

Securing Help for the Summer.

The season has now arrived when assistance must be secured by very many of our farmers for the summer season. It is of much importance that the right class of assistance be secured. The difficulty, as things are, is to secure this. The best men in the country usually hire by the year. Another class are adopting the six or seven months term altogether, and this latter class are sure to be difficult to treat with in the matter of wages, as they must secure enough in summer to tide them over an idle winter. There is much that is pernicious in this system, and the sooner there is a complete turn over the better. It is the outgrowth in part of our severe Canadian winters, which shut us away from the fields for so long a period every year, and partly that of the grain growing system of farming pursued in the past.

The whole course of relations between master and servant want re-adjustment in this country, and we trust that this will be undertaken very soon. Farmers should discourage that six months term service system. They have the matter in their own hands. If they resolutely refuse to hire men who will not engage for the year, the latter must come to terms, or move away. Then there is the item of providing work for them in winter, which is easily solved. Keep all the stock a place can carry, and there need be no difficulty in making work.

Then, again, there should be some guarantee that the laborer is of some use before he is engaged. Without this, the party is taken on trial, which is all very well if he prove suitable, but if not, then the favorable season is gone for securing the services of another. We think it would be well if farmers insisted on the production of credentials from employers to whom they had been previously in service. It would exercise a salutary influence on the laborer, who would feel that the nature of his certificate would depend upon the degree of his fidelity, and of his general fitness for the position. This plan has been in vogue in older countries and we deem it one of the leaves of old time custom that might with great advantage be re-inserted in the book of modern practice.

One difficulty is the scarcity of laborers; but even so, the man producing good credentials should be rewarded for having obtained them by giving him priority of claim, when seeking a situation. The sifting process must be done by farmers if it is done at all. Laborers will not grade themselves in this land where "Jack is as good as his master." Any gradations that are made must be done by the farmer.

It is high time that clear distinctions were made. So long as every man is paid about alike, so long will the inefficient clamor for equality with the efficient in their wages. Once show men that a person with really good credentials, and especially one who has proved his services valuable by actual test, will command double pay, and they will give more heed to their own actions.

Now that the hiring season is upon us, let farmers bestir themselves to get good men. Let every one proposing to engage farm help ask for certificates of efficiency, and men will soon begin to perceive its worth. It is vastly important that not only good help be secured, but a sufficiency of it. More grain, we believe, is lost every year in the Dominion through an insufficiency of labor, than would twice over pay for what would be required in addition, to properly secure it.

Fathers, who, in looking over the forthcoming season's work, are reckoning on this and that from immature lads, should take heed. Many a promising lad in Canada has had his growth checked, his mind fet-

tered and his spirit broken, by the heavy tasks early imposed upon him by fathers who were over-anxious to save money. Now is the time to so arrange as to avoid this cruel mistake the coming season.

The exact amount of labor required is not easily accurately gauged beforehand owing to the vicissitudes of seasons, one that is wet entailing more labor than one that is dry. The safer plan is to secure a sufficiency of help, and then try and make the best possible use of it that custom and conscience will admit of.

Now that self-hinders are being introduced, the accuracy with which the labor wants can be determined is being much increased, as the severity of the pinch of harvest is much mitigated, and this affords another argument in favor of an annual term of service, as there is less likelihood of not being able to cope with the work at any one particular season. Whenever labor is done out of season, it is done at a great loss, which misfortune can be avoided by seeking help at this very time, if so minded.

Agricultural Institutes.

THIRD PAPER.

The management of these Institutes is a great matter. Indeed the success of the meeting and the good resulting depend very much on the manner in which it is conducted, after suitable help has been secured and the people are convened.

