

showing up all over the country—hip-roof barns and two-storey houses.

During the time from 1908 through to 1912 the country, having proven itself through the efforts of these homesteaders, was being invaded by thousands of people from the United States and eastern Canada who had the money and wanted to establish themselves in this virgin and already-proven, fine wheat country. Development then grew very rapidly. In fact, it was said that the telephones arrived at the farms before the houses were built, in many cases—an indication of the rapidity with which development took place. A great many of these farmers brought in the new, heavy tractors, run by steam or oil, which would pull a 9-bottom plow, a set of double discs to cover the width of the land broken by the plow, and a set of harrows as well, or a float to level the land down. Thus, some of these farmers, working day and night, would bring about 500 acres of land under cultivation in a single year.

At the time of World War I all this rapid expansion was called to a halt for a year or two until a sudden demand for agricultural products became evident and the farmers again speeded up their production. This demand brought a tremendous increase in price to the farmer for his products. With his added wealth and good crops he was able to expand quite rapidly, buying more land and bringing it under cultivation as quickly as possible. There was considerable evidence of prosperity in western Canada during that period and through into the twenties. Then came the hard years of the thirties when, coupled with the great depression, large areas of Saskatchewan, in particular, suffered from a severe drought. These large areas continued to have set-backs right through until 1942, with the exception of one or two intervening years in which they got an average crop. A great many farmers abandoned their farms and moved to the cities; others moved north or east of Saskatchewan, and many went as far as the Peace River country, where, they felt, they would be secure in obtaining fuel and also feed for their stock, both of which they were not able to get in the great wheat belt.

In the early 1940's crops all over the West started to come back as the dry areas receded. The Second World War was on and, again, a tremendous demand arose for farm products. In this period the great majority of farms were mechanized, new homes were built and new cars or trucks appeared on almost every farm. In fact, the whole face of our farming community had changed completely and, to look back

over the previous fifty years, it would have been almost impossible for an old-timer to believe that he was looking at the same country. New highways were black-topped or gravelled, running in all directions to the rapidly-expanding cities, electric power was expanded tremendously and many farms were electrified. New modern homes began to replace homes built in the 1900's and the 1920's. Many farmers built or bought homes in the adjacent small towns to which they would retire for the winter and enjoy a bout of curling.

So we get a picture of Western Canada over the past 60 years of tremendous advancement from the days of our homestead pioneers. Of course, it must be remembered that you can still find many farmers who, due to bad or incapable management or adverse conditions in certain areas, have not been able to keep up with the pace set by those in most other areas.

There is, however, one trouble which bothers farmers today and which did not exist a short time ago, and that is the very rapid increase in the cost of the tools of production.

The farmer realizes that labour and management are entitled to good wages and a profit, for while they are making good money there is a much better and close market for farm products. However, paying good wages and making a profit, plus the cost of factory expansion and the cost of taxation, have had an effect on the price of the farmer's tools of production, and during the past ten years this increase has been rapid; yet at the same time of increasing costs of farm machinery there has been a trend downward in the price of farm grains which has left the farmer with the problem of how to make the two meet. Two groups of farmers through their own efforts are able to maintain the balance between cost of production and the value of the products which they have to sell. The first of these groups are the farmers who, having large areas for growing cereal grains, operate anywhere from a section to three or four sections of land. The other group are those who developed a good herd of beef cattle which, as you know, commands a very good price on the market today. These two groups, so far, have been able to avoid the cost-price squeeze.

This indicates that when we have areas where farmers are hard up and crushed in spirit, we find that the main cause has been the lack of credit which would have enabled them to participate in either one of the aforementioned projects, namely, to increase acreage or build up a good herd of cattle. For