

FARM BULLETIN.

Lambton and Essex Notes.

One cannot help wondering at the amount of work that has been accomplished on the farms of Ontario this year, despite the lack of labor. It must be that farmers are rapidly adjusting themselves and their methods to the serious reduction in available help and have adopted short cuts in the way of modified tillage methods, in addition to providing themselves with an added quantity of labor-saving equipment. It is, of course, well known that appeals for production, the well-known need for foodstuffs and prices for farm products more nearly in keeping with the cost of production, have brought about longer hours and harder work, but still the wonder of it is that the crops are being so well taken care of and the farm operations carried off so nearly on time as they are.

A trip through the Counties of Lambton and Essex reveals the fact that the grain harvest is completed almost without exception and threshing well under way. In fact, according to W. P. Macdonald, Agricultural Representative for Lambton County, threshing in Lambton is fifty per cent. completed, while J. W. Noble, Agricultural Representative for Essex County, was of the opinion that nearly seventy-five per cent. of Essex County's grain crop has been threshed. These counties are, of course, favored by a climate which provides early seasons, and it is only natural that the harvest and the threshing should be completed considerably in advance of most other sections in the province. The grain crop has been good. In Lambton County what amounts to almost a record crop in some respects has been harvested. The stubble in nearly all instances bears testimony to the extent of the crop, and instances were brought to our attention where yields of fall wheat as high as 52 bushels per acre had been secured, while spring wheat ran up to 36 bushels. It is interesting to note in this connection that Lambton County growers feel no concern as to the abundance of fall wheat seed for the 1919 crop. There is, in fact, a surplus of at least twenty-five cars which could be shipped out to other parts of the Province according to Mr. Macdonald, and farmers were somewhat uneasy at the action of the Provincial Government in practically setting a price of \$2.50 per bushel on imported seed. The quantity of seed provided for an emergency was thought to be and undoubtedly is very much in excess of what will be required to meet the deficit over the province. It is possible that none of the emergency supply will be needed at all.

Wheat in Lambton is weighing out well. One man sold 1,000 bushels to the elevator just as it came from the machine for a price of \$2.10, and it weighed just 62 lbs. per measured bushel. This is suggestive of the quality of the crop. One is struck in driving through Lambton at the great numbers of stacks noticeable everywhere. This is in contrast with many other sections of the province where stacks are rarely met with, the custom being to house all grain in capacious barns and, where necessary, to thresh for room. In Lambton, however, stacks are everywhere and barns rather small. Fall wheat has turned out much better than was expected early in the season, and fields which were nearly plowed under at one time turned out to yield as high as 25 bushels per acre.

Wheat in Essex has been good also, and yields as high as 55 bushels per acre were reported by threshers. Oats yielded up to 80 and 90 bushels, and barley as much as 67. These, of course, are exceptional instances drawn to our attention, but on the whole are indicative of the satisfactory nature of the crops. Essex and Lambton are both excellent corn counties, Essex particularly having become widely known for the high quality of her seed corn. We saw many excellent crops of both silage and husking corn, and in Essex County we noticed three fields which had been cut August 23. This is exceptionally early and, of course, the crops might have been better off for a few more days on the roots. One field in particular of White Cap Yellow Dent would have been benefited, for seed purposes at least, by a little later cutting. Corn was to be seen everywhere, much of it of splendid height and showing evidence of having been well cared for. As might be expected in a county where dairying is a minor branch of agriculture, only a small quantity is grown primarily for the silo. Much husking corn is to be seen, and before long cutting will be in full swing. The ears are large and well formed and the silk is brown and dried up.

Clover fields left for seed look exceptionally well, especially in Lambton, where there is promise of an abundant amount of clover seed. Many fields are strikingly beautiful with their masses of purple blossoms, while others had browned rapidly during the few days preceding our visit. East and south of Petrolia nearly every farm exhibited a field of seed clover, and, in fact, we understand that clover seed has played no little part in the prosperity of many farmers in that district. Flax, too, has developed quite an acreage in Lambton, and the crop this year has been taken care of in good shape so far. Mexicans imported for the purpose have done good work, and we understand have worked willingly. Part of the flax crop this year was not put into the ground early enough, but it has done well and the crop has been a successful one.

