

very great disadvantages for the farming community. Already are to be found in these new provinces, districts yielding little more than half the returns per acre they did some years ago, and while the yield, following continuous cropping, is going down, the land is becoming foul with weeds, whereas, a system of mixed farming, including the feeding of the straw and other rough feed to cattle, together with a suitable system of rotation, involving spreading the manure on the land, builds up the soil, keeps it clear of weeds, and hastens the ripening of the grain, thus reducing the danger from early frost.

There are in certain sections of the west, farmers who finish their cattle during the summer and ship them to the British market. An example of this may be seen on a farm near Moosomin, where Mr. R. J. Phin, is devoting his attention to this work. He handles about nine hundred (900) head each year, sometimes shipping direct to the old country. These cattle are gathered largely around Moosomin, and in the Moose Mountain country, where there is abundance of water and grass. The chief points of interest regarding his operations are—(a) the finishing on rape of cattle not otherwise fit to ship; (b) winter feeding.

#### MR. PHIN'S METHODS.

##### (a) Finishing cattle on rape:

The land intended for this purpose is treated as a summer fallow during the early summer, and about the first of July is sown to the forage crop mentioned, two pounds of seed per acre being used, sown in drills. After the sowing is done, manure is applied with spreaders; surface cultivation is followed about once a week, thus keeping the weeds under. The cattle are turned on about September 15, and kept there until the frost sets in; in addition some chopped grain is fed. The cattle come off the rape in primo condition and ship well. The grains fed consist of oats, barley or frozen wheat, depending upon the price at which these may be obtained. Not only are the steers thus turned off in good condition, but the land is cleaned and made to bear a profitable crop of wheat, the straw being strong and the heads well filled. The packing of the soil seems to have the effect of preventing a rank growth of straw and also hastens the maturing of the crop. In 1908 sixty-five (65) acres were under rape, but some years double this quantity has been sown; this course of husbandry has been followed now for five years with satisfactory results.

(b) Winter feeding outside.—During the winter months, from one to two hundred steers are fed on cut straw and chopped grain. The equipment is not expensive, consisting of cheap wooden troughs, up about two feet from the ground on the leeward side of the buildings. Adjacent to the buildings is a yard with cheap sheds, but the steers fed there do not seem to make any greater gains than those altogether in the open. As remarked by Mr. Phin, "A big well-fed steer seems to take little heed of the cold." The cattle fed are practically all Shorthorn grades, which are preferred, as, in addition to being good feeders, they have size and weight.

The following statement by Mr. W. F. Puffer, M.L.A., of Lacombe, Alta., who is, in every sense of the word, a practical man, will be found both interesting and instructive.—

#### INTENSIVE FATTENING.

(By W. F. Puffer, M.L.A., Lacombe.)

"In the district around Lacombe and Red Deer, and in fact in that part of the province generally spoken of as Central Alberta, the winter feeding of cattle is becoming more general.

There is still plenty of grass throughout this district but the farmer is already occupying considerable areas. The country is somewhat rolling with abundant water, and dotted with frequent groves of poplar and some spruce, affording excellent opportunity for winter feeding in the open without the expense of stabling.