

Labour on the Farm

Yearly Employment of Help Would be of Great Value to the Farmers

Farm labour conditions received careful attention in the agricultural survey conducted on 100 farms in each of four counties in Ontario during the summer of 1915 by the Commission of Conservation.

One of the signal facts revealed was the small number of farmers employing male help by the year. In Dundas 10 farmers, in Waterloo 9, in Northumberland 7, and in Carleton 35, provide yearly employment; or a total of 61 out of the 400. Those employing help by the month included 13 in Dundas, 10 in Waterloo, 6 in Northumberland and 15 in Carleton, while those providing employment by the day only, were 41 in Dundas, 26 in Waterloo, 50 in Northumberland and 9 in Carleton. Farmers employing male help by mixed methods numbered 16 in Dundas, 42 in Waterloo, 19 in Northumberland and 9 in Carleton. Transient employment was thus provided for 256 men among the 400 farmers, as against 61 continually employed.

In view of the yearly complaints regarding the scarcity of farm help, the foregoing data indicate that much of the trouble is of the farmers' own making. It is too much to expect that a floating labour market can be maintained to supply this large demand at specific times. At that are these men to secure a livelihood during the balance of the year? True, there are on the great majority of farms periods of great pressure, when the crops must be cared for, and it is usually at these times that the additional help is employed.

The farmer is not alone in this situation, however; many of our largest factories and business houses have had the same conditions to meet. One of the largest clothing manufacturers of the United States recently stated that the keeping together of their staff of skilled workers had been one of their hardest problems. They had solved it, however, by utilizing their employees and plant in the manufacture of other lines for which it was adaptable during the off seasons in the clothing trade.

So with the farmer. He has at his command a wide range of production. By so operating his farm, he can increase his work at seasons when otherwise there would be no employment for his help. Competent help is as economical on the farm as in the factory; training help is an expensive undertaking. By providing continuous employment, the farmer not only overcomes this constant training of new men, but obtains the more valuable assistance of men familiar with his farm conditions.

One of the maxims of the Schools

Division of the Experimental Union of the Ontario Agricultural College might be adopted with profit by the transient employers of labour, "Learn to look forward and plan your work." By doing this the slack seasons would be eliminated, the farm would greatly increase its production, the farmer would be better off financially and would also be relieved of the worry due to the help problem.

NORTHERN ONTARIO FIRES

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Close supervision was shown to be needed, as well as an increased staff of fire-rangers to cover large areas at present unprotected.

The annual expenditure on forest fire protection in Ontario approximates \$300,000. The province derives an annual revenue of more than \$1,500,000 from its timber lands. For the perpetuation of this revenue and the safe-guarding of life and property, more adequate measures are required than have been in effect in the past.

The report of the Ontario Department of Lands, Forests and Mines for 1915 shows that 126 men were employed on fire patrol along the National Transcontinental and Timiskaming and Northern Ontario railways, at a cost of \$56,326. These rangers patrolled only along the railways. They were not able to patrol the forested portions of the adjacent settlements, nor was any other provision made for such patrol. Even had the forested area in process of settlement been patrolled, the rangers would have had no authority under the law to prevent a careless or reckless settler from starting a clearing fire at any time he might wish, thus creating a most serious hazard to life and property.

That the province is justified in spending \$56,326 annually on patrol along the two railways in question, is undeniable and the situation demands adequate provision, both legislative and administrative, in the adjoining forest areas in process of settlement, where the danger of fire is little, if any, less than along the railways. As a matter of fact, the one is of little value apart from the other.

Continued failure to provide efficient fire protection in the "clay belt" will inevitably mean that prospective settlers will refuse to undergo the unnecessary risk to life and property, and the whole development of that promising region will be retarded indefinitely.

—C. L.

