

IMPURE SEED GRAIN.

A HEAVY TAX ON THE WESTERN FARMERS.

Necessity for the Campaign of Education Inaugurated by the Dominion Government and the Railway—Wild Oats and Smut.

(Special Despatch to The Globe).
Winnipeg, Jan. 7.—The necessity for seed grain education among the farmers, which begins to-morrow, under the auspices of the Dominion Government and the railways, is evidenced by the fact that up to the 31st of December 1905 had passed inspection at Winnipeg, and of this amount 5,574,000 bushels graded below No. 4 wheat, some 8 per cent. being rejected for smut, and 5 to 6 per cent. for weeds, of which wild oats were most in evidence. It was claimed by many farmers that there was something in the climatic condition of 1905 particularly favorable to smut, and there may be some truth in this statement, but ever against this must be placed the fact that farmers, who paid special attention to their seed, and were careful in blue stoning it, did not suffer from the smut as did farmers who were careless of these precautions. Certainly no climatic conditions were responsible for the presence of wild oats and many other noxious weeds. It is a severe object lesson that in the first four months of the crop year something like 15 per cent. of the crop has been depreciated anywhere from eight cents to twenty cents per bushel in value from these two causes alone.

What are you doing for your Seed Grain?

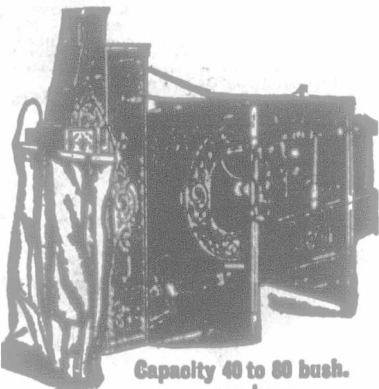
If you want good, clean grain, you must sow good, clean seed. Carelessness is losing thousands of dollars for the farmers of the Northwest, as is proven by this news item from a daily paper. Read it.

Your share of this loss would in a short time pay for a

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Suggestions to Intending Fruit Ranchers in British Columbia.

(Continued)

PENTITION. This is the name given to the small settlement at the southern end of Okanagan Lake, over 70 miles south of Vernon. Thirty thousand acres of beautiful country are here in the hands of a company, which is busy dividing up and selling the land nearest to the landing stage, in five or ten acre lots. Again the youth of the place prevents it from having any past to which it can point confidently in speaking of its future. The conception of Pention as a fruit-raising area took place little more than a year ago. It is true that a small orchard many years old surrounds the former homestead of this estate and contains a number of bearing fruit trees, but I have already indicated in my preliminary remarks, the point of view from which I should regard such orchards. However, the vendors of land at Pention enthusiastically ask one to look forward to a profit of \$5000 a year off ten acres of trees in full bearing.

The position of Pention is favorable. The area at present offered for sale is divided into bottom and bench land. Some of the bottom land appeared likely to suffer from flooding by lake and river but I was assured this did not occur. The bench land while somewhat unequal in surface and in the presence of timber and stone, is mostly of good quality. The soil is sandy with a subsoil of light clay or compressed sand; in parts there is much gravel. The exposure of the bench land is excellent, sloping mostly to the westward. The system of irrigation is not yet installed (November 1905). The transportation facilities are, in an inferior degree, the same as those of Kelowna and Summerland, but like many another budding district in many a land, Pention has the prospect of excellent railway communication in the future. The weather while I was there was charming, but although the climate is advertised as the "best in Canada" I was unable to obtain any meteorological statistics. I understand that the Land Company does not intend to go into the fruit-growing business on its own account, but that an expert will be obtained to supervise the care of orchards belonging to absentees. The price of the best bottom land is probably, based upon the presumption, for which there appears some justification that the south of the Okanagan Valley should be a more varied and earlier producer of fruit than the north. The lack of efficient transport at present and the fact that time and expense are required to prove fully the capabilities of the district, must be taken into consideration. Whilst I became persuaded that the company is pursuing energetic methods and possesses good land in a favorable and beautiful position, I was unable to understand on what data the forecast is made, which apparently calculates the numerous fluctuating conditions and influences of eight or ten years hence, sufficiently accurate to be able to ask the buyer to expect a return of \$500 per acre from his fruitland at the end of that period. I heartily hope that the labors of those, who are about to settle upon the land and elucidate its possibilities, will result in a vindication of the prophecy.

