

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE

AND HOME MAGAZINE

* AGRICULTURE, STOCK, DAIRY, POULTRY, HORTICULTURE, VETERINARY, HOME CIRCLE. *

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Vol. XXXVII.

WINNIPEG, MAN., AND LONDON, ONT., SEPTEMBER 20, 1902.

No. 558

Manitoba's Harvest.

Hark to the merry noise—the joyous whirr
Of driving-wheel and roaring cylinder;
At night the camp-fires flush with ruddy glow,
The blue above—the tinted wheat below.

God keeps his promise—He doth aye prevail:
Seed time and harvest, they shall never fail.
Behold the canvas that He doth unfold:
Above, the blue; below, the cloth of gold.
—The Khan.

Plowing.

There are some districts of the country where fall plowing is not much practiced, not giving good results, but, generally speaking, each land as possible is plowed in the fall. In these sections where fall plowing is not favored, notably in the wheat country around Indian Head, much of the land is stubble sown; that is, sown with the shoe or disk drill, with no preparation other than burning off the stubble, whenever that is possible. Of course, this can only be practiced on land recently fallowed, and where there are few biennial or perennial weeds or grass. This plan certainly has the advantage of furnishing a firm seed-bed for the wheat and of saving a great amount of labor. In the Indian Head country, good yields, 25 and 30 bushels per acre, are frequently obtained by this plan, and the writer recently saw 100 acres of wheat stubble sown in the Red River Valley, near Niverville, south of Winnipeg, that looked like a 30-bushel crop. This crop was the second on new land, and it being impossible to burn off the stubble, it was simply gone over with a horse-rake, and then sown with shoe-drill. Some strips that were grassy had been spring plowed, but little difference could be detected in the appearance of the crop. The spring was particularly favorable to such a crop, and we do not undertake to recommend the plan for general adoption, but merely state the practice to show what can be done.

In order to obtain a firm seed-bed for wheat, it is desirable to plow as early in the fall as possible. In districts where the soil-packer has been introduced, its use proves very beneficial in this respect, and many farmers run the packer over all land immediately after the plows. A disk harrow set pretty straight would doubtless help greatly in firming the soil. For the destruction of biennial and perennial weeds such as Canada thistles, the earlier in the fall the plowing is done the better, and on early plowing there is generally a good germination of small seeds that lie near the upturned surface, which are killed by the frost and thus the surface is to that extent cleaned.

In the Mennonite Reserves, one frequently sees the best-cut crops, barley generally, stoked in straight rows far apart, and the land plowed on wet or broken days during the early part of harvest. This always makes good wheat land, besides having the advantage of keeping the work well forward. Of course the Mennonites generally do not farm larger areas than they can handle within themselves, and when the rest of our settlers get their farms reduced to a like system, in that respect, at least, the more safe will be their position and in this will be found the solution of the harvest labor question.

While all plowing should be well done, it is especially important in the case of fall plowing, rows should be straight and of even depth, so that every weed is cut and all the soil turned over. A man plowing straight and level can turn as many acres as he whose only boast is "blackening" his fields in a hurry. As to

the depth of plowing, that of course depends upon the soil and its condition. The fall is a good time to bring up a little new soil if it is necessary, but on new strong land there can be no particular gain in deep plowing.

Get a plow that will clean and that suits your soil and conditions.

Keep shares and coulters sharp and see to it that the plow runs true and level, without running on its nose and without side draft.

Have the horses, whether two, three, four, or more, hitched so they can travel free and respond promptly to the lines, and

Having set your hand to the plow, do not look back.

The Labor Problem in the West.

Manitoba called for 20,000 extra men to assist take off the harvest, and while the number that came out on the harvest excursions was large, the Province is still short by 5,000 or 6,000 of the required number. In the Territories, too, farmers are badly handicapped for want of men. The harvest being somewhat later this year, farmers were not ready to contract for men when the excursions reached Winnipeg, and in consequence all the available men were rapidly distributed to Manitoba points.

The system of handling the men by the C.P.R. and the Provincial Government was a great improvement over previous years, and the excursions were well timed.

But what of this great labor problem! Can we depend year after year upon obtaining 20,000 or 30,000 men from the Eastern Provinces to take off our harvests. From the decrease in numbers this year it would look as though the good times in the eastern part of Canada would tend to keep the men from coming west. Still, settlement is rapidly going on, and large areas are being broken up under just the same conditions as exist now; that is, each man's capacity based upon what land he can plow and sow, not upon what he can reap; and while this system of farming such large areas per settler is in vogue, dependence will have to be placed upon harvest help from the outside.

Apart from the direct help derived from these harvester excursions, they are certainly good advertisements for the country and afford an unequalled opportunity for young men from the other provinces to come out and see the country, with a great probability of their becoming settlers. But the system that necessitates this annual influx of helpers is one that cannot very long be continued. While there are men who from natural ability can manage very large farms, for the great majority the most profitable and safe system is to farm on such a scale that all the work at all seasons of the year can be handled with only such extra help as can surely be secured at reasonable wages. With half-section farms, put under a suitable rotation system, stocked and equipped with buildings, machinery, etc., all work could be handled and kept right up to time with the help that would be necessary for practically the whole year. Under such a system land would be kept in better shape and free from weeds, and the social and educational advantages of the whole community would be much greater than is possible under a system of large farms.

Farm Siftings.

The men who went right to work and stacked their wheat will have nothing to regret. The wise man profits by the lessons of the past.

The wheat grower may have an easy time all the rest of the year, but he has his share of worry all "of a heap" during harvest and threshing.

With twine at fifteen cents, threshing at six cents to eight cents, and labor at \$2.00 per day, it takes some brains to make money out of fifty-cent wheat.

Better let the other fellow do the speculating in wheat; it may be he has nothing else to do. The farmer has enough to do to mind his own business.

Rush the plowing now, but don't get in such a hurry that you can't do a good job. Better make a thorough job of 50 acres than simply blacken 100.

Look out for prairie fires and threshing engine fires. You know what to do—do it.

It's now time—past time, in fact—to put the milk cows in the barn at nights and feed them a little extra. This does not apply to the wheat farmer whose tin cow needs only the protection of a customs duty.

Give the stables and henhouse a thorough whitewashing some of these showery days. Use good strong lime and add a little carbolic acid.

Push the pigs along now before cold weather sets in, and get them onto the market before the rush, as prices are always apt to drop a little then.

Are you going to give the boys a chance this winter for a little more education. We have no agricultural school yet, but a few months at a good business college will be a great help; or may be you will stay home this winter and let the boy visit the old home in the east. If he's the right stuff he can learn a good deal that will interest and benefit him wherever he goes. The trip could be timed to take in the fat stock shows and some of the big farmers' and breeders' conventions.

Co-operative Agricultural Tests in the Territories.

An announcement comes that an interesting experiment is about to be introduced in the Territories in connection with the local agricultural societies. The scheme, as outlined, is something after the co-operative plan of the Ontario Experimental Union, which is under the supervision of Prof. Zavitz, of the Ontario Agricultural College. It is proposed to have experiments on a variety of questions pertaining to the particular locality in which the society is located, undertaken by leading farmers, under the direction of a committee of the local society, this committee to be under the direction of the Department of Agriculture at Regina; the whole work to be undertaken under printed rules to be formulated by the Department of Agriculture, and all work to be annually supervised by an official of the department. Owing to the large foreign element in the Territories, and the immense territory and varying conditions of soil and climate, it has been thought that some such scheme might result beneficially if it can be properly worked out.