

## Some Needed Reforms.

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

Farming in the West is undergoing a change, is in a sort of transition period, and as a consequence many problems are cropping up for solution. Some of these concern the production end of the business, some the selling end, and some the social. Considering the first mentioned, the one which receives the larger share of the farmer's attention and at which he is now busily engaged, many interesting points present themselves. One of the primary requisites of the production end is labor, which at present is beginning to give the farmer some anxiety. Requisitions sent in from the various centers for men, indicate that a considerable amount of extra help will be required this year, while a consideration of the labor market indicates that the available supply is none too large. While railroad construction is not extensive as was last year expected, it engages the employment of a larger number of men and cuts down considerably the number available for farm work.

Little as yet is definitely known regarding the number that will avail themselves of the excursions which start from eastern parts in a short time, but already officials from the two provincial Departments of Agriculture are making preparations for their reception and distribution. Take the province of Saskatchewan alone. At date of writing, August 10th, applications for 5,500 men have already been received by the Department of Agriculture and Mr. Hedley Auld, chief of the Bureau of Statistics, states that 8,000 is a conservative estimate of the number that will yet be required and that in all probability another thousand will be necessary to harvest this year's crop. Last year 8,066 men were actually distributed, but this year, although there is an increase of 15% in the average, all of which will likely be harvested, the yield over the province does not promise to be so high so last year, which was phenomenal. Much will depend on the weather from now on, as regards yield, and in the matter of the number of men that will be required to harvest the crop.

To the thoughtful the question of just how long we can depend for our harvest help on these excursions, must have presented itself. The supply in the East is not by any means inexhaustible. In fact, the farmers there have been for a number of years complaining that the West was taking the best of their young men, lessening the available supply of farm help, necessitating a change in their methods of farming on that account and in some districts causing a depreciation in the value of farm land. This is in the main true. There are on record statistics that go to show that a considerable proportion of those that come out on the harvest excursions remain in the country; some go back East only to return later, while some go back and stay there. As long as our supply of homesteads and low-priced land holds out, and as long as it is to the interests of the railways to run them, we can count on excursions, but the number in the East taking advantage of them cannot continue as it has been doing. There are not enough young men. The demand here is constantly growing while the source of supply is decreasing. Recently an ingenious citizen of the Republic to the south advanced the idea that a sort of international harvesting gang be organized and follow the harvesting of the crops from South America up through the States and into Canada. It looks easy and some day may be put in practical operation, but it is doubtful if the Western farmer can count on that for the solution of his labor difficulties. He can, however, depend on a supply from another source, Great Britain. The excursions run by the C. P. R. last year when some 1,800 laborers were brought from England direct to the West, demonstrated what could be done in this direction. The supply in Ontario and the farther East will not fail for some time. Each year sees shipload after shipload from Great Britain and other European countries, land in Canada, induced to come by the available homesteads in the West. But so urgent is the Ontario farmer's demand for help that a large number of these are intercepted. Many of them, however, only remain for a year or two; then after receiving a training in farm work they take the excursions to the West. It is largely on these that the promoters of the excursions and those they are designed to benefit must ultimately rely.

But is the West, in harvesting her crops, always to require a large number of men for a short length of time? Are we always going to

warrant the title "the flour barrel of the world"; to confine our attention and place our dependence in one crop alone; to strain every muscle of our bodies during seeding; to take just enough gentle exercise for a pleasant healthy appetite while the crop is ripening and then to rustle up harvest-help, anything that looks like a man, and to go at it again in harvest-time like a whirl-wind? Present indications are that an opportune time is at hand for a change. Wheat growing on account of the relatively small initial outlay required, the quick and frequently abundant returns that can readily be converted into cash, is the ideal crop for the homesteader or the beginner. But it cannot be wheat, wheat, all the time. The land will not stand it and the farmer's duty to his family demands that he leave them a farm in good condition and not one from which almost everything but weeds has been taken.

The experience of the past is the teacher of the present, and it is no less the prophet of the future. We can learn much from other countries or different districts of the same country. Agriculture in older parts was years ago much the same as it is here now, that is to say, they grew wheat, wheat, wheat, and kept at it until the land got sick of the job and finally so weak that it refused to produce a paying crop. Then they quit wheat and tried to coax the land to grow something else, but while it did better at that it was too weak and worn out to return a good profit. Then they got sore on it and those of them that could lit out for the towns and cities. Are we drifting in the same direction? To the writer if he reads the sign aright, there are three facts indicating in the case of the older established farms the necessity for a change. The scarcity, frequent inefficiency and high price of farm labor that is hired for a few months only, the alarming increase and spread of noxious weeds and the depletion of fertility, the decline in the soil's crop producing capabilities, comprise the three. More mixed farming must be done if these difficulties are to be overcome. This is not equivalent to saying to every farmer, "Go into the stock business," for on some farms, the newer ones, the beginners will find wheat will return a quicker profit on a smaller investment. Their land being new will stand and in some cases improve with continuous cropping with the one crop for a few years. But this cannot be continued. While wheat may still be a staple crop, a system of farming which will keep down weeds, conserve fertility, keep the land in good condition, enable the farmer to keep his labor the year round and at the same time return a profit, must be worked out.

