

sent out shall be carefully experimented with and from the data gathered as to their success or failure valuable information will be derived by the government for distribution among the people generally. The theory is a good one. The working out of it is fraudulent and pernicious.

It is hoped that the present Secretary of Agriculture, Mr. Wilson, will endeavor to stop the demoralizing fraud. But by the terms of the Act under which it is carried on it will be almost impossible for him to do so; and the senators and representatives who alone have power to annul the Act, value too highly the means which it affords to them "standing in well with the farmers" to make it probable that they will do so until the farmers themselves demand it.

Now, we have seed distributions, bulletin distributions, report distributions, and other sorts of distributions in this country, all sustained and carried on by our various governments for the benefit of farmers. None of these have as yet got so far as to be "abuses," nor do we believe they ever will be. But some of them have got to be perilously near being wasteful and ineffectual expenditures of public money. The caution signals should be out. Danger lies ahead of all government administration unless it is very closely watched.

Getting Stuff to Market.

The marketing problem is the biggest problem the producer of agricultural produce has to face to-day. We argue with perfect truth that the Canadian and American farmer should not attempt to do much wheat growing; that he should devote himself to the growth of produce in which the cheap farming of other lands cannot compete, as, for example, the finer sorts of meat products, fine beef, mutton, lamb, bacon, ham, poultry, eggs, butter, cheese, etc., etc. That is good sound argument: but the man who grows wheat has an inestimable advantage over the man who grows fancy lambs, poultry, fruit, or garden stuff. He is sure of a rapid, safe, and comparatively cheap means of getting his produce to market. The man who grows the finer sorts of produce is not. We saw last week how it was with the fruit-grower. But it is almost the same with the growers of poultry and eggs, and many other things.

Upon the other side of the line there is a class of farmers who are experiencing exactly the sort of difficulties which we portrayed a week or two ago as being hurtful to our fruit-growers; these are the growers of garden stuff. Unless in specially favored locations, the grower of garden stuff has almost reason to look upon a good crop as a dispensation of evil. He has a surplus of it for his own local market, and he cannot afford to pay freight and express rates upon it to other markets. A writer in *The Country Gentleman*, commenting upon this, says: "A large percentage of what we now grow is wasted or almost given away, while there are hundreds of second and third class towns and cities which would welcome our stuff if we could only get it to them. Though commission merchants are, as a rule, honorable men, the returns from shipments to them are generally unsatisfactory." This writer advocates *cooperation on the part of growers* so as to control the output, to seek out new markets, to secure reasonable freight and express rates, and to establish economical means of distribution in the markets that are secured. This is certainly good advice. *Cooperation is the system to which all modern farming must have recourse.* The commonly alleged cause of the trouble, "over-production," is an absurd one. As the *Market Garden*, of Minneapolis, remarks, in a recent editorial on the subject, "to say that 'over-production' is the cause of the difficulty is to put the cart before the horse. It is not 'over-production' that is the difficulty, but 'under-consumption.'" And this is right. Everywhere, up and down in the land, there are thousands and hundreds of thousands of people who cannot eat of the good things of the earth because these are too dear. What is needed is cheap and economical distribution. This can be secured only by cooperation on the part of producers, with watchful

supervision and direction on the part of a wise and energetic government.

Preparation of Sheep for the Winter.

An old saying among sheepmen that is applicable in all parts is, that a sheep which goes into the winter season in good flesh, is half wintered. While this saying may have been more true in olden days than it is now, yet it may serve to draw the attention of farmers to the condition of their flocks. If the sheep are thin in flesh, an effort should be made to secure a surplus of flesh on them before they go into winter quarters. See that they have good pasture, if that is not to hand, then give them a little extra feed, for as likely as not the sheep are hunting for something to eat on bare pastures, and losing flesh every day. Feed a few turnips or a little grain, so that if the sheep do not gain any in weight, they at least do not fall away as they are almost sure to do if left to forage for themselves on poor pastures. This is the season of the year when a piece of rape comes in very handy. If you have not got a piece for this year, be sure you make preparation for a suitable piece next season. If not done already, make a thorough inspection of the flock. Examine all the ewes, and cull out those that have poor mouths, defective udders, or that are very thin in flesh, or that from any other cause will not make profitable animals to keep over winter. Get rid of them to the butcher, or in other ways. Give those ewes that are coupled this fall all the requirements which will help to develop for you a healthy good lamb. See that you have proper shelter for them when the cold rains come on. The change from grass to hay should be gradual. Another important item to attend to before the cold weather comes on, and one that should not be postponed, even if it is a busy time—you cannot afford to feed sheep ticks or lice all winter. Therefore select a suitable day and dip all the sheep. It is not yet too late, if proper precautions are taken to guard against the sheep taking cold. It will pay you to do it.

NOTES AND IDEAS.

