

THOUSANDS ON INDIAN HEAD EXCURSIONS

THE experimental farm at Indian Head is recognized as one of the most noteworthy institutions in connection with agriculture in Canada. The infection of good farming methods has spread throughout the Indian Head district until the farmers scarcely know what it is to have poor crops. It is quite proper, therefore, that the department of agriculture should arrange for annual excursions that permit agriculturists from all parts of the province to see this great Dominion experimental farm, as well as privately owned farms in the neighborhood, at as low cost as possible.

Last week close to 4,000 people, including farmers, farmers' wives, farmers' sons, farmers' daughters and hired help took advantage of excursion rates to see the crops and hear particulars regarding how

to cut off noxious weeds. Later the mower is used again to check top growth and develop a strong root system for winter. This last cutting should not be made later than August 1st, so that there will be enough top to protect the crowns from damage by frosts. Summerfallow land was advised as best.

It had not been found necessary to inoculate the soil at Indian Head, but over 200 sacks of soil had been sent to individual farmers to aid them in starting this most desirable crop.

The alfalfa growing competition was referred to by F. Hedley Auld. It was explained that the province has been divided into four districts and that in each six cash prizes of \$500, \$400, \$300, \$200, \$100 and \$75 would be offered for the best fields of alfalfa in these districts in 1914, comprising at least ten acres.

comers this year have a poor crop in Saskatchewan, because of a lack of knowledge last summer. They were anxious to plow as many acres as possible and so neglected to use disks and harrows.

Experiments that have been conducted at Indian Head with different varieties of farm crops were discussed by Professor Bracken. He also took up the thickness of seeding, the dates of seeding, the depth to sow, the use of the soil packer and several other points of practical interest to every farmer, and impressed upon his hearers the fact that every man must be guided by the conditions under which he works.

Mr. Gussow gave a short talk on smuts, rusts and other troubles found in farm crops. Many questions were answered. The Dominion botanist is anxious to find out what plant diseases are common to the various parts of the West. He will be pleased to receive specimens and particulars from those who run across any pests.

ABOUT AND IN THE HOME

Household affairs and home surroundings were not neglected. Miss Beynon pointed out that more should be done to provide cosy homes and the comforts of life. Women's clubs are too few. In Ontario 12,000 women organized in some 500 clubs, discussed details of affairs with which they have to deal. The women of the West want to know how best to cook three meals a day for 365 days in the year with a small variety of cooking materials. Simple recipes on breadmaking were acceptable. All wanted to know how to save labor and make the home beautiful on a small outlay.

It was hinted that sometimes women were inclined to be hard on the men who hunted far and wide for girl help and then their wives sent them away because of some trifling deficiency in working ability.

Professor Macoun was glad to learn on investigation that the opportunities in the Canadian West were great for the production of small fruits and vegetables to meet the requirements of every home. He advised that special attention be paid to native trees and bushes, as many introductions would not survive the rigors of winter. Details regarding preparation of soil and planting of various fruits were given.

Mr. Ross said that this season had been the worst experienced for some time in horticultural work. However, despite adverse conditions it was found possible to have a fine variety of trees, shrubs, flowers and vegetables. Shelter belts were essential to prevent the sun and winds from destroying what was planted. Lawns and flowers were discussed at length.

Garden work and the advantages of having home grown vegetables were dealt with by Mr. Batho. It was pointed out that with a little care and proper attention every farmer could produce his own garden products.

A digest of some of the addresses will be given in future issues.

PROSPEROUS NEIGHBORHOOD

It is not only on the experimental farm that crops are good and trees, shrubs, flowers and vegetables thrive. It is claimed that many farmers practice even more thorough methods in some particulars than do the farm authorities. The uniformly good condition of summerfallows for miles around the town indicate that slovenliness in that work is not tolerated. Grain crops, corn, potatoes and roots, too, are par excellence. Many wheat fields will yield 30



GREAT CROWDS VISITED INDIAN HEAD EXPERIMENTAL FARM LAST WEEK
This shows part of Thursday's excursionists near the big barn after they had listened to interesting and helpful addresses.

they are produced. None were dissatisfied with what they got for their time and money. However, several hundred were sorely disappointed because of the fact that a wreck prevented the excursion train from Saskatoon making the run on Wednesday. Thursday was the big day. About 2,000 excursionists were on the grounds all afternoon listening to practical addresses by competent speakers, examining test plots and field crops, comparing varieties, marvelling at the trees, shrubbery, flowers and vegetables, asking questions and discussing matters of mutual interest.

