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One of the mightiest forces in the world of men and animals is habit. Habit has killed more than any poison known to savage or scientific and it has also unconsciously cured more in flesh and blood than all the restorative prescriptions the medicine men hold in their catalogue of "remedies."

Habit of thought is far stronger than ten preaching archangels and change the current of a man's life if it is set in a given course. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he," and when the thought habit has become a time-incrusted conviction it takes far more than the claxon-call of an impending judgment to convince and convert.

The thought habit and the inbred conservative streak in human nature is accountable for the slow progress that has been made in applying much of the ascertained facts that scientific research has dug up and presented without fee or patent restriction to the service of men.

In the world of agriculture we see this cautious conservatism holding its own more conspicuously, perhaps, than in any other department of our social economy. Even in highly civilized countries, we find to-day rules in operation and methods employed in crop cultivation that have not changed in the slightest detail for centuries. They are clung to with almost insane tenacity because the habit of thought that was born with them has given these methods the prescription of a natural law that cannot be varied or tampered with except at a risk which no man dares to contemplate!

Some of these—in India, Egypt and even in the highlands of Scotland were described and illustrated in these pages quite recently. We smiled at them because that was all we could do. Here, however, we are set down in the very centre of the biggest and most enterprising phase of agricultural activity that the eyes of the modern world have yet looked upon and looked towards for that "testimony in the life" that, all who seek to inculturate

THE BRAWN IN THE BARLEY

new doctrines must render if their school has a right to live and to look for converts who can no longer hold out against the living testimony.

To be specific, the subject of barley may seem to be a very

had but scurry treatment. No doubt, as suggested by Dean Henry of Wisconsin University, the brewers are responsible for the widespread prejudice with which it is regarded in this connection, some of them even going

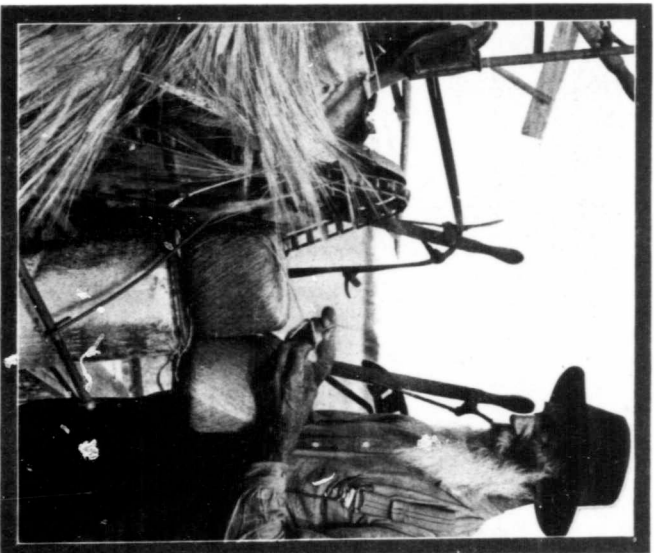
gent farmer to-day will belittle the feeding qualities of barley, but for several reasons he has not yet risen to a full conception of just how great these are and of the point to which the value of this cereal may be carried in Western Canada where it can be so easily grown.

Did some of our Western stock men realize just what this means, it would be a source of comfort to them, when they find much of their barley crop discolored by exposure to rainfall, etc., before they were in a position to thresh it. Such grain has lost little or none of its nutrients, though for the brewer its value may have been greatly diminished. The wise stockman will use such barley for feed rather than force it on the market at the low price to which its "color" condemns it.

Now, this article is not intended to take the form of a discursive treatise on the nature and cultivation of the barley plant. All that is needed in that respect is about the commonest of our common knowledge. Few things in agriculture are better understood or more easily accomplished than the raising of a good barley crop in Western Canada, but not many realize the possibilities it offers as a flesh forming food.

Were barley recognized as it deserves to be as a stock food, it would not figure as it so often does as a kind of after-thought in the mixed-farming or purely grain growing business, a sort of "handy-man" to clean up the weeds, a kind of "tag" or vallet to wait on the aristocratic wheat crop, or that might come to something in any old place that looked a risky spot for any other crop.

The habit of thought has been that the great stock feeder is corn, corn and again corn. Corn is king in the cattle states of America, and in looking up a long file of rations published as the last word in stock-feeding by one of the most popular of the American farm journals, there is not a single reference made to barley except in one melancholy instance where it is quoted as a



"Making ends meet"—with his barley crop.

insignificant one to associate with any strenuous "thought habit," yet at no time nor anywhere has it

taken the place which scientific research and conclusive experiments have earned for it. While (as "pearl" barley and in other forms) it is used extensively and with extraordinary results as a human food, in certain parts of Europe, in North America it is barely recognized.

Even for stock feeding, it has

so far as to allege that it is poisonous to farm stock!

The probabilities are that the brewers, wishing to control the entire use of this crop, have furthered the prejudice and kept alive the belief that there is only one real market for this much maligned cereal—that which will conduct it straight to the distillery and the beer vat.

Not to speak of the absurdity of the "poison" myth, no intelli-