

COMMITTEE ROOM 46,
HOUSE OF COMMONS,

TUESDAY, 7th March, 1893.

The Select Standing Committee on Agriculture and Colonization met at 10.30 a.m. this day. Col. TISDALE, Chairman, *pro tem.*, presiding.

MR. WILLIAM SAUNDERS, Director of Dominion Experimental Farms, called, addressed the committee, as follows:—

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,—It affords me pleasure to have another opportunity of appearing before the Committee on Agriculture and Colonization of the House of Commons to answer such questions as may be asked and to present to you such information as may be at my command regarding the work being accomplished by the experimental farms of the Dominion of Canada.

THE AIMS OF EXPERIMENTAL FARM WORK.

But six years have passed since the work of establishing these farms was begun, yet I think it may be safely said that they have already become an important factor, and are now exercising much influence on the progress of agriculture in this Dominion. There is no difference of opinion as to the importance of doing all that can be done to make farming more profitable and attractive, so that those who are engaged in this work may become more interested and contented with their calling, and that our young men who are brought up on farms may be induced to continue to devote their energies to the farm and become wealth producers. To elevate that calling, to show that there is plenty of room in it for the exercise of all the brain power a man may possess, to point out how farming operations may be conducted to the best advantage to the farmer, how processes may be improved and waste products utilized, are among the aims and objects of the experimental farms. We are not to be content with theorizing on such matters, but to demonstrate the truth of what is advanced by practical experimental work. Farmers are beginning to realize that there is so much still to be learned in connection with agriculture which it will be to their advantage to know, that they are eager to avail themselves of all the useful information we can give them.

INCREASING DEMAND FOR RELIABLE INFORMATION.

As one proof of this, I would refer to the demand which exists for experimental farm reports. Four years ago from 5,000 to 10,000 copies were ample to meet all the demands. Now 40,000 copies are required to supply the farmers whose names are on the experimental farm mailing list and who expect to receive all our publications regularly. In addition to this issue from the experimental farm, there is the large edition published annually by the House for the use of members and the demand is so great that good use is made of all. Hundreds of inquiries have already been made about the forthcoming report now in the printers' hands, as to when it will be available.

This great demand exists because the farmer finds in the pages of these reports information in all departments of his calling. He treasures the experimental farm reports among his best books. Does he desire to find out what grain crops are likely to be most profitable to him, he turns up the experience gained and recorded at one of the experimental farms nearest to him, and by comparing these with the records of similar work at all the farms and the average experience of those farmers who have tested the samples of those cereals sent out from the Central Farm, he has the foundations which will enable him to reach correct conclusions. The chief reason why this experimental farm work is so much appreciated is that it is reliable and honest work.