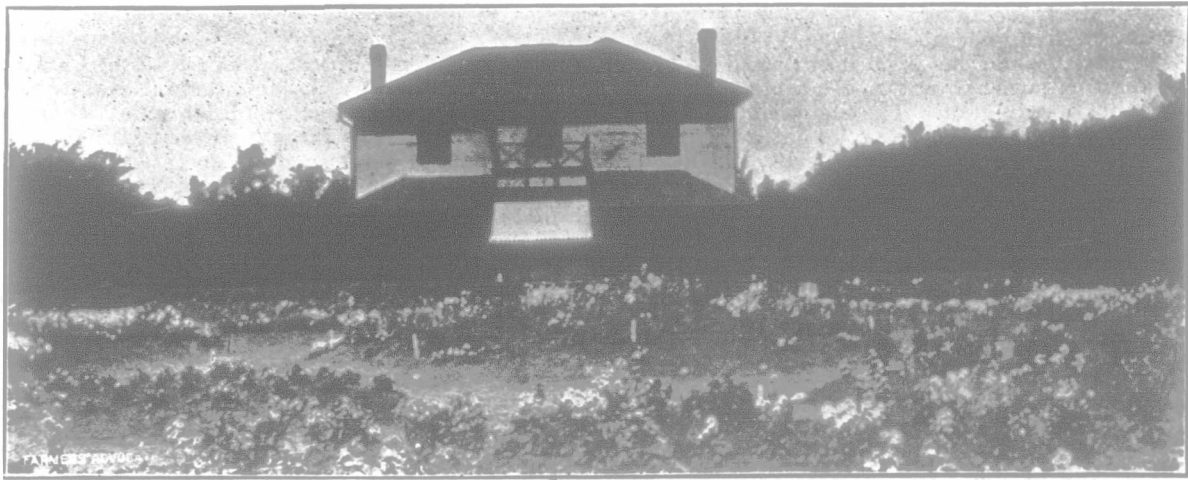
These excursions were arranged by F. Hedley Auld, who is in charge of agricultural extension work for the province. System prevailed throughout and excursionists were delighted with what they saw and heard. If one-half of them make an honest effort to put into practice one-tenth of the information available there will be a marked improvement in Saskatchewan agriculture in the next few years.

Hon. W. R. Motherwell was always on hand. Superintendent Angus Mackay also spared no effort in an endeavor to make the excursions a success. Notables, who spend their time laboring in the interests of Canadian agriculture and who were present on one or more of the three excursion days, included Dr. Wm. Saunders, director of the Dominion experimental farms; Geo. H. Clark, chief of the Seed Division at Ottawa; Prof. W. T. Macoun, Dominion horticulturist; H. T. Gussow, Dominion botanist; Norman M. Ross, superintendent of the Forestry Farm; Professors Willing and Bracken, of the College of Agriculture, Saskatoon; W. A. Munro, superintendent of the Experimental Farm at Rosthern; A. F. Mantle, chief of the Bureau of Statistics and Information, Regina, and F. H. Reed, representative of the Dominion Seed Branch at Regina. Others who gave interesting and helpful addresses were Miss L. K. Beynon and George Batho, of Winnipeg.

In welcoming the visitors Superintendent Mackay stated that this year's crops were about the best the farm had produced. There was therefore good opportunity for them to study conditions and decide for themselves whether or not it paid to cultivate thoroughly and follow a regular system. Attention was called to the growing of alfalfa. Turkestan and Grimm's were the hardest strains. Best results had been obtained from plowing about five inches deep the first week in May, sowing broadcast twelve pounds to the acre, harrowing and rolling. It always should be put in without a nurse-crop. When it has grown to about seven inches the mower is run over

Any farmer living within twenty miles of a railway can compete and entry must be made through the local agricultural society.

Crop rotations were dealt with by Mr. Munro, who urged the necessity of establishing certain principles, including intelligent summerfallowing. The study of rotation of crops was also advocated in order to permit of providing something to prevent soil drifting and supply humus. At Indian Head a satisfactory rotation consisted as follows: 1st year, summer-fallow; 2nd year, hoed crop such as corn, field roots, potatoes, etc.; 3rd year, wheat; 4th year, oats; 5th year, summerfallow; 6th year, wheat; 7th



RESIDENCE OF SUPT. MACKAY OF THE INDIAN HEAD EXPERIMENTAL FARM
Note the array of flowers in the foreground and of trees and shrubs for protection.

year, oats (seeded down to rye grass); 8th year, hay; 9th year, pasture. It was of course pointed out that any satisfactory rotation necessitated the keeping of live stock.

Prairie breaking and summer-fallowing were dealt with by Hon. Mr. Motherwell, and it was pointed out that they were much the same when done right. The object should be to check growth early, to make the surface in shape to take in the rains and then to harrow, forming a mulch on top to lock in the moisture. Crop returns for the first four or five years depended largely on the thoroughness and timeliness of breaking. Many new-

to 40 bushels to the acre. And gardens are not altogether neglected. Some have as fine flowers and vegetables as can be found anywhere. Whether these farmers took pattern off the experimental farm years ago or not their methods are worthy models for agriculturists in all parts of the West.

The present condition of the forestry farm is a credit to Superintendent Ross. It is difficult to imagine that such changes can be worked in this prairie country in four or five years. What was naked prairie in 1905 is now a model of perfection in the line of trees, shrubs, flowers, etc. Everything is arranged with good effect.