

PREPARE FOE FUTURE

SOME EXCELLENT SUGGESTIONS FROM A GOOD SOURCE.

Putting On the Emergency Power in Farming—Making Canada the Granary of the Empire.

By H. H. Biggart, Hamilton, Ont., superintendent of the International Harvested company, of Canada, Limited, writes:

The history of all great wars has shown that the man at home behind the plow fought shoulder to shoulder with the man at the front behind the gun. In times past, without the first the latter would have starved, and without the second the former would have been destroyed. Such a crisis has not yet come in the present conflict, but the silent appeal of the mother country to all her colonies has been heard around the world—an appeal for supplies, for bread, for hay, the horses, and for moral support.

Already across the border the American farmer is fortifying himself to meet the increased demand which will be made upon him for his produce. He is increasing his acreage and everywhere is re-echoing the appeal to him to improve his methods in order that his acreage yield may be increased. The impulse which is swaying him to answer emergency fall should meet with double response from the tillers of the soil in this country, where not only the dictates of business urge them on, but where there is the added incentive of the higher consideration of patriotism. As a man doubles his strength when he is tightly pressed, or an engine exceeds its rated capacity when forged ahead, so should the Canadian farmers multiply their energy and strive to excel their past good records as producers of the world's bread.

The recent appeal of the Hon. Martin Burrell, minister of agriculture, showed definitely the business advantage of beginning at once to prepare for a greater acreage of wheat. "The only way to get more wheat," he said, "is to properly and most carefully handle the stubble land. Let it be the termination of every farmer to make

his wheat acres in 1915 yield as never before. It is certain that an increase of many millions of bushels can be insured if every farmer on the prairie will carefully consider the following suggestions and put them into practice immediately:

"The summer fallow—Get the summer fallow into good shape; let it be ready for the seeder the moment the snow goes, and put it into such shape as to be free from weeds, ready to absorb moisture, and as safe as possible from evaporation.

"Stubble land—Every acre of stubble land in good enough shape to be fairly safe for wheat should be plowed right now; plow not less than seven inches deep, and deepening if the character of the soil and moisture content will permit; deep soils should be plowed deeply, shallow or light soils with a more shallow furrow; do the plowing well, every acre should be harrowed within two days after plowing and pack the land if possible after harrowing.

"Spring work—Early seeding is the next consideration; make every preparation now and this coming winter, to lose no time when the spring opens; be sure the seed saved is clean, and of high germinating quality; get the best variety possible; do the work well at seeding time, cultivating or disking before seeding always means bigger and better crops, and in districts where the crops were a failure this year the methods outlined above are particularly necessary.

We would emphasize especially the necessity of frequent disking, and the almost essential use of the land packer as a safeguard against drought. Many thousands of farmers, for the first time, last year staked their crops on the land packer, and owing to the unseasonable dryness which prevailed this season, it is estimated by many authorities that the use of this machine, wherever used, made a difference of six to twelve bushels per acre. At the price at which they are disposing of their wheat this year the packer has proved an investment worth several hundred per cent. to them the first year of its use.

Preparing The Seed Bed. In those parts of the country which

do fall plowing and fall seeding, the way the seed bed is made and the way the sowing is done this fall will determine the crop per acre next year more than next year's rain fall, hot winds or frosts. In an experiment not long ago described by F. L. Peterson, of the University Farm at Davis, California, he says: "As the pressure for supplies becomes greater it becomes more evident that the world cannot afford large farms skinned over with careless culture. In an actual experiment a gain of 200 per cent. which was made in the productiveness of a certain area, 100 per cent. was found to be due to better plowing and harrowing, 50 per cent. to better cultivation, and the rest to better seeding."