The unsatisfactory nature of our labor supply is only too apparent to every farmer; the necessity for prompt, vigorous, intelligent action in regard to the weeds cannot fail to have escaped his attention, especially this season, and the reduction in his yields to the acre must have forced itself rudely upon him before now. These are the facts that have presented themselves to us repeatedly. How much longer are we to ignore them, to procrastinate and to delay the working out of a remedy? Many have sought a remedy, but the great majority still refuse to act. A rotation is necessary. A judicious mixture of grain and grass growing and stock raising, with the manure back in the land, brings about the desired result. There are a number of different ways in which this may be accomplished, but enough has been said to convince the most obdurate of the necessity for a change in the direction indicated. The manner in which he works it out must be determined by himself; no hard and fast rule can be laid down as what suits one farm may not give the best result on another. However, much can be learned from the methods of another. Contributions on the subject are useful and helpful.

Sask.

J. S.

## The Good Work of Clover.

The reports we have received this season of flourishing crops of red clover in different parts of Manitoba are most gratifying to us, since we have so persistently advocated the growing of this crop to fertilize and renovate the soil. The determination with which some farmers have persisted in sowing clover seed and in changing conditions to try to find the best treatment to get a catch is deserving of the commendation of every well-wisher of the country, and merits the gratitude of every farmer. In the action of the clover plant upon fields that have been long cultivated we believe the solution of the problem of moisture conserving and of firming the soil will be found, and if the crop is persisted with, it will prove one of the strongest enemies of weeds. Successful growers are invited to give the fact every prominence.

## HORSE

## Judging at Regina.

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

In looking over your report of Saskatchewan's provincial exhibition at Regina I notice some omissions and misleading statements which I would like to correct.

The judges were asked by the directors to select a male champion and reserve, also a female champion and reserve. We placed the Van Horne horse, Lord Ardwell, for champion (already mentioned) and Baron of Arcola for reserve (not mentioned). In the female class Mr. P. M. Bredt's four-year-old, Irene, was placed champion and W. H. Bryce's yearling, Lady Montrave Ronald, reserve champion; in the later class the assistance of Dr. Folmie of B. C. was called and he reversed my judgment, placing the four-year-old ahead of the yearling filly.

In the Clydesdale teams the judgment of Mr. Gibson and Prof. Rutherford was not reversed as stated, as Rosadora took the place of Lady Rotha and made a different turnout.

Regina.

TULLY ELDER.

[We are aware that we had made an error in naming Lady Rotha instead of Rosadora, but that does not alter the case perceptibly, for Mr. Gibson placed Lady Rotha over Rosadora in their class. We gladly make the correction in the names. As for the reserves for championship, we are glad to have their names, as it is often difficult to watch all rings of stock when the judging is going on, but we must admit that we were under the impression that the competition in the female championship was between Irene and Baron's Lassie and supposed the second choice was the reserve.—Ed.]

## Brood or Yeld Mare.

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

As I am interested in horse judging and horse showing, I am anxious to know how it is that the same horse, I mean Lady Rotha, was shown in the brood mare class at Regina Spring Show and as a yeld mare at the Winnipeg Exhibition. I think a judge should use his eyes and not give a yeld mare a prize in the brood mare class, nor a mare in foal a prize in the yeld class.

Summerbury, Sask.

J. B. L.

[These matters are very largely regulated by the rules in the prize list. Lady Rotha, whatever she may have looked at Regina, has since been proved to have been in foal. At Winnipeg the prize list insists that a brood mare must have a foal by her side and as Lady Rotha did not foal until after the exhibition she was not eligible to be shown in the brood mare section, but was eligible in the yeld mare class. Personally we think the rules governing the brood mare class should be somewhat flexible, so that a mare that gives evidence of having raised a foal or of being in foal would be eligible. At spring shows it is difficult to decide very often when a mare is not due to foal until late, whether she is more properly a brood or a yeld mare and exhibitors should be willing to abide by the rules of the exhibition board.—Ed.]

## Darnley and Prince of Wales.

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

I notice an excellent article in your valuable paper on these two celebrated sires, and from personally knowing these two noted horses I think the writer does ample justice to them, but falls into the common error of not doing justice to Prince of Wales' back breeding; but of course, Clydesdale fanciers do not like to acknowledge the English cart horse blood which undoubtedly ran through his veins. The secretary of the Clydesdale Horse Society a few years ago was advancing something like the same theory as your present writer puts forth, but the breeder of Prince of Wales came forth and distinctly proved one of his granddams as having been bred in Derbyshire and the other granddam in Warwickshire, from which counties they were taken north by dealers. If any of your various readers had seen Prince of Wales I am sure they would have been able to detect the Shire in many points of his formation, and again seeing that both of his granddams were grey in color I