



HAZZARD MINES.

A Western Industry of Growing Importance.

To the great majority of the settlers of the wheat-producing districts of the West the question of supply is one of greatest importance. As a necessity arises, however, a means of supplying it is generally found. In the south-eastern corner of Assiniboia, just west of the Manitoba boundary line, near the junction of the C. P. R. south-western branches with the Soo line, a large area of lignite coal was discovered some years ago. Engravings are produced on this page, one showing the mine mouth of the pit that is now being worked at Coalfields, the other the Roche Percee, or pierced rock, from which the mines take their name. These mines are the property of the Souris Coal Mining Co. (Ltd.), and the property owned by the Company, comprising 2,500 acres, is located in townships 1 and 2, range 6, west of the 2nd meridian, about 290 miles south-west of Winnipeg, where are the headquarters of the Company. There are two workable seams of coal. The upper, about 20 feet below the prairie level, is four feet thick; the other seam, 100 feet below the prairie level, is from 7 to 10 feet thick, and is the one that is being worked. The yield is estimated at 8,000 tons per acre, so that this property would give about nineteen million tons of coal. This lignite coal, while inferior to anthracite or bituminous, is a very useful fuel, and is rapidly increasing in favor as furnaces and stoves are being improved so as to be more adapted to its use. As an evidence of the increasing demand for the coal, the output for the years 1895 and 1896 was only about 10,000 tons, while last year about 40,000 tons were mined. This winter about 150 men are employed.

A Common Mistake Regarding Work.

The farmer is a busy man if he is worthy of his occupation. So is every other man, no matter what his business in the world may be. The idler and the trifler are like the sinner who "cannot stand in the judgment"; they cannot stand long in the stern trial which the world has for every business man. But too many men misunderstand the meaning of the word work. To many it means only manual labor; to many farmers it looms up as necessary and important above all other things. For the sake of their work they will neglect their business; for the sake of their work they will pass by opportunities of great value if they were improved. The wise man spoke of him who is "diligent in business" as worthy of the highest honor; not of the man who is a slave to his every-day work.

There is a nice problem confronting every business man. It is what and how much of the drudgery or detail of his business he shall attend to personally. We have known a man whose time was worth several thousand dollars a year to spend it on work that a cheap clerk could do as well. He was losing something. We know farmers and stockmen who are sticking at home and at labor all the time who ought to be attending to their business affairs instead of taking the place of a hired man. They are putting their ability in at too low a price, they are underrating themselves. Consider what work can be done most effectively, and do it. It may be that writing a letter will bring returns enough to pay for a laborer for several days. It may be that reading an article or an advertisement will be worth more money than a month's labor. No man can lay down a rule for another in such matters, but if some people would labor less and attend to business more they would be better off. Work is not all manual labor, it is the intelligent direction of energy to the furtherance of business.—Exchange.

The Farmer as a Thinker.

It is long since I heard it remarked of a certain farmer, well known for the successful management of his farm, that he "was always thinking." And, it was added, that is the first quality of a good farmer. Perhaps the same might be said of any other business or profession. To be so saturated with it that it is never out of one's thoughts means success. The person who made the remark went on to discourse of the change that has taken place in farming during the last fifty years, or thereabouts, in the relative importance of manual labor and thought. When one listens to the talk of elderly people—if those over sixty will pardon being called "elderly"—it is noticeable what emphasis they put upon the fact that in their "young days" farmers worked much harder than they now do. Hard labor, unceasing industry and thrift were the only gateways to success—at least among the class from which I sprang. No idling with reading, correspondence or half-holidays for them; no dabbling in science or theories or experiments or lectures; nothing but dogged persistence in rough, hard work from year to year. Such tales I have listened to of our forebears; of the prodigies of their zeal in cleaning sheughs, which was so great that such a one would never be seen to lift his head from the task for half a day! Indeed, it seemed to be a favorite pastime for the long summer evenings. One was telling me of the loneliness of her early bridal days on a moorland farm, and when I asked her if her man didn't keep her company in the evenings after the kye were milked, she replied, "Oh, no! He aye gaed out tae clean sheughs." It must have been because the land was insufficiently drained that they were constrained to spend so much of their time in dyke-building.

