

Stonewall Farmers' Institute.

The preliminary steps were taken and petition duly forwarded for the formation of this institute on Wednesday, the 18th of February. The preliminary meeting showed that there is sufficient material in the locality to make it a prosperous institute. Organization is due largely to the efforts of Mr. Jno. McLure and Jacob Scott, jr., J. W. Bartlett, of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE, assisting. At the first meeting, Mr. Bartlett read a paper on institute work, and Richard Waugh spoke at some length on the same subject. Meetings will be held fortnightly.

Burns Visits the Brandon Experimental Farm.

If there is any place in the province that will repay a farmer for a three or four days' visit, that place is the Brandon Experimental Farm, conducted by Mr. S. A. Bedford. I am fully persuaded that many of our farmers do not fully realize the importance of the work being carried on there, or the object and aim of the directors and of the government. They have no idea of attempting to teach our farmers how they should manage their business or set before them a model farm for them to imitate, but to assist them by making hundred of tests and trying experiments which the farmer is not in a position to do for himself, the result being made known to all who wish to avail themselves of it. Mr. Bedford has arranged a permanent exhibit of all grains and grasses grown on the farm, both threshed and in straw, which are placed side by side with the product of the previous year, giving winter visitors an opportunity of seeing the results of the different seasons.

At the International Show at St. John, N. B., this fall the farm obtained the diploma for the best collection of threshed and unthreshed grains.

To show that the management of the farm is alive to the interest of Manitoba farmers, I would like to place before the readers of the ADVOCATE the following practical tests.

TEST OF TREATMENT FOR SMUT.

In all cases the same quality of seed was sown and the same kind of soil occupied. Untreated grain gave 6½ per cent. smut; that scalded in water, heated to 132°, gave 1 per cent. of smut; that steeped for thirty minutes in brine, strong enough to float an egg, gave less than half of 1 per cent. of smut; while that treated with one pound of blue stone, dissolved in a patent pail of water and applied to 10 bush. of wheat, was practically free from smut heads. Mr. Bedford does not consider it safe to use blue stone stronger than the above, as he is of the opinion it will injure the vitality of the seed. He will thoroughly test it, however, the coming season.

FROZEN GRAIN FOR SEED.

Many are of the opinion that any kind of chicken feed will do for seed, but the following test fully demonstrates the folly of using damaged seed. The tests were made in acre plots: No. 1 hard gave 33 bush. per acre; No. 1 frozen, 32 bush. and 40 lbs.; No. 2 frozen, 32 bush. and 20 lbs.; No. 3 frozen, 28 bush. and 56 lbs. The above tests were on the uplands, and a test on the lowlands gave: No. 1 hard, 24 bush. and 49 lbs.; and No. 1 frozen, 23 bush. and 23 lbs. Following this experiment farther we might mention that two experiments were tried in selecting seed, everything being screened out

but the very heaviest and plumpest grain. Black Tartarian oats were sown: The unselected seed, on a half-acre plot, gave 76½ bush. per acre, while the selected seed gave 88 bush. per acre. In native corn for fodder the unselected seed gave 24,420 lbs., where the selected seed gave 33,000 lbs. Several tests will be made with selected seed the coming season.

BROADCAST SOWING VS. DRILL.

The common drill gave 30 bush. and 24 lbs. per acre, the press drill 29 bush. and 24 lbs., and broadcast 28 bush. and 20 lbs. In wheat, the drilled-in ripened in 132 days, and that sown broadcast in 136 days. In oats, the press drill, 72 bush. and 30 lbs. per acre; the common drill, 72 bush. and 22 lbs., and broadcast, 56 bush. and 32 lbs. In barley, the press drill gave 60 bush. and 14 lbs.; the common drill 56 bush. and 60 lbs., and broadcast, 50 bush. and 46 lbs. In case of sowing with the drills, the grain came up very evenly and ripened together, whereas the broadcast sowing was of different lengths and uneven in ripening.

PLOWING IN SEED.

Oats sown broadcast on oat stubble and plowed in, being covered about three inches, gave 49 bush. and 30 lbs. per acre; those sown beside them with the drill in the ordinary way on fall plowing, gave 41 bush. and 10 lbs. On wheat stubble those plowed in gave 56 bush. and 27 lbs.; and those sown with the drill on fall plowing gave 51 bush. and 16 lbs. Wheat and barley treated in the same way did not show the same results in favor of plowing in the seed. The oats requiring more moisture to germinate receives the benefit from the plowing-in system.