It will thus be seen that the Okanagan Valley may be divided roughly into northern and southern parts; that in the north the soil is chiefly a black loam, while the south possesses soil of a sandy nature; that apples and other of the hardier fruits have been proved conclusively to flourish in the north, and that there is reason for believing that peaches and various soft fruits, as well as apples, may be produced in the south; and finally, that while commercial success has been attained in the north after years of scientific toil, those years are still in front of the south.

There are certain general considerations which should enter into all calculations as to the future of a fruit-growing area to which it is not possible to allude within the limits of this article, e.g. it would be vain to anticipate a long continuance of the freedom from serious pests, enjoyed at present in the Province. However stringent the precautions, however zealous the work of inspectors, pests are sure to creep in, whilst new pests may arise in any country from within, owing to the unpleasant way which insects and fungi may have of discarding the lesser

attractions of wild plants, which have served them for food through ages, for the tenderer nourishment of cultivated trees.

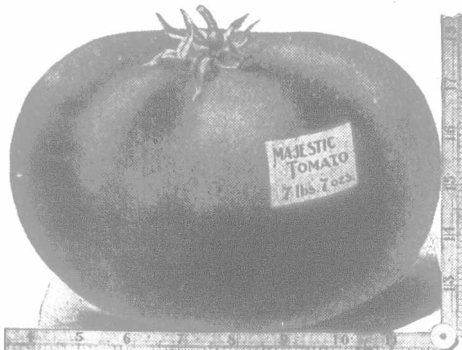
Then again there are certain local conditions in the dry belt upon which much might be written, but which will occur to every intelligent observer. Two subjects will, it appears to me, be a source of much discussion in the future, first, whether a man may reasonably hope to make a living off a mere five or ten acres of fruitland as he is now encouraged to believe, and secondly, whether absentee ownership of fruit lots is a good thing either for the district or the owner. Let me here quote the words of a leading authority on fruit-growing: "It is a common practice to estimate the amount of fruit, which will be produced at any given time in the future by multiplying the number of acres of plantation by the yield of a normal acre of that kind of fruit. The fallacy here lies in the fact that very many of the orchards which are planted in hope and expectation yield only bugs and fungi. It is probably not too much to say that fully half of the fruit plantations which have been set out in the past, fail to produce any crop for the market." These words should stand as a caution, but need not deter the man, who brings brains, determination, energy, and the necessary capital, into the business, and I feel sure that he will find the Okanagan Valley not only a pleasant home but also a district in which his efforts are likely to be rewarded with flattering returns; it is, however, necessary that the newcomer to whom the ins and outs of fruit growing are unknown, should acquaint himself well beforehand with the risks and difficulties which may be encountered, as well as the wonderful results which may be attained.

The Provincial Government appears to take a paternal interest in the industry and renders a good deal of practical help to the grower—the measures taken to prevent the incursion of pests, the importation of infected stock, are good. A great need is an experimental station in the upper country in the heart of the orchards, and it cannot be long before an outcry will be raised for the establishment of an horticultural college within the Province.

In conclusion permit me to acknowledge the universal courtesy with which I was received from one end of the district to the other, and my indebtedness for many useful facts to an admirable supplement issued by the *Vernon News* in connection with the Dominion Exhibition at New Westminster. If some of my observations seem to differ from the opinions held by some of the gentlemen, whom I had the pleasure of meeting, it must be remembered that my point of view is that of the buyer not of the seller, and that a free and friendly exchange of views in the best of stimulants to healthy progress.

H. GORDON.

The accompanying illustration is from a photograph of the tomato, which won the first prize for the largest tomato grown from Majestic seed, a variety which is being widely distributed by the Iowa Seed Company of Des Moines. The grower of this tomato is Mrs. Amelia Cronin of Akron, Iowa, who in sending in her report says, "I planted the Majestic tomato seed in February in a box of soil in the house, and when about two inches high, transplanted to another box. At proper season I set them out on a very rich piece of ground where a straw pile had been burned



and the ashes raked in. The plants were watered every night and when about 18 inches high, I cut the tips off and by allowing only 2 or 3 fruits to ripen on some of the plants, it threw all the strength to these fruits. The largest specimen weighed 7 lbs. 7 ozs. and there were several which weighed over 5 lbs. each." Some plants of the Majestic tomato have produced 145 to 160 lbs. of fruit. Just think what that kind of a crop would mean on an acre of land. The Iowa Seed Company are again offering \$100.00 in cash prizes on them and we hope our readers will compete. Better write them today for a copy of their large illustrated catalogue of Garden and Farm Seeds, which will be sent free if you mention this paper.

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