It is not suggested that these farmers were not thinkers, but simply that necessity put hard manual labor in the place of first importance. Among them there would be, then as now, the thoughtful and the thoughtless. But while thrift and industry can never lessen in value, it becomes more and more important that the farmer, even of few acres, should use his brains—his thinking faculty. So much occasion is there for forethought, planning, and a constant alert supervision, not to speak of anxiety, about the rent and losses among the stock, that I have often thought a farmer's life would be too hard if it were not that the conditions of his work give him ample opportunity for quiet thought. Walking from field to field to inspect his stock or his crops he can mature his plans in peaceful surroundings without interruptions. If he puts forth his hand to milk, to sow, to lead a horse, or to build a stack, the work is not so absorbing that his mind is not free. And I have it on the testimony of more than one that a great amount of useful thinking can be done between the stils of the plow. A way has

been found through many a mental thicket as the skillful hand and eye made the furrows straight.—The Scottish Farmer.

An Essential in a Good Potato.

The tendency in agricultural lines is more and more towards knowledge of the products of the farm. It is not alone sufficient to produce things, but the article produced must be the best possible. To render such a result possible, it is incumbent on the producer "to know a good thing when he sees it." In potatoes, size, as far as is compatible with smoothness and soundness, is desired, as is also the mealy texture, about which the Farmer's Gazette has the following to say: "Why is it that the potato on being boiled becomes so floury or 'mealy' in texture? When cut up in the raw state the flesh or substance of the tuber is quite soft and juicy, whereas the same tuber after being boiled becomes quite crisp and mealy in texture. The explanation is that in the process of cooking the starch grains which are stored up in such large quantities in tubers become so acted upon by the heat that they burst the little cells or coatings in which they are enveloped, and in this way give the peculiar floury appearance so characteristic of a well-cooked potato of good quality. The higher the percentage of starch present the more mealy the appearance which the tuber will present after being cooked. A simple test of the quality of a potato may be applied by cutting it in two and then placing the cut edges against each other so as to get them into the positions which they occupied before cutting. One of the sections should then be taken hold of and the other allowed to depend or hang down. In almost all cases the lower portion will remain attached to the upper, but by jerking the hand slightly the two can be made to part company. The more difficult it is to shake them apart in this way the better the quality of the tuber, the explanation being that the pieces are held together by the adhesive nature of the starch, and that the more starch that is present the more difficult it will be to part them. On the other hand, the less starch there is present and the more water, the softer and less floury the flesh will be when cooked."

Hedge Planting in December: a Singular Experience.

To the Editor "Farmer's Advocate":

Sir,—I have been a reader of your valuable journal for years, and confess that I have learned many good lessons from discussions in it on different lines of farming. Having been benefited by others' experience, I am willing to help my brother farmers in return, especially when it comes in the line of beautifying our farms with ornamental and shade trees, thus increasing their value and making homes more attractive.

In your March 15th issue is a question and answer regarding lawn and hedges. I do not wish to dictate to those who should know more than myself, but in the last part of December, 1899, as the weather was mild, we planted over 400 cedars for hedge, from two to three feet high, and cut them back to 18 inches. Experienced men said I was wasting time, as they would not live, as May and 1st of June was the proper time to plant. In the following spring we planted some more in the first week in May and 1st of June. Of the 400 planted in December only two died. Of those planted in May not any lived, and of those planted on 1st of June, one lived. My lawn is clay loam. Nearly all the trees were taken from high land; a few from swamp, but they do not seem to do so well as the others. The cedar makes one of the prettiest hedges we have. Huron Co., Ont. G. LAITHWAITE.



THE ROCHE PERCEE, OR PIERCED ROCK.