

THE MISFORTUNE OF BUMPER WHEAT CROPS.

"About the biggest curse this country has is the bumper crop of wheat," said Dr. J. G. Rutherford, Dominion Live-stock Commissioner, addressing a Manitoba meeting of stockmen last winter. "Some three times since I first came into this Province we got farmers started fairly well along live-stock lines and along dairy lines, and were getting them to try various live-stock branches. Creameries were being built, pigpens erected, and people were doing fairly well, but there would come one of these big crops of wheat and everyone would throw up his head and the first thing we knew the cattle were sold, the pigs were sold and the fowls were allowed to freeze to death. Creameries were closed up. Every man was plowing, and it was forty bushels to the acre and \$1.00 a bushel!" The fact of the matter is that with all credit to wheat, we must, if we wish to succeed in this country, look to our live stock."

While it may occur to the satirist to suggest that next winter Dr. Rutherford may be able to lead in a hymn of praise for the blessing of a slim crop of wheat, nevertheless there was much wisdom in his words. Mankind is ever prone to shortsighted conduct which very often leads to commercial suicide, and it is only when the easy down-grade path is providentially blocked that he begins the climb to higher and more stable levels of success.

So much for official philosophy. Continuing, the Live-stock Commissioner touched on a question that will awaken the interest of Eastern as well as prairie cattlemen:

"Complaint has been made that it does not pay to go into beef production in the West. As matters are, a man, after considerable expense and trouble, has prepared a number of fat cattle for sale and then finds very great difficulty in getting their proper value in the market. You all know what has been achieved by the united concerted action of the grain-growers of this country. The same thing can be done with regard to the marketing of cattle. It is simply a matter of combination on the part of the producers, and, in my opinion, there is a very profitable field for the production of beef. The export of cattle bred in this country is large, and it is getting larger all the time. In 1904 30,000 head of cattle were shipped East; in 1905, 32,000, and in 1906, 35,000. For years large numbers have been sent, and a lot of these cattle are shipped at a loss to the owner."

"In the States the cattle are shipped from the ranches to the Middle States, and there fed up, and at the end of ninety days are sent in to Chicago, and are carefully culled and only the best are sent forward for export to European markets. They sell from a penny to two-pence a pound more than Canadian cattle. On the other hand our cattle are shipped right through, and when they arrive on the other side of the Atlantic are a disgrace to Canadian breeders. It has always struck me on this phase of the matter that there is a great field in our Province of Manitoba, and in what is now Saskatchewan, as well as some parts of Ontario, for the finishing of these cattle. I think if these cattle could be taken by our Manitoba farmers in the fall and put into feed lots and fed on coarse grains, that it would pay very well indeed to finish these cattle here and send them forward to a properly-safeguarded market in Europe or in the East. I think that could be done very profitably. We have more coarse feed in this Province and in Saskatchewan than in any other part of the world that I know of. It is a ridiculous thing to ship cattle and also to ship our coarse grains. I intend to go thoroughly into this question with a view of establishing a paying and profitable cattle trade from Manitoba to Europe."

THE FARM.

EXPENSIVE PASTURE.

Late autumn and early spring grazing of meadows shortens more hay crops than drouth, soil poverty and summer frosts combined. The fields need an autumn growth of top for winter protection, and for mulch and fertilizer next summer. Don't crop the pastures too close or too late. Better put the stock up early, even if they require to be fed partly on straw and bedded with sawdust. Every bite in November means two or three less next summer. Penny wise, etc.

THE BEAN CROP SUFFERED.

In my neighborhood the bean crop is not nearly so even as it was last year. The frost of July 2nd took off a large per cent. Some planted over again, and some sowed buckwheat and millet. One neighbor had twenty-five acres frozen right down, another thirty-five acres, and many others had acres hurt. There has been no threshing done in this neighborhood, as there has been so much wet weather, and the beans are soft yet, so cannot tell how they are turning out.

Kent Co., Ont. W. LORNE DEMPSTER.

THE THING THAT IS NEEDED.

Ours is an era of progress, and everything must be turned to account. Even brains must be utilized! This is true on the farm, as anywhere else. The "anybody-can-farm" idea, of the days of crude methods and initial conditions, has exploded; the scientific idea and advanced conditions have succeeded. The farmer is approaching his true status. He is a force to be considered in the community and in the councils of the nation. To be a successful farmer, a man must be a thoroughly practical man of affairs, not a dreamer or mere theorist. He has as much need to think clearly, forcefully and intelligently as any other, the "learned" professions not excepted. Indeed, I am convinced, from some acquaintance with professional men, added to a practical knowledge of agriculture, that exigencies arise almost daily in the latter which tax equally, if not in a greater degree, the resourcefulness and innate ability of a man. And, after all, this is the chief factor and the supreme test—the aptitude to do, and do well, the work in hand. A man may sit on a fence and theorize all day; he may even learn the rules and principles of a vocation in a college, or from books, and yet be a failure. There are many such. It is not intended to put any discount upon theories as such, nor to cast any discredit upon books, colleges, rules or principles. These are, or should be, valuable aids. But the object is to emphasize the fact that the thing needed—the something, natural or acquired—which enables one to make his efforts count for success under ever-varying conditions, to surmount obstacles, and to solve the practical problems of



Rose Victor =64835=.

