

## WEEDS AND PLANT PESTS.

To the extraordinary progress that has been made in Canada in combating insect and weed pests, much credit is due the work of the Botanical and Entomological Divisions of the Experimental Farms system. Himself an authority upon the sciences that underlie the understanding of these enemies of crops and a keen judge of men, Dr. Saunders was able to make a wise choice in the selection of the late Dr. James Fletcher, to take charge of this Branch of the Farms' work.

Through his entire official career, Dr. Fletcher was constantly on the alert for information through the press, correspondence, public meetings and personal observation, regarding the introduction and ravages of insect enemies and the appearance of weeds of every kind. The pests of other countries were made the objects of study so as to be able to identify and combat them effectively, should they appear within the borders of the Dominion. Collections were being continuously made from material collected in the field, the forest and the orchard and garden, as well as through the kindness of correspondents who applied to the Division for help in their studies of insects and of plants.

Much time was given to the rearing of insects, eggs or larvæ. In this way, an exact knowledge was gained of the preparatory stages of insects, the number of broods and the times of year at which they develop, so as to better devise remedies for injurious species. The information thus gathered was systematically recorded, so that, as time went on a vast fund of most valuable data was accumulated for the benefit of the farmers of the country.

Equally extensive and complete was the work with plant life. Constant additions were being made to the herbarium from specimens sent in by correspondents for naming, or from donations, and in many instances, fine specimens of rare plants have been acquired by growing the plant from the seed and securing samples at different stages of development. By this constant study and systematic accumulation, the Botanical Division became a museum of the weeds of Canada, of extraordinary completeness, and in his capacity, of Dominion Entomologist, Dr. Fletcher was an authority of the highest order, who was ever being appealed to from all quarters of the Dominion.

Through the press, the public platform, and by bulletins and reports, the information gathered was being constantly given out until the great majority of the farmers, who have studied their calling, are able to identify the various pests and apply an effective remedy.

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