Everywhere it is dry. Dry is not a sufficiently strong term. The roads are inches deep in thick dust, particularly in the more sandy areas. The tobacco crop, a most important one in Essex, is stunted and unless the field has been in the hands of a good grower, empty spaces are conspicuous. Few good crops of

beans, another important crop, are to be seen; and no wonder, there has been no rain to more than lay the dust since the second day of July. It has been trying to rain for a month; clouds come up threateningly every day or so, but the rain never falls. It is a good thing for Essex County farmers that they have made rapid progress in draining the flat country and incidentally conserving soil moisture in dry seasons, by the liberal installing of underdrains. There are in Essex County alone, we understand, fifty ditching machines in operation, and in addition to 7,000,000 four-inch tile manufactured in the county each year there is a similar number imported.

Muskoka Farming.

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

Though one would not record of the Muskoka and Parry Sound farming areas as is sometimes said of the Northwest, that every season is an exceptional season, still this beautiful region has its peculiarities and 1918 brought some notable encouragements and incentives to future endeavor. If there are drawbacks, these serve to spur on the resolute and progressive. In field husbandry, the outstanding new advance has been the success attending spring wheat growing in response to the call of a world need. Fall wheat not being counted a Muskoka crop, supplies of Marquis wheat for seed were secured through various channels, over 500 bushels being distributed by the Ontario Department of Agriculture Office, Huntsville. The results of the venture have been decidedly gratifying; the District Representative, F. C. Patterson, who appears disposed to proceed by a conservative way, reporting some really splendid crops, so that for seed and local milling there will be very considerable quantities when threshing takes place. Present indications point to the sowing of a greater spring wheat acreage in 1919, for which the land now under potatoes, turnips, corn and other crops for which manure was applied and involving good summer tillage, will provide a promising seed-bed readily put into condition with the disk, if not fall plowed. Another marked advance for which the natural conditions and present market demands are highly favorable is the continued increase in sheep raising previously recorded in "The Farmer's Advocate," and which merits more special reference at another time. The hay crop is probably lighter, taking the country over, than last season, and there were rather over-ripe fields of timothy being taken in during the last half of August, showing the difference in climate here compared with more low-lying parts of Ontario. Corresponding with other sections, the oat crop, an important cereal in these districts, is reported better than 1917. The particularly fine, sunshiny weather about the third week in August hastened the oat ripening and cutting and also the browning of the pea fields, a crop that does well and fits in naturally with sheep husbandry. Some of the late bloom, however, was pinched by an altogether exceptional and severe frost on August 2nd, which also proved destructive in certain localities more than others to susceptible vegetables. Visitors have been surprised at the excellence of the corn and the rapidity with which it matured during late August. The yield of wild strawberries and red raspberries appears to have been more luxuriant than usual this year. Specializing in the production of seed potatoes free from disease continues to receive attention by enterprising growers, and is encouraged by the Department of Agriculture. An official eye is being kept upon any appearance of mosaic and other yield-diminishing ailments, and observations have been made which will have a bearing in clearing up their pathology. Without professing to be authoritative, the opinion is expressed by one observer, that mosaic is due rather to weather conditions than to constitutional disease. At the lake summer health resorts there have been fewer visitors this season, at least of men of military or active working age. Women and children are greatly in evidence. For a couple of summer months many people take advantage of the tourist side line which creates a temporary demand for butter, milk, cream, eggs, berries, etc., at tempting prices, but the permanent advantage of it to the regular industry of farming is questioned. The conviction is entertained that corresponding energy devoted, say to sheep husbandry, etc., would result in more substantial returns, particularly when the minimum of men required for its prosecution is taken into consideration. The call of the world for meat and wool looks like a very dependable asset for the future. Here and there some few accumulations of fuel are observed, but they seem very limited compared with the great supplies of bush timber within sight, much of it wasting that would replace the empty town coal bins next winter if only it could be cut and got to them. The difficulty of securing sufficient men capable of wielding an axe in getting out logs for lumber or fuel is an evident present handicap to a most substantial industry.