First-prize senior yearling Shorthorn bull, Canadian National Exhibition, Toronto, 1907. Owned and exhibited by W. R. Elliot & Sons, Guelph, Ont.

life, is the prime essential. The farmer, like every other man who wins success, must be more than a mere automaton, more than a mere machine working blindly, or working even according to set rules. He must be able to think, to see, to plan and to contrive independently of rules. I don't believe that all the mathematics in the world would fit a man to plow a good furrow, without a firm muscle, a good eye, and a correct idea of a furrow. A man may have a good acquaintance with the principles of the science of surgery, and yet, through lack of deftness in manipulation or steadiness of nerve, fail to be a skillful surgeon. So one may be well versed in mechanical philosophy, or the theory of machines, and yet be unfit to operate the common machinery of the farm.

By working according to right methods, let the farmer win the best that nature holds in store for him.

Kent Co., Ont.

TEN TO FIFTEEN BUSHELS BEANS PER ACRE.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

Regarding the bean crop in this section of the country, I would say the acreage for this season is about the same as former years. Regarding the yield, the late beans are not all harvested, and it would, therefore, be hard to determine, but I think I will be safe in saying the yield will be from 10 to 15 bushels per acre, with an average quality.

Kent Co., Ont.

EDWARD BRIEN.

RESULTS OF SEED SELECTION IN ONTARIO.

The work of inspecting the field plots of members of the Canadian Seed-Growers' Association is completed again in Ontario, not without some lessons which may be of general interest. Most farmers understand that there are a number of men in the Province who believe sufficiently in the forward movement in field agriculture of improving their crops by a system of selecting good, strong, vigorous plants, and sowing the product on what is called a breeding plot, to take the time necessary to work along lines laid down by the Canadian Seed-growers' Association.

Needless to say this season has been a peculiar one in being so late, and early growth having been so much retarded. With all the handicaps of weather, there has been a lot of good work accomplished by our members, and the work of breeding up plants has gone forward a stage. In fact this has been a season in which the value of this kind of work is clearly demonstrated.

In fall wheat, one of our oldest operators, Mr. C. R. Gies, of Heidelberg, had his breeding plot out in the middle of a 15-acre field of Dawson's Golden Chaff, which gave promise of an average yield of close on 40 bushels per acre. Mr. Gies top-dresses a meadow with stable manure after he has pastured the field or taken off a crop of hay, and sows it early in the season for fall wheat. The result is that he rarely fails in having an excellent crop. This year, where his breeding plot was a little thin, the plants were large and sappy and showed a slight tendency to rust when rust was scarcely seen anywhere else. He sows with alternate drills closed. The heads were very large and compact, and some of them showed an increase in the number of kernels. He was intending to hand-select these as a means of increasing the productive capacity of the strain. Mr. Gies informed me later that his plot turned over 42 bushels per acre. Mr. John Mc-

Callum, of Shakespeare, was growing side by side this year, in large quantities, the varieties of Dawson's Golden Chaff and the Abundance, I believe he called it. The latter was giving a much better promise for a yield. At the O. A. C. experimental plots the same variety was showing well.

I think I never saw larger heads of wheat than on Mr. H. Davidson's plot of Early Red Clawson. The severity of the spring season had thinned the crop somewhat, but it was trying hard to make up for this in growing heads, which would undoubtedly yield well. One conclusion I drew from

visiting the fall-wheat districts was that on well-drained soil those who top-dressed sod and plowed it shallow for wheat, rarely, if ever, failed in getting good crops, no matter what the season was, unless hit by insects or a fungous disease, and even from these this preparation made the crop quite immune.

Mr. Chas. Mackey, of Kinsale, had a remarkable plot of barley. He had alternated every other drill hoe in sowing about three acres, so that not only his breeding plot, but a large amount of his improved-seed plot was sown that way. One object he had in view was to get a good stand of alfalfa, and in this he had succeeded admirably. The heads on this barley plot were exceptionally large, and must have given a big yield; I fancy rather more than would have been the case if every drill had been used in seeding.

A very striking thing in this plot was that on about one acre, some three years before, a top-dressing of stable manure had been given it. Its effect in hastening maturity could be seen to the very line where it came. The barley on that part would do to cut probably a week before the rest, and it was ripening very evenly. This is not the first time my attention has been drawn to this fact. In Alberta, some German farmers about Didsbury, some years ago, found that on that rich prairie soil stable manure had a similar effect on the oat crop.

Selection was not able to make the oats immune from the blight which seemed to affect oats so very generally this year. There was nothing