A lesson or two like that in every community would soon work its way into farm operation in such a way that several costly practices, sanctioned by time and custom, would become in a short time as historical as cradling wheat and threshing it with a flail are now. The great economic law which makes a man's land profitable is not so much the price he gets for his produce as it is the difference between this price and the amount spent in producing this produce. The above experiment was apropos of the tractor—a mechanical way of plowing and of disking—a mechanical way of manureing the land, so to speak, and of drilling—a mechanical way of sowing the seed. In the cost of raising a crop, just the same as in the cost of making carpets, shoes or wagons, hand power and animal power cannot compete with mechanical power. The mechanically prepared seed bed not only costs less in its preparation, but it gives more in its harvest.

Oats and oil are in the throes of a little war of their own just the same as the human back once combated with the ropes of war. This strife is fast becoming more acute because the price of horses is being accentuated every day by the number being sold out of the country for cavalry mounts to be used abroad. The drain upon the Canadian horse supply will soon be such that wherever possible mechanical contrivances will be used to do their work. Were we to begin at once, it will require five years to replenish the drain which the war has already made upon the horse supply of the world. The United States government department of agriculture has estimated that it costs \$75 to \$80 per year to keep a horse, and in the study of horse utility for a period covering six years, it was found that he averaged only 3.14 hours of work per day as his contribution to lessening the high cost of living. In contrast with this it was found that he ate up the entire yield of one out of every five acres which he helped to cultivate. It has been shown, too, for every hour he worked it cost about sixteen cents; whereas, a full horse-power hour can be delivered by high-grade oil engine for only two cents per hour, in both cases interest, fuel food and depreciation being included. Again, in plowing, a team of two horses can plow only about two acres per day. In doing this, they travel sixteen miles, which is a good day's pull for horses with a load. An oil tractor, on the other hand, will plow deeper and keep it up twenty-four hours each day until the work is completed without feeding, resting, or growing thin. While it would not be wise to dispose of brood mares and blooded stock to satisfy the demands of the war, in the end perhaps the increased prices which the present horse purchases will undoubtedly bring about will be beneficial in forcing thousands of farmers to adopt a newer and more economical form of power. Everyone who cultivated 100 acres or more is a candidate for a share in the millions of dollars which the country-wide adoption of this method of plowing will ultimately save.

Insuring Crop In Advance.

After plowing, the first duty of a man is to guarantee the work by proper cultivation and disking and packing. The disk harrow and packer are two of the leading nature aids in farming. It is said that rightly used the disk does more to increase crop profits than any other farm implement and should be used on every farm. It is one of the simplest implements made; one of the easiest to obtain, simple to run; will stand much hard work, and lasts a long time. It is so inexpensive that if used on a fair sized field it will increase the production that it soon pays for itself.

After the seed bed is in a condition satisfactory for the proper development of the seed, the next important step is to be sure that the seed is sown just right. It is only within recent years that definite, decisive tests have been made between sowing with a drill and sowing broadcast, but so one-sided have been the various tests in regard to these two methods that broadcasting is fast being numbered among the many old methods which farmers are now discarding. Broadcasting requires more seed, and yet it produces a smaller crop of lower grade grain. The reason for this is that the seed thus sown is not distributed evenly over the ground. It does not all start from an even depth, nor does it begin germinating uniformly. By the use of an ordinary drill, even without the more modern attachments, the seed is deposited in fine, slightly compact, moist soil, all of it at a uniform depth. It is thus carefully covered by the cover chains or press wheels, it all has an even chance of germinating, and all the grain will tend to ripen at the same time. It requires, furthermore, much less seed to get a good stand with a drill than by broadcasting.

Proper drilling and packing and proper sowing are the best ways to help nature give a good crop. There is very little more expense in doing it right than in doing it wrong, and the returns are much greater.

Our work begins this fall in our plowing and seeding, and our opportunity to help will come next year at our harvesting and selling. We have more at stake than our profits. For every acre we are sowing and sowing over everything and stifling our selfish hope of gain or our commercial instincts, is our ability and our willingness to meet the call from the which we know will result from the waste and devastation of the present unfortunate conflict into which the mother country has been drawn.

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