Provincial Cabinet Ministers Returned.

Hon. George S. Henry and Hon. Dr. H. J. Cody, recently taken into the Provincial Cabinet by Sir William Hearst, as Ministers of Agriculture and Education respectively, were returned with good majorities at the by-elections held last week. Hon. Mr. Henry, who ran in East York, won by a majority of over 2,600. Hon. Dr. Cody had a majority of 4,838. Only 29 per cent. of the vote was polled in Northeast Toronto, and only 12 per cent. of the vote in East York.

Spud the Weeds Out of the Clover Field.

In districts where red clover can be grown successfully there is a chance for a double revenue. The hay crop is usually harvested late in June or early in July and the aftermath, the extent of which depends on weather conditions, makes excellent pasture for the stock, thus increasing the milk flow of the dairy herd, or aiding in making more rapid gains in the fattening steers. There is another revenue, however, which may be secured, especially if the farm is free from such noxious weeds, as buckhorn, dodder, rag weed, etc., and that is from clover seed which is never too plentiful at seeding time in the spring. The price of red clover seed for the past year or two has made the growing of the same a profitable sideline. Cutting the first crop early is one of the first requisites for a crop of seed, and the prevalence of the bumble bee is another important factor. If the field is being left for the production of seed, it is advisable to go carefully up and down the ridges and spud out any noxious weeds which may be found growing. The field is the best place in which to clean the seed. True, many weed seeds may be removed with the fanning mill, but owing to clover seed and many of the weed seeds being similar in size, it is next to impossible to remove all the weed seeds should any plants be allowed to mature in the field. The best and cheapest plan is to go over the field and hand-pick them out before cutting.

No special date can be set for harvesting the seed crop as it depends very much on the season. When the majority of the heads are well browned it is about time to commence cutting. If the seed is soft and not properly filled the crop should stand a little longer, even if a few of the early ripened heads are lost. The main thing to do now is to see that the field is clean, if the highest price is to be obtained for the seed.

Conditions Have Improved in the West.

Reliable reports indicate that conditions have very much improved in Western Canada as far as the crops are concerned. Frost did a great deal of damage in the north, but there has been a marked recovery in the drought area in the south, and conditions are not nearly so serious as they were a month ago. It is altogether probable, however, that there will be a large number of stocker and feeder cattle put on the market between now and the end of the year. A large number of American buyers are already on the Winnipeg market, and if Ontario farmers wish to secure this class of stuff it will be necessary for them to get into the market in some way or other. Of course, there will be a certain number shipped east on speculation, but the American buyers are, to a large extent, filling orders for farmers in their country. The wheat crop is now estimated to reach a point somewhere between 150 and 200 million bushels.

In Behalf of Sailors' Homes.

Those living inland do not hear very much about the perils and sacrifices which the sailors endure who man the mercantile marine. More than 15,000 have already perished, and many of these have left widows and orphans to mourn the loss of husband or father who went down to the sea in extremely perilous times. They did not falter in their duty so why should we, safe at home, hesitate to lend what comfort we can to the sorrowing ones whose lives have been darkened. By financial aid we can bring some material comfort to the destitute and bereaved families and thus assuage, in a measure, their great sadness.

Canadian industries, including agriculture, would have been at a standstill had not brave seamen manned the ships that carried our produce through the danger zones. We owe the sailors a great debt, and the opportunity of repaying this in a small way presents itself next week. All should respond liberally.

Wheat Prices.

The Canadian Council of Agriculture recently made a recommendation that the price of wheat be fixed at \$2.26½. It was explained that this price was recommended on account of the price at Duluth being fixed at \$2.24½.

A communication was read from the Fort William Grain Exchange recommending that the grain trade in Canada be handled the same as in the United States with a maximum price for wheat and a maximum price for flour.

The Northwest Grain Dealers' Association recommended that the margins on wheat prices be changed, suggesting that there be a buying margin of six cents on Nos. 1, 2 and 3, Northern wheat; a margin of seven cents on No. 4, and eight cents on Nos. 5 and 6.