UTILIZING MILL WASTE

It is estimated that there is enough waste from the sawmills of the Southern States alone to produce 20,000 tons of paper per day. The waste from Canadian sawmills is undoubtedly in proportion. Investigations are being made by the Forest Products Laboratories, in both Canada and the United States, with a view to the develop-

Fresh Air a Necessity

Ventilation of Homes Essential to Health of Occupants

Many Canadians have returned from summer outings, of which the principal attraction and benefit were the enjoyment of the open air. Living in the open has health values superior to any artificial cures, and, during the warmer months, is fully enjoyed by Canadians. Today fresh air is a recognized remedy for tuberculosis and pneumonia and a preventive of disease generally.

It is regrettable that the interiors of the majority of homes in Canada are breeding places for disease, because of the difficulties in admitting fresh air. Foul air, containing exhalations from the lungs of the inmates, constitutes the atmosphere in many homes, and it cannot be otherwise when houses are built to exclude the external air.

It is a common mistake to confuse heat and bad air or cold and good air. The atmosphere may be below freezing and still be bad, or it may be excessively warm and still be pure.

Buildings should be ventilated so that it will be impossible for the occupants to breathe air already used. A simple means of keeping the air of a room fresh is by a cross draft, secured through open windows on either side of a house. Where there are windows on one side of a room only, the upper sash should be lowered and the lower one raised. This allows the warm, foul air to escape through the opening above the upper sash as the pure cold air enters below the lower sash.

To utilize an opening above the upper sash of a window fully for ventilation and at the same time to lower the window shade, the latter may be attached to the roller by four or five pieces of tape, about five inches long. This leaves a space between the roller and shade through which the impure air may escape. The shade should also be shortened so that when drawn down to expose the opening at the top it leaves an opening also at the bottom. This will permit constant changing of the air of a room.

Canadians should be as fond of fresh air in winter as in summer. The benefit of the three or four warmer months with the open-air life is often offset by the shutting-in process adopted in the autumn, and the life and vigour displayed during the open-air months are frequently followed by lassitude and nervous depression, due entirely to the lack of proper ventilation.

ment of methods for the commercial utilization of this waste. Considerable progress has already been made in seasons where local markets are readily available.

FIRE PREVENTION IN SCHOOLS

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deposited near frame buildings or wooden fences. Wood should not be placed close to the stove or furnace to dry. This is a very dangerous practice, and has caused many fires.

As doors leading from classrooms, corridors and school buildings should open outward and should never be locked during school hours.

In the larger schools where a janitor is employed it should be a part of his duty to make a daily inspection of the school premises, from basement to attic. This should be imperative and not simply a matter of convenience.

The position of janitor or caretaker of a school is an important one. The custody of valuable property and the protection of many lives are in his keeping. Too often the only qualification for this position is the low salary at which a man may be secured. The position should be made one of ample salary and a reliable and qualified occupant employed; strict attention to duty should then be insisted upon.

There has been a material reduction in the number of school fires during the past few years. In 1913 there were 35 school fire losses, in 1914 there were 26, while in 1915 there were only 11. It is hoped that 1916 will show that, owing to the greater care exercised by those responsible, school fires have been entirely eliminated.

"Safety First" with Firearms

Each year the shooting season records a long list of accidents due to carelessness of hunters in the forest and in the use of firearms.

A gun going off accidentally and killing the owner, climbing fences with the gun loaded and cocked, or shooting at a companion in mistake for an animal are stereotyped causes. With the knowledge of the danger of handling firearms, it is surely incumbent upon hunters to exercise every precaution and keep continually before them the motto "safety first."

Stovepipe and Chimney Fires

With the approach of cooler weather, stoves and fireplaces will soon be put into commission. Before this is done care should be taken to see that chimneys and stovepipes are in good repair, thoroughly cleaned, and rendered safe from fire. Owing to the dampness of the early summer, many stovepipes will be found badly rusted, which an outer coating of enamel will not expose. Examine these carefully and replace defective pipes. Fire prevention is one of the first considerations of the household.