

that the Minister of Agriculture will remember that the finances of the country are not in the most flourishing condition that we could desire, and that he will exercise a due economy in putting the scheme in operation, that he will be specially careful as to the character of the purchase he may make near this city, that he will select a suitable site and take care that an extravagant price is not paid for it. It is probable that the operations of an experimental farm, in so far as they would be really beneficial to the people, would be rather limited in their character. It is not necessary to establish one to show the people what is the right stage at which to cut their wheat, whether it is better to cut it a little green or a little ripe. The intelligent agriculturist has ascertained that information for himself; he knows it already. It is unnecessary for an experimental farm to inform him on that point. With regard to forestry, which was alluded to by my hon. friend from West York (Mr. Wallace) I apprehend that a model farm will do very little towards renewing the forests of this country, and that that question will have to be dealt with in another way. With regard to the introduction of hardy fruits from cold countries such as Russia, that, too, I have no doubt, is a matter which will be coped with quite as satisfactorily by private enterprise as by an experimental farm; in fact, the question is pretty well understood already. Intelligent and enterprising nurserymen have introduced Russian fruits, and they are offered for sale in great quantity—fruits suited for extremely cold countries like the North-West. Of course the Government can experiment in these matters, but I doubt whether it is absolutely essential to the farming interests of the North-West that the Government should expend a large amount of money in this direction. I am glad to hear the admission made by my hon. friend from North Perth (Mr. Hesson), with regard to the Ontario model farm. His eulogy upon the management of that institution, and his eulogy upon the Minister of Agriculture who, he says, had the honor of founding that institution, may be taken as a very graceful compliment to the Government of Ontario, coming from the source it does. We have all noticed in past years how the management of that farm and the character of its operations have been bitterly assailed by the Opposition in the Ontario Legislature; and when we hear from a disinterested witness like the hon. member for North Perth the truth of the matter, it is very gratifying to this side of the House, and I am sure will be to Mr. Mowat and his associates. I am told that the Minister of Agriculture had the credit of purchasing the Mimico farm, which proved to be utterly worthless, and unsuited for the object in view, and that the present farm was purchased when Mr. Mowat came into office.

Mr. CARLING. The hon. gentleman is quite incorrect. The Mimico farm was approved of as an excellent farm for the purpose.

Mr. MILLS. Three hundred acres of Canada thistles.

Mr. CARLING. I beg pardon; 600 acres were purchased at Mimico, and the farm was highly recommended by Prof. Buckland, a man of great experience and integrity, as the best selection that could be made.

Mr. CHARLTON. I would not attribute to the Minister of Agriculture anything wrong in the purchase of the Mimico farm. It seems, however, that it was found unsuitable; and the location was changed to Guelph.

Mr. CARLING. Not at all.

Mr. CHARLTON. However, it is not a matter having any bearing on the present subject. I have only to repeat that the country is somewhat impecunious at present; and that I hope the hon. gentleman will not go too fast in establishing these farms, and will see that they are efficient.

Mr. CHARLTON.

Mr. McCALLUM. This is an important subject. As a practical farmer I do not think the Government could better spend some of the public money than in teaching the people of this country how to pursue agriculture in a more efficient and scientific manner than they do now. If they spent the money on forestry alone, it would pay, as we are destroying our forests very rapidly. An hon. gentleman opposite intimates that this work should be done by the Local Governments; but how about the North-West? There could be no better investment made by the Government than to spend a quarter of a million in planting trees in the North-West. If that were done, I believe it would very greatly change the climate and character of the country. Then, there is the question in raising wheat, as hon. members say on the other side of the House, whether it should be cut green or ripe, because if you cut it too green it is useless, and if you cut too ripe it will shell out. The farmers know when to cut their wheat without any further knowledge on that question. Then, there is the subject of seed; if you could obtain for the farmers of this country a proper seed that will stand the climate and give a good return, that alone would justify the expenditure of a large amount of money. This House is always ready to vote money for other purposes and why not for the improvement of agriculture? We have been told that the land might yield twice as much as it does if we seeded it down with the proper kind of grasses; and the Government might do something to teach farmers how to establish permanent pastures. No individual effort in forestry can be of much advantage. It is estimated by competent parties that a piece of land planted with walnut trees and kept 40 years, will yield more than it will if cropped every year, in addition to the benefit the trees would confer in the way of shelter and in improving the climate. It is only the Government of the country that can afford to wait so long for a return. What the North-West most stands in need of is the planting of timber which would act as shelter and as wind breaks for cattle and for settlers. There are thousands of acres in that country now that are hardly fit for settlement, but that will grow timber that would add largely to the revenue in the future. I am glad the Government have taken a step in this direction.

Mr. FERGUSON (Welland). Whether this subject comes within the jurisdiction of this Parliament or that of the Local Legislatures, certainly the hon. Minister who has introduced it is deserving of the gratitude of the agriculturists of this country. I believe he was the founder of the experimental farm of the Province of Ontario, and he has brought into this House the principles he then pursued. There is no doubt that the agricultural interests of this country are not second, but first of all the interests in the country. We have labored much in this House, and we have spent much in legislating on the subjects of trade and commerce; but, Sir, the foundation of all trade and commerce is agriculture, and it is the duty of this House and this Government to see that a certain amount of our money and attention are devoted to the interest that forms so large a share both of the capital and industry of this country. It is the duty of this House and this Government to see that the agriculturists of the country are furnished with the greatest possible facilities for gaining information on scientific agriculture. Until the present time this was not so necessary. The original fertility of the soil led farmers to depend largely upon simply sowing and reaping; but that time has passed by. The agriculturist has found that something more must be done, that he must know the nature of the soil, what it contains, what the food of plants is, what are the elements of this food in order to keep the land in a good and proper condition. As the hon. member for Monck