

## Experimental Farms.

We are in receipt of an advance copy of the report of operations on the Dominion Experimental Farms during the year 1890. The Central Farm at Ottawa is dealt with in a very comprehensive manner and so also are the branch farms at Nappan, N.S., Brandon, Man., Indian Head, Assa., and Agassiz, B. C. The information contained in the report will be of very great value to Canadian farmers and fruit growers, covering as it does almost every branch of agriculture, horticulture, etc.

We do not propose to give a thorough review of the whole report this week, but will take up such parts as more directly relate to this province. This we find in the report of Superintendent S. A. Bedford of the Brandon farm.

After devoting half a page to the weather he comes directly to the most important part of his paper—wheat. Of this cereal 60 varieties were sown, 30 on the higher portion of the farm and 30 in the low land. By taking this plan, it was shown conclusively that wheat sown on high land is less susceptible to frost than wheat sown on low land. The different varieties of wheat maturing at the same time were also carefully examined to see what the difference in the effect of frost on them would be. The results of this test were very striking, it being shown that the close and heavy chaffed varieties are least liable to injury. Experiments were made with frozen wheat to ascertain what its value as seed would be. Some 1888 frozen wheat was obtained and sown on new land. Of this test Mr. Bedford says:—"Although the loss from slightly frozen grain was small, the No. 3 or badly frozen seed, gave considerably less than No. 1 hard, and in an unfavorable season the difference would no doubt be greater."

Some trials were made of the different methods now in use for treating smutty wheat. Bluestone, salt brine, and hot water were all tried and, although by none of these methods could the smut be entirely removed from the wheat, the results were, especially in the case of the bluestone, very satisfactory. The experiments made with fall sown spring wheat and fall wheat, were, on account of the unfavorable weather, not very encouraging.

Twenty-eight varieties of oats were sown and this test of varieties proved to be very satisfactory. The best yield obtained was from the kind known as English White Oats. This variety also has the advantage of ripening early.

Last season was an exceptionally favorable one for the barley crop and several interesting tests were made. 12 varieties of two-rowed barley were sown on backsetting. One of these is especially commended in the report as follows: "The Danish Chevalier was one of our best varieties last season, and has this year given slightly the best yield among the two-rowed, both on high land and in the valley. This excellent variety is said to be in active demand on the English market and appears well adapted to our climate."

Under the heading "Different Dates of Sowing", Mr. Bedford gives some valuable hints as to when to sow the different kinds of grain. He also made experiments in thick, medium and thin sowing. A trial of drill versus broadcast seeding, which was made, showed results very favorable to the former method. In addition to those already mentioned, experi-

ments were made with peas, turnips, potatoes, mangels and sugar beets, carrots, fodder corn, and fodder plants, grasses, both native and foreign, millets, buckwheat, and fruit and forest trees. All these are reported under different headings and accompanied by a large amount of tabulated matter, which assists very materially in making the results of the experiments plain. Mr. Bedford speaks very favorably of the Kentucky blue grass in his item on the cultivated grasses.

A great deal of attention has been given to tree culture, and very curious results obtained. This is, however, not a report of last year's work alone, but includes a report on the condition of trees which were planted in previous years. Among the varieties of fruit are apple, crab apple, cherry, pear and plum trees, all of which are, on the whole, in good condition. The care of forest, ornamental and shrub trees has also been carefully studied and reported on. The varieties of forest which have been found to succeed best on the farm are native ash-leaf maple, native ash, American elm (from native seed), Russian poplars and willows, cottonwoods (northern grown), alders, birch and white spruce. A number of shrubs have also been found to do very well, a Japanese rose bush (*Rosa Rugosa*) being among them. The success which has attended the planting of berry and currant bushes has proved beyond a doubt that these can be raised in this country with a little care. Strawberries have also been raised in sufficient quantities to show that their cultivation is not a difficult matter.