NOTES ON RIPENING.

It must be remembered that it takes a great difference in the time of sowing as to the number of days in ripening. That sown very early, before there is heat enough to make the grain germinate, will naturally take several more days between sowing and reaping. About the middle of April is a fair test, and the following varieties were sown at that time: Red Fife yielded 28 bush. per acre, and ripened in 134 days; Ladoga yielded 21 bush., and ripened in 128 days; Eureka yielded 27 bush., and ripened in 128 days; Russian Hard Tag gave 26½ bush., ripening in 128 days; Golden Drop and Club wheat yielded 24½ bush., and ripened in 128 days; Eureka and Campbell's White Chaff each ripened in 130 days, yielding 24 bush. per acre. Experiments are being made with a number of varieties of wheat ripening in shorter time than the above, but the yield and quality are not yet satisfactory.

CORN FOR FODDER.

Occasionally we have a very dry scorching year, when our meadows are burnt up and hay is a failure, such a year is well-suited to growing fodder corn, for that plant likes heat above all things. I think it will pay to try an acre or two of it, as it only requires a small amount of seed. It may be sown by stopping up sufficient spouts in your grain drill to bring your rows about three feet apart, setting the drill to drop one kernel every eight inches.

Large numbers of tree seeds have been collected and forwarded to the Central Farm at Ottawa, where a general distribution will be made, and those applying for the same will be furnished free of charge.

A large number of grasses and millets have been tried, as well as about seventeen different mixtures of grain for fodder, which I hope may be given a mention in a letter later on.

BURNS.**Subscription Prizes.**

From lack of space we were compelled to lay over our list of prizes given to those who send us clubs of new subscribers. We refer our readers to page 69 of the February issue. Send in good large clubs and obtain some of these valuable prizes.

New Grains.

Mr. D. McNaught, of Rapid City, sowed four bushels of Carter's Prize Prolific Barley last spring and harvested eighty. From all accounts this barley is likely to prove a valuable acquisition to this country, as no poor yield has yet been reported. This seed is advertised in our advertising columns.

Mr. E. J. Darroch, of Minnedosa, this year sowed a bag of White Wonder Oats with excellent results, getting some eighty bushels from that amount of seed. Mr. Darroch also raised some California Prolific Barley which so attracted the attention of Professor Robertson on his recent visit that he bought several bushels (all that was available) for the Experimental Farms. The California Prolific is a two-rowed barley, and is very plump and heavy. Mr. Darroch has none for sale this season, but hopes to be in a position to furnish seed in quantities next year.

A Central Farmers' Institute.

Now that the farmers institutes have been organized, or are about to be organized in, at least, a score of the electoral divisions of the province, a permanent central institute is not only desirable, but an absolute necessity, if the very best results are to be obtained from institute work. This central institute should consist of delegates, and only delegates from local institutes. Each local institute should send one delegate for say every thirty-five members or fraction thereof. That is each institute send a representative, and if the membership is over thirty-five, two delegates, if over seventy, three, and so on. This central body should meet at some central point, and take into consideration the best methods of conducting institute work, how the most good can be accomplished with the least expenditure of money, etc., etc. At present there is a pressing need of steps being taken by the local institutes jointly to arrange a circuit of meetings early next winter, and secure assistance for the same. This can be accomplished in no other manner so readily as by such a central organization. Again, the local government have shown a disposition to aid the institutes, and would, no doubt, be pleased to learn in what manner such aid could be best rendered. It will be readily seen that thirty men representing each thirty-five members or thereabout of the local institutes, would have, and properly, too, great influence, and prove of great value in advising with the Department of Agriculture on this and kindred subjects. There is also another way in which this organization could be of use to the country at large. We all too often hear of frauds being perpetrated on farmers, such as seed grain swindlers, sales being made and notes given when the buyer supposed he was only signing an agreement to act as agent for the article. Such a fraud occurring in any locality could be at once reported to the Secretary of the Central institute, and he, in turn, could notify the local bodies, and thus put them on their guard. This is but a fraction of the many benefits to be derived from such an organization, which it is to be hoped will have been perfected by next winter.