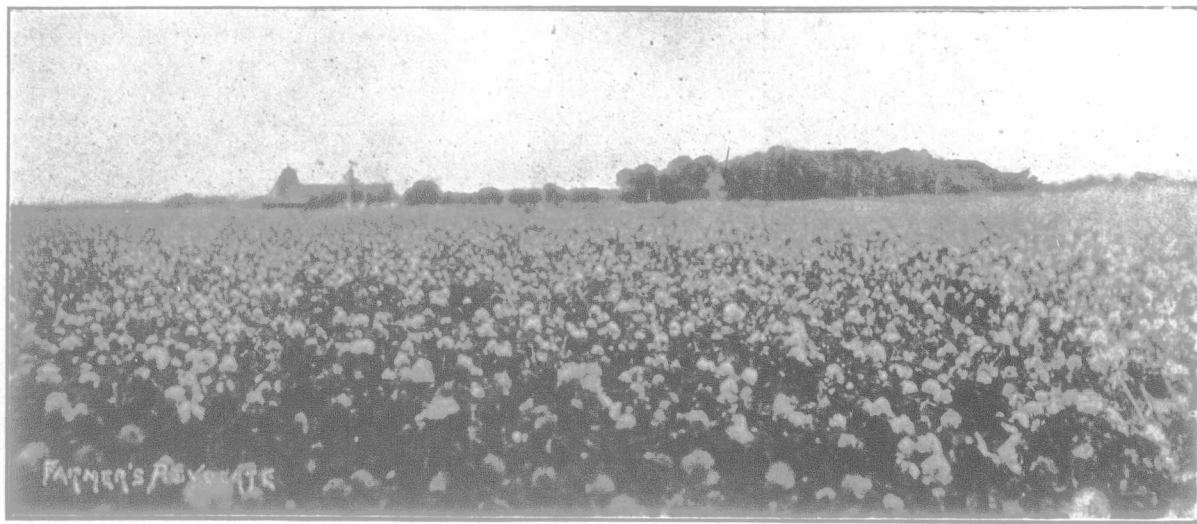




CLOVER FIELD ON THE ASYLUM FARM, SELKIRK  
Winner of the Farmer's Advocate Gold Medal, for best field of clover in the Province.

### Wheat and Meat Production in a Competitor's Country.

In the competition between nations for a share of the world's trade in wheat and meat, Canada has to among other countries, with the Argentine Republic. That nation is making enormous strides in production and so great are her shipment of wheat that they have a direct bearing upon the prices of our staple product here. The Argentine has nothing to teach Canada in the matter of production, although in the handling of meats her packers appear to be much more progressive than ours. Her increasing greatness is due mostly to her natural advantages. Of the Argentine and its agricultural resources and methods, Mr. J. A. Kinsella, a Canadian in the employ of the New Zealand government as dairy commissioner, writes in his report of agriculture in other lands quite interestingly and because information of a competitor is always interesting we take from Mr. Kinsella's report the following excerpts:

#### AGRICULTURE, STOCK, AND GENERAL.

"When one travels over a portion of the Argentine, a country only one-third the size of the United States, he sees its immense plains formed by Nature, with a climate perhaps the most comfortable and salubrious in the world taking it the year round. It is a country also where railways find no natural obstacles in the way of their construction. You find on the Pacific Railway plains the great estancias (ranches) covered with fat steers and sheep. The latter, I may say, are to be seen in millions. Amongst the cattle I can safely say thousands are of the best breeds. You also see the great fields of linseed, corn (maize), and wheat, the principal agricultural products of the country.

"The size of an estancia, or what we should call a 'run' in New Zealand or a 'ranch' in the United States, varies from 3,000 to 600,000 acres. About 20,000 acres might be said to be an average estancia. In conducting the business of cattle-herding or ranching in the Argentine, that is where cattle are raised and fattened for export, it requires expert men. These men in the Argentine are called Gauchos. They are, so far as riding and the care of cattle is concerned, similar to our cowboys in the Northwest Territories of Canada, where they can lasso or tie up a wild steer or horse in lightning style without getting out of the saddle. The horses, generally speaking, are small-sized, but wiry and of marvellous endurance. They somewhat resemble our Canadian mustang horse. The cattle roam over the great plains, and many of the estancias are not fenced. It is therefore necessary to brand the cattle. They have an exhaustive set of branding regulations, which time and space would not permit of my detailing in this report.