Last season being a very favorable one for vegetables, a good showing was made in that branch. The kinds planted were beans, beets, corn, cucumbers, cabbage, carrots, kohlrabi, lettuce, onions, pumpkins, parsnips, peas, radish, rhubarb, salsify, spinach, squash, tomatoes, turnips and cauliflower. This latter is especially worthy of mention, the yield being a very fine one; the variety known as Early Erfurt being among those mentioned as giving good satisfaction. In regard to flowers we might just make another extract from the report to show that their cultivation is not such a difficult matter as is generally supposed. "The impression is general throughout the province that the cultivation of garden flowers here must necessarily require much time and skill to produce satisfactory results, while the reverse is the case, for it is questionable whether the natural soil of any portion of the Dominion is better adapted to the growth of flowers than that of this province, as is evidenced by the abundance of wild flowers growing everywhere."

The next important point touched on is that of seed grain distribution. Of this a considerable quantity was distributed among the farmers of the province last year, and a still larger quantity will be sent out this year.

The report closes with a few words on "Exhibits at Agricultural Fairs" and "Farmer's Institutes."

## Furs in England.

The London, England, correspondent of the *New York Fur Trade Review*, writes that journal as follows: "During the last few days this city has been visited by one of your favorite 'blizzards,' and such a storm as raged here on the 9th and 10th of February, has only been equalled by the great storm of 18th January,

1891, and therefore it was no wonder when we were experiencing such arctic weather that the Hudson's Bay Co.'s and C. M. Lampson & Co.'s sales should go with a swing, and we believe it is without precedent that two sea otter skins should sell for £200 per skin.

Black bears, which were wanted by our furriers, ruled very high in price, but the figures did not deter the home trade from buying, and as Messrs. C. M. Lampson & Co. have not yet sold their collection of bears there will be handsome prices paid at their auction, as they have a very fine collection of Minnesota skins.

Grizzly Bears—This article also came in for a share of patronage by the home trade, and it seems likely that it will recover its former standing here.

Skunk—The home trade is simply mad after this article just now, as will be seen in the result of the Hudson's Bay Co.'s sale, when prices realized fully 20 per cent. advance on last March.

Squirrel Linings are still very firm, and there is no appearance of the article being any cheaper, in fact our latest advice from Russia is that wiatka are selling at 30 rubels per pair, so that would make them at least 65s. per pair here, and even at these extreme prices our furriers are buying.

In the sales yesterday there were some very large parcels of Thibet lambskin coats and crosses which fetched extraordinary prices; one string of crosses, which were exceedingly fine, sold as high as 117s. each, and has given us the impression that this article will again advance to 1889 prices.

Nutria is still selling very freely for mantle trimmings, and in consequence of the continued high price of fur seals the better grades are being dyed seal color and certainly look very handsome, far surpassing the pulled and dyed musquash.

Mink was growing in favor here, but the high prices realized by the Hudson's Bay Co. this week did not enable the trade here to secure many, but the bulk was taken by the German buyers.

## Another Railway Deal.

The Manitoba Government has made an arrangement with the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, for the extension of its Souris branch to the Souris coal fields, some distance beyond the western boundary of the province. The distance to be covered is 120 miles. Then the Deloraine branch is to be extended to Melita, where a junction will be formed with the Souris branch. The distance of the latter line is 25 miles. In addition to this the Glenboro branch is to be extended five miles. So that the C. P. R. will build 150 miles altogether. To aid them in doing this the Government agrees to give the company a cash bonus of \$150,000. This is equivalent to \$1,000 a mile. It might be contended that the Government had no business giving aid in territory beyond the boundary of the province. As an offset to this, however, the Government has secured an important agreement regarding the development of the Souris coal fields. The Dominion Coal company, through Major Walsh, agrees to proceed at once to the development of the coal mines, and the railway company has bound itself in a bond of 50,000 to the Government that coal will be supplied for \$4 a ton, which means a reduction of \$3.50 per ton on former prices. The arrangement is binding for ten years.