

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE.

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A Report on Sugar-beet Growing.

It is somewhat surprising to find, from the last report of the Kansas Board of Agriculture, that the United States, with all its progressiveness, and with every facility for the production of both beet and cane sugar, is yet far from supplying its own demand for the sweet commodity. Last year, in fact, 1,643,273 tons of sugar were imported into the country, 55.9 per cent. of this coming from Cuba, 24.43 per cent. from the Dutch East Indies, 5.57 per cent. from Germany, 2.12 per cent. from the Philippines, and 9.33 per cent. from Brazil, S. Domingo, British Guiana, B. W. I., and Peru. From such statistics, it is argued that the future of the beet-sugar industry in the country looks bright, and every encouragement is being given both to beet-growers and beet-sugar manufacturers.

Although due warning is given in regard to possible failures, devastations by frosts, such as that which almost ruined the Kansas crop of 1903, etc., the Report sees no reason why the industry should not be introduced into many localities where it is now unknown. The best way to do this is, it is suggested, to form a beet-growers' association, which will first obtain all possible information on the subject, make arrangements with the nearest available factory for taking the beets, and engage a practical sugar-beet agriculturist to superintend the work of demonstration. The capital needed will be about one-third the total expense, or about \$10 per acre. The organization will supply the growers with seed implements and labor, and plan to repay the money advanced by the members upon receipt of the harvest returns. The proving that beets can be successfully grown in the district is but the first step towards the establishment of a factory in the district itself. Warning is given that sugar-beet growing entails much work, and growers are advised to procure laborers to assist. Otherwise, since a poorly-worked crop means a poor crop, profits cannot be expected.

As regards the most promising localities for beet-growing, it has been found that a deep, fertile sand or clay loam gives best results; gravelly soil is not good, neither is soil sandy enough to be blown. Beets should be grown as a third or fourth rotation, and will be found to do exceedingly well on old alfalfa land. If planted after grain, the stubble should be burned or plowed under in the fall. If the soil is not rich in humus, well-rotted manure—sheep manure, if possible—should be spread and plowed under, also, in the fall, using seven to twelve loads to the acre. In the spring, the soil should be levelled and harrowed as soon as possible, being pulverized as thoroughly as possible. The working of the seed-bed, also, should be done so rapidly that the ground has not time to dry out before the seeds are planted, an operation which varies in time in different localities, early planting being always advisable. The seed should be planted $\frac{1}{2}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in depth, depending upon the soil and time of planting; the earlier the planting, the shallower the depth. And when weeds appear, constant cultivation will be necessary to keep them down. Shallow cultivation after every rain should also be done to conserve the moisture. Thinning the rows is very important, and should be done carefully, so that no harm may be done to the plants that are left.

Harvesting is begun by loosening the beets with a beet plow, which breaks the taproot and lifts the beet so that it can easily be pulled by



Mr. M. McF. Hall.

Manager Dominion Exhibition, 1906, Halifax, N. S.

hand. A topper follows the harvester, and must be skilled in his work, for if he cuts off too little the amount of tare will be increased, while if too much, some of the actual profit in sugar may be lost. The tops may be turned under for fertilizer, or siloed, or stock may be turned directly upon the field to clean them up. Beet pulp is valuable as stock food, but, on account of the loss of sugar and salts, is not, of course, as good as the beets themselves.

Mr. J. G. Hamilton, Secretary of the American Beet-sugar Company, concludes the report by the observation that, to be successful, a sugar factory must be run right. Trying to run it "on the cheap" is not likely to be profitable. "I may say, in conclusion," he says, "that a successful factory means continuous and uninterrupted prosperity to the locality in which it is built. But an unsuccessful factory is an error, and simply a monument that will stand out to your prejudice. I believe in home industries, and any concern which takes the money out of the ground and sells the article out of the town, and pays out large sums for labor and material, must be of vast benefit to a locality. But it takes a great deal of money to build and properly conduct a beet-sugar factory, and it is not an industry that should be encouraged without mature and careful consideration."

Our Maritime Letter.

At the Maritime Board of Trade, in August, we had the pleasure to introduce this resolution, as basic of all the Conference's legislation for the upliftment of these Provinces by the sea, the fair readjustment of their financial concerns with the Central Authority, and their new outsetting, on some sort of equality with the nascent Provinces of the West, just accorded their autonomy on broad and generous terms:

"Resolved, that in view of the fact that the upbuilding of the West has entailed a tremendous drain on the population and resources of Maritime Canada, the time has arrived when the General Government should devise some efficient means of recompense, by encouraging immigration of suitable people, for the development of the fisheries, the agriculture and the mines of these Provinces, and by such bonusing or other fiscal treatment of prime industries as must necessarily give the requisite impetus to trade and commerce within them."

This resolution, although general enough in its terminology, enunciates a deeply-felt sense of loss at the diminution of our population, even if we are glad to see the exodians turning their footsteps towards Western Canada; it also expresses our conviction that, according to distributive justice, something should be done to relieve the stagnation which has overtaken the seaboard, a stagnation brought about by a too-profuse blood-letting, followed by a state of atrophy which now attains the public-spiritedness of almost every portion of this country.

Of course, it is no easy task to elaborate off-handedly a policy which will afford a remedy for every phase of this case, but the sooner our public men get together and impress their united views on the Ministry, the better. This resolution, reflecting perfectly the mind of the convention, then, passed without a dissenting voice. It was made, too, the corner-stone upon which all other resolutions in this class were built. However different delegates felt on the abstract questions of trade, and the subsidiary ones of bonusing, all agreed that we had reached a point when we must look back searchingly over the past, view our difficulties impartially in the present, and bravely bridge over the deep chasms which the future held up so unmistakably to our view, by some new accommodation of the ever-elastic national policy.

Some, who have given the subject no study, may think that the premises of this resolution are untenable. They are as solid as the rock. Willingly or unwillingly, we have been giving of our best blood—our very youth itself—to the West, until now we have little but those past middle age and the old to maintain us. To use the graphic language of President Read, at the Board, how can we longer subsist when the "generative force of our people" has gone out from us.

In the Island, we have suffered in population even more so than the sister Provinces of the eastern mainland. Communication they have, and we have not; they are at least in the life-stream of the nation. Our condition more readily disheartens, although despondency also seems to be far too general in the agricultural centers of all three divisions. Everybody knows that if the heart is not rendered light for purposeful action by faith in the country and expansive hopefulness, ideals will not work out in practice. The cry, "To the West! To the West!" has gone through the land so persistently that hopes are high with those tending there, and ventures on them are made which in ordinary conditions might well be considered desperate. Once sold out in the East, however, no matter how they may long to return, it is but a mere fraction that can ever come back again. Abandonment of the agriculture of the East would be a disaster; if it is not to come, steps must be taken, and taken quickly, to raise the spirits of Eastern farmers, and this can only be done by some plan by which to get them the real profits and comforts which are in farming, and in farming under Eastern conditions especially.

"The lure of the West," all will admit, is denuding the East, but, say those Heaven-born philosophers: "It is only the inevitable happening. Do not, for a moment, challenge such conditions, nor be stupid enough to utter complaint." In other words, "Get out and shovel snow!"