"In my opinion the republic is favored with a combination of advantages over many other, or, perhaps, over almost any country in the world. I am still further of the opinion that if the Argentine agricultural and pastoral industries were developed on anything like up-to-date lines, within very few years they would be able to land their products on the markets of the world almost beyond competition. People may ask, Why? I say then that the above statements may be backed up by the following: First of all, perhaps, the success and future progress of the Argentine, so far as agriculture is concerned, may be credited to her geographical position or situation, and also to her favorable climatic conditions. Then there is the low price of land, and the fact of her being able to make use of labor on the land all the year round. Next is the growing of alfalfa, of which four or six crops are often cut, the latter in the best districts. The Argentine has also the advantage of having cheaper labor than such great producing countries as Canada, United States, Australia and New Zealand. It has, further, the advantage of breeding and the carrying of cattle for dairying purposes, and also of fattening its live stock the year round with little or no extra feed. It has also the advantage of having lower ocean rates to the principal markets of the world than Australia and New Zealand, and only about 25 per cent. higher than North America. The Argentine also has the

advantage of having an unlimited mileage of railway, which enables her to land her products at the ports of shipment at a very low cost. Then, again, severe droughts are almost unknown in the Argentine, and the pests which we hear so much of in our colonies, which it is claimed do so much damage to crops and pastures (such as the locusts), are, in my opinion, not nearly so bad as they are made out to be, and there is no immediate cause for alarm from this source. The Argentine Government has ever since 1987 taken the most energetic measures to prevent the invasion of the crop districts by these pests, and has been very successful. They have spent \$11,000,000 gold in this direction, with the result that in 1898 95 per cent. of 68,000,000 hectares was saved from the scourge, and in 1901 and 1902 they almost entirely eradicated the plague. About three-quarters of the soil in the arable districts is composed of alluvial deposits of volcanic and granitic origin, making the soil fairly light, porous, and free from stone, which makes it easily worked. The soil in most districts is strongly covered with vegetable deposits. It rests on a subsoil which varies from 25 centimeters to 1½ meters.

#### WHEAT-GROWING.

"It was at one time the opinion of scientific men that the pampa soil of the Argentine was not very suitable for agriculture, particularly for the growing of a good quality of wheat. That idea, however, has long since disappeared. Excellent specimens of wheat can be seen all over the country now. There are many varieties of wheat grown, but probably the best suited to Argentine soil is the 'Barletta.' Some tests have been made where it was found that this variety gives a weight of 83.250 lb. per hectolitre, while one of the best Russian varieties weighted 84,500 lb. per hectolitre. One must take into consideration the vast extent of the wheat districts of the great Argentine territory in order to realise that it is necessary to procure that particular seed which may be best adapted for the district he may be farming in. Want of knowledge in this particular direction is said to have caused serious deteriorations in the quality of wheat in some provinces, particularly in the noted wheat province of Entre Rios. In the southern parts of the Argentine splendid results are said to be had from Hungarian and Russian varieties; those along with the first mentioned, Barletta, seem to be very suitable for export.

