditions in their own districts, but few have the opportunity which comes to those who are in close touch with the inspection departments, of knowing how limited is likely to be the really good seed. For the first time in the history of the West there are considerable quantities of wheat arriving for inspection that weighs considerably less than 54 pounds to the measured bushel. Last year wheat weighing 66 and 67 pounds to the measured bushel was common and 63 and 64 pound wheat being an everyday occurrence, it is easy to imagine how wide is the discrepancy this year. The actual germinating quality of this light wheat has yet to be determined, but it needs no test to tell the capable farmer that shrunken wheat is less desirable than the full plump berry untouched by frost.

Millers report that it is taking from 10 to 12 and even 15 pounds more wheat to make a barrel of flour than it did last year and this too in face of the fact that the actual milling quality of the wheat is higher.

Some of the time of the hired help suggested in the previous paragraphs, might very profitably be spent in hand picking seed this winter. Prices of feed and low grade wheats are high and likely to be higher, therefore any farmer can afford to select his seed carefully and sell the balance.

It is generally admitted now that the country has not enough oats for seed and that high grade seed oats in considerable quantities will have to be imported. The man with oats he knows are good for seed should have their germinating quality established at once and then hang on to them; he will pretty well get his own price before spring, always provided he is not a seed hog trying to make money out of his neighbors' and country's dire necessity.

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"What in the world do you do when you forget your lines?"

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