The chairman in such an assembly is full half the meeting, and fortunate is that Institute over which a competent chairman is called to preside. Farmers have more of a reserve when they come together than business men. And the chairman, if equal to the occasion, will at once labor to dispel this, and to make them feel perfectly at home, by his genial, frank and happy way of putting things, without sacrificing that dignity which is always essential to secure respect. When the chairman or president, as he will be termed where the Institute has assumed a permanent character, puts in an appearance similar to him who has just been unloosed from his grave-clothes, and in slow, measured, sepulchral tones opens the assembly, a chill paralyzes every one present, which neither the eloquence of the papers read nor the animation of the discussions which follow, can drive away. The chairman should be able to read character readily and surely. He should possess a happy tact in managing men who in nature may be at the antipodes; and he should possess that rare gift of being able to say just the right word at the right time, and in the right way. On no account should a man be chosen because of his position, without a regard to his fitness for the office. When such an one is found it will be wise to retain his services for a time at least. The dairymen of Ontario have found that it is to their advantage to retain the one man in the chair year after year, as experience has told them that this step was necessary in order to insure the success of their meetings. If the Institute has discovered that the wrong man has been chosen as President, it will wisely supersede him by some one better fitted at the first suitable opportunity, and if the right man, keep him in so long as his services can be retained.

The programme of the meeting is a matter of great importance. We will speak further on regarding the quality of the services secured. At present we speak of quantity. In the past this has been very much overdone. It reminds us of a teacher of music occupying the whole time of the lesson in singing the most beautiful selections of music to his pupils. We know in such a case how much they would learn of its principles. When an Institute is held but for one day, two sessions are sufficient, and one paper for each session

is ample. The rest of the time should be occupied in discussing the papers read, as in this consists the extracting of the marrow. No paper is suitable for such an occasion that will not bear analyzing of the severest nature, and the best analysts thereof are the rough and ready men who are engaged in the practical every day work of the farm. In this way the document may be turned over and over again, and an approximate estimate obtained of its true value. The good that it contains will be borne away to benefit a hundred homes, and what is objectionable will be given back to the author for further rumination.

The method of conducting these discussions is worthy of the most careful consideration. Farmers are not, as a rule, conversant with the conventional forms of discussion, and when once a spirit of animation pervades the audience the chances are that two or three will be sometimes on the floor at once, which will draw upon the tact of the chairman to the utmost, as in such a place every person should be heard, unless it be the irrepressible man who is always saying, and yet never has anything to say. It is not wise to insist on having every man come to the platform who may wish to say something, as some farmers not gifted as speakers, whose judgment is of great weight, have an instinctive dread of appearing on a platform, from the consciousness of their weakness in the use of language. They will leave their say unsaid if they must come to the platform to say it. They do not often sling, but when they do, it is to a hairsbreadth, for they never miss the mark though the stone is slung awkwardly by the left hand. Such men should be most carefully encouraged to take down the sling and use the stones that they have so carefully selected from the brooks of life. A question from the veriest tyro in agriculture will sometimes lead to a train of discussion on most important subjects, which, commencing at the river's mouth, may lead to its survey up to the fountain from which it issues, and the survey of all its branches. Every man present should be made to feel that he has an equal right to speak at the proper time with every other man, and that he will get a respectful hearing.

Extraneous matter should be introduced with caution. At some of the meetings musical entertainment has been introduced. Though this in moderation at first sight is not objectionable, our fear is that it will be difficult to properly rein in this strong Bucephalus. It has been a question in every age as to whether the world has been most afflicted with undue austerities in life, or with its frivolities. And though engineers have been out sounding the river-bed in every century, they have not as yet decided as to where the channel is most navigable. The history of country and city life, we believe, throws some light on this subject. To us it shows which way the needle points. Life is much more austere in the country, and one result seems to be that the cities become what they are through talent that is fostered amid those more austere surroundings. We are apt to judge of the success of a meeting, and indeed of its utility, by the attendance, and this of course is one element of such a meeting, but only one. It should not be pressed too far, for on the same principle it might be said that the most successful meetings the world ever saw were those of the Roman amphitheatre, where 100,000 citizens would sometimes assemble to behold some captive gladiator in mortal conflict with a bear.

Farmers pursuing that calling which is soon to be the envy of all the nations and the foremost of whom are only in the alphabet thereof, should at least come to an Institute to learn more of what they shall never