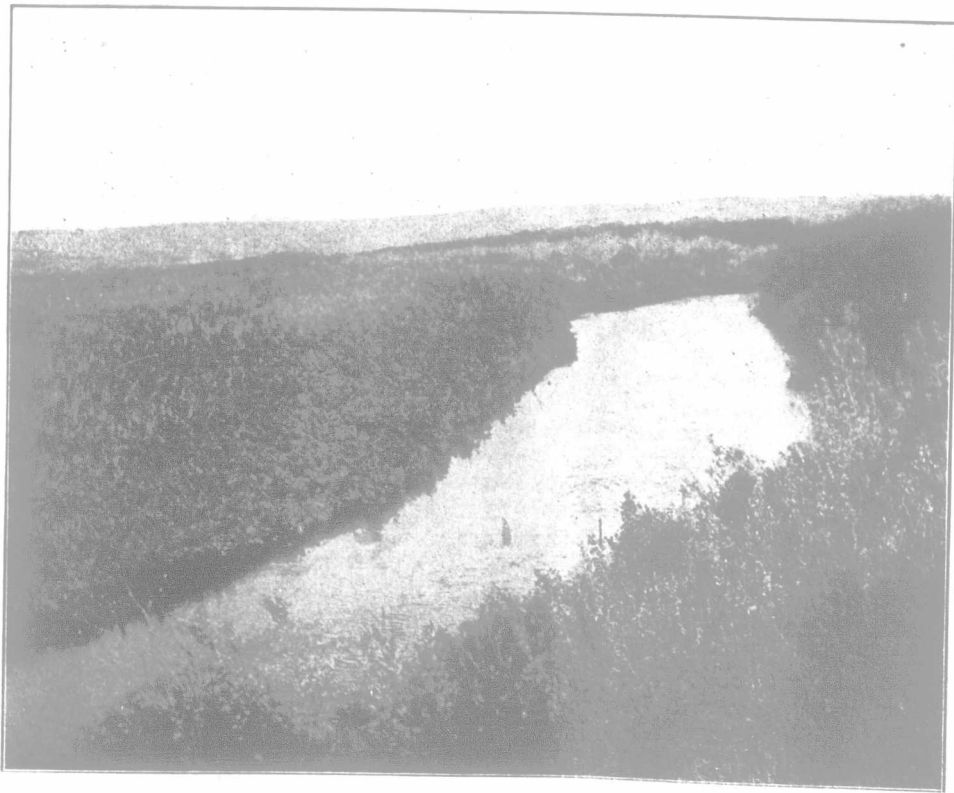
"In the southern parts of the republic you find a colder climate, which, perhaps, tends to make seed imported from colder climates do better. It is said, however, that excellent large, plump, bright seed from Manitoba, and also magnificent seed from California does not do well in most districts. I have also learned from old Spanish wheat-growers that such excellent imported seed only requires a few seasons until it degenerates into a shrivelled-up inferior product; while, on the other hand, the best varieties of native grain which are suited to the different provinces seem to give general satisfaction both for milling and for export. Among the varieties grown are to be found some French varieties, which are much in request for home consumption, but are not sought after by the British importer.

"Before dealing briefly with a few practical facts as regards the actual practice of wheat-growing by the natives in the Argentine, I beg to quote a few statistics which I consider to be as reliable as can be obtained in the republic, seeing that they came from the Ministry for Agriculture and the latest Argentine Year-book. I suppose the largest harvest the Argentine ever reaped was in 1898 and 1899, when they exported over two million tons. Besides the exports, 1,750,000 tons was used for home consumption and for seed. According to the latest figures issued by the Ministry for Agriculture, the total wheat production for 1903 and 1904 was 2,750,000 tons, of which 1,681,000 was exported. Besides this, the 71,980 tons of flour was exported. The home consumption of wheat in the Argentine is now over 700,000 tons per annum. The quantity of maize produced by the Argentine is large. Last year she grew no less than 3,770,195 tons. In 1903 and 1904 there were under wheat alone in the Argentine something over 4,300,000 hectares, a hectare is about 2½ acres.

"The cost of cultivating 100 hectares according to the latest statistics is found to be as follows: This crop gives twenty bags of 70 kilos., or about 1,400 kilos. to the square: For plowing, \$300; harrowing \$100; two plowings, sowing, overseer, etc., \$400; two extra harrowings, \$100; 6,000 kilos of seed at \$5.50 per kilo., \$330; interest on capital, depreciation, and payment of labor, \$70; total cost, \$1,300.

"Speaking generally of the various provinces as wheat-growers in the Argentine, the Province of Buenos Aires contains the best land. This province is being rapidly opened up to agriculture. The centre part of the province is largely adapted for sheep-farming. The Province of Entre Rios lies near the rivers Parana and Uruguay. This is a great country, having vast rolling plains, and many small rivers, and some woods in places. This will also some day become a great wheat province, owing to its having such rich soil.

"Plowing is done in a very rough, slovenly manner in most places in the Argentine. A Canterbury farmer would be scornful if he watched the ordinary 'chacero' Italian tenant following his bullocks as he turns the most crooked furrow imaginable, leaving much of the grass to be seen on the surface. It is said, however, by old farmers that there is sometimes wisdom in light working of the land, particularly during wet seasons. It is found during the wet season with deep plowing the wheat grows very much to straw, whereas the shallow-worked land returns a good crop. This would appear somewhat of a lottery business in wheat farming. Idleness during the growing of the wheat crop seems to suit the Italians. While that is true, it may be pointed out that no country offers better advantages for carrying on mixed farming the whole year round. There is no time of year when a farmer could not if he wished be busily engaged in plowing, sowing, reaping, or threshing either wheat, linseed, maize, or lucerne.



ROUGHBANK CREEK, SASKATCHEWAN

Photo by Buckley, Weyburn