

## SECOND ADDRESS

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### SASKATCHEWAN AS A FIELD FOR DRY FARMING OPERATIONS.

#### *Explanation of What "Dry Farming" Is.*

Whether or not the term "dry farming" has come to stay is immaterial, but the fundamental principles that underlie this system of farming will endure forever, with, of course, such variation in detail as location and the evolution of time may warrant.

Some sensitive people dislike the term "dry farming" on the ground that it is a reflection on their country and an admission to the world at large that their district is subject to drought. Admitting that this is correct, is it not better to face the situation boldly and prepare for it on the principle that "forewarned is forearmed" and that nothing in the end is gained by pretending to have what you have not? The meteorological records of Saskatchewan go to show that we have an average annual precipitation of about seventeen inches, and there is no getting away from the fact that this is usually looked upon in more humid countries as only about one-half the amount necessary to grow profitable crops. Thus the climate of Saskatchewan is sufficiently dry that until a few years ago it was thought to be impossible to grow cereal crops in the greater portion thereof. Intelligent tillage methods, however, timely applied, have demonstrated in every district that crops can be grown with very much less precipitation than was supposed, provided the moisture is systematically and economically taken care of. As a matter of fact the dryness of our seasons is, in one sense, our salvation, as reasonable drought is essential in most districts to insure the maturity and saving of cereal crops in our ordinarily short growing seasons. But a dry climate to be a blessing must be prepared for, otherwise it will blight and disappoint the hopes of the husbandman.

Since dry farming has become a popular term, and its principles recognised as scientific, many critics have claimed that this method involves nothing more or less than the methods that our fathers followed in eastern or other climes, known as "good farming." While it is admitted that dry farming is good farming, it cannot, however, be claimed that good farming is necessarily dry farming. Good farming in some countries may consist among other things of getting rid of superfluous moisture; while dry farming, among other things, always involves economising nature's water supply. In all semi-arid regions the besetting hindrance to successful farming is drought, consequently the basic principles underlying dry farming must and do imply a system of scientific and timely tillage, such as will best offset the dangers of scanty precipitation—in other words, we must accomplish in