

abridge the time needed in particular operations at seasons when time is very precious, is the best ally of the agricultural implement or machine maker.

It would be very gratifying to know that out of 403 townships reporting on the use of special fertilizers, in 286 these valuable aids to the agriculturist are employed — were it possible, on the evidence, to believe that their use is general in any considerable proportion of the number last mentioned. But in too many cases it is clear that their application is confined to the more enterprising farmers. No country could be more favoured with an abundant supply of these products, and only an intelligent knowledge of their value is needed to ensure their far more liberal and general application.

The subjects of crops and stock have been somewhat exhaustively discussed elsewhere. It is only necessary here to allude to what may, at first sight, appear to be the comparatively small profits of the ordinary farmer on his outlay. That the profits are much less than they might be with better management is not to be questioned, nor is it denied that, even at present profits, some not very good farmers manage to make a living and more. It has, however, to be borne in mind that on every estimate of the cost of crop raising the whole amount of labour is charged. The farmer's own time, and that frequently of his son or sons, is thus paid for before the balance of profits is struck, and this item is, for a large portion of the year, equal probably in amount to the whole requirements of the household, so far as money purchases are concerned. The same remark applies to charges for attendance on stock, marketing produce, and other operations. If these be deducted from the outlay account the profits will be very considerable in many cases where otherwise they would appear very small. Where, too, the farm is owned by the occupier, and unencumbered by mortgage, the charge for interest goes into the farmer's own pocket, although it has to be debited in the account before the actual cost of a crop can be correctly ascertained. If it be recollected that, in addition to those circumstances already mentioned, the farmer supplies all the needs of himself and family, so far as the first necessities of life are concerned, at wholesale price, even if he charges all his household consumption, as he is supposed to charge the stuff consumed by his stock, at market rates, another source of saving, which is equivalent to profit, is ascertained.

The Commissioners would have been glad to have had an opportunity of inquiring into the proportion of labour employed on Ontario farms, and the general character of the arrangements between the employers and the employed. Opportunity has not offered for such an inquiry beyond eliciting some general information. The opinion of good farmers is, that not less than three adult males, or a force equal to that strength, should be employed on every 100-acre farm, and can be so employed profitably. The disposition to provide for the accommodation of married labourers also appears to be increasing.

The work of the Commissioners is now concluded; how imperfectly, looking at the importance and many bearings of the subject remitted to them, they are only too sensible. Their duty was a novel one. Their course had to be shaped, from time to time, as experience was obtained or suggestions were presented. They have sought to leave nothing undone that could be reasonably expected to be done in the time and with the means at their command. And their labours have been lightened by the hope that a clearer sense of what may be achieved by intelligent and well-directed efforts may inspire the agriculturists of Ontario with increased determination to attain in everything to the highest and the best. Let it be remembered that in the simplest operations of this most honourable of pursuits, the farmer who proceeds, not upon chance or by merely traditional habit, but on sound principles, is elevating his calling from the mere drudgery of toil to the dignity of a science, as he seeks to co-operate with Nature's beneficent laws, and to secure his full share of her bounties. If he keeps this steadily in view, it will give a new charm to labour, and present at each step fresh objects to awaken his interest or to stimulate his ambition to excel.