It is in the Western States, where formerly there used to be maintained many huge flocks of small fine-wool sheep, that the change in the methods of sheep-breeding is showing itself most markedly. These small fine-wool sheep are being exchanged for sheep of the large mutton breeds—sheep that produce wool of fair quality, good mutton, and choice spring lambs that sell at good profits. The demand is now for rams that will grade up the native flocks to the quality of improved mutton producing flocks.

The shipments of cattle from Manitoba and the Territories this season promise to be the largest ever made. The total number shipped is now in excess of the total of last year, and yet there are a lot more to ship. One report has it that there must still be about 20,000 head to ship by one firm, not to say anything about other firms. This certainly is a good record, and shows that wheat is not the only product the prairie provinces export. Prices, too, have been very satisfactory for the stock-men. It will not be long till these provinces are also shipping large quantities of dairy produce in addition to wheat and cattle.

The demand in Chicago for sheep for feeding was never equal to what it is at the present time. In many cases feeders are selling above mutton prices. The farmers want them, because they believe they can make money out of them. Judge Lawrence, in a recent address, stated that the United States required the equivalent of at least 650,000,000 pounds of unwashed wool per year to meet the annual demands of her population. To fully supply their own demand they would require at least 110,000,000 sheep. To meet this they have only 34,785,000 sheep, according to the

most reliable figures, with a wool clip of about 230,000,000 pounds.

One of the unsolved problems in the Buffalo market is the question why Canadian lamb raisers, who in every other respect lead the market there, should send forward so many bucky lambs. The *Buffalo Live Stock Review* writing on this point says: "Canadian lambs allowed to feed and fatten as bucks, sell anywhere from 25c. to 40c. per cwt. lower than they would do if they were properly 'treated' when lambled. 'Tis true, 'tis pity, and pity 'tis 'tis true; but Canadian lamb feeders are largely blind to their own interest in failing to 'doctor' their flocks at the proper time." A perusal of our stock reports, week by week, will show that this criticism is just.

Intensive farming is simply the application of that principle to farming which is now applied to almost every other industry, namely *specialization*. The successful farmer of the future will be he who will confine himself to a small area, and devote himself wholly to that one product which he finds best suited to his land, his taste, and his ability. Strawberry culture as pursued to-day is an illustration of intensive farming. Few people realize how much can be produced from an acre of ground by specialized work. A strawberry cultivator writing to *Our Horticultural Visitor* says: "In 1887 by heavy manuring I netted \$350 from a quarter of an acre. In 1888 I netted \$900 on a scant acre and a quarter. I averaged that year \$400 net per acre on five acres. In 1890 I averaged \$300 per acre on five acres. In 1893 I netted \$600 per acre on all I had under intensive culture, five acres."

CANADA'S FARMERS.

VI. Capt. Thomas E. Robson.

Of the breeders who have succeeded in coming to the front in the Shorthorn classes in the show ring this year none stand out more prominently than Capt. T. E. Robson, of Ilderton. At the meetings of the live stock breeders he is also a familiar figure, and his genial ways and hearty songs make him a general favorite. Mr. Robson was born on the farm on which he now resides, in the township of London, Middlesex county, and like many other successful farmers, received his early education at the common country school. On his fine farm of two hundred acres of choice land he breeds Shorthorn cattle, Lincoln sheep, and harness horses. His father was a breeder before him, so that he comes honestly by his love for good stock. Though always a breeder of purebred stock, it is only within the last few years that Mr. Robson has entered the show ring. From the first he was successful in winning a good standing among the old exhibitors. This measure of success would have contented many a man of less ambition. Mr. Robson believed that if a thing was worth doing at all it was worth doing well, hence his ambition was to excel in his calling. He worked with this end in view, and this year success crowned his efforts, for his herd of Shorthorns was awarded the herd prize at the three leading exhibitions of the province, Toronto, London, and Ottawa. He had the sweepstakes female at all three exhibitions, and the sweepstakes bull at Toronto and Ottawa. His stock were brought out in the pink of condition, and no small share of this year's success in the show ring is due to the painstaking care and skillful feeling of his herdsman, Mr. Harry Coultham.

As a breeder of Lincoln sheep, Mr. Robson has been very successful in breeding a large number of prize-winning animals. The ewe that won first place in the Lincoln class at Chicago in 1893 was of his breeding. No small share of the honor of this winning was that the ewe defeated a first prize winner at the Royal of that year. This year a two-year-old ram of his breeding was sweepstakes at London, and has since won first place at Springfield and St. Louis. As a breeder of fancy harness horses, Mr. Robson has also been very successful. He has recently sold several fancy animals at long prices.

Mr. Robson's ability and general popularity have been fully recognized by those who know him best. When quite a young man he was elected deputy-reeve of his township. This position he filled so acceptably that in 1890 he was made reeve, and in 1891 he was chosen as warden of the county of Middlesex. Ten years in the county council gave him an intimate knowledge of municipal matters, and qualified him for the position of county clerk, to which he was appointed in 1892, and still retains. Mr. Robson is a director of the Dominion Shorthorn Breeders' Association, and for several years has been president of the London Mutual Fire Insurance, Co., London, Ont.