

from immigration were considered. As reported, Mr. Parliament stated the decline at 152,000 or putting it in another way that the rural population was 100,000 less than forty years ago. It is conceded in a publication by the Conservation Commission that the production of food has not been commensurate with the demand because the population is not properly distributed. War aggravated the situation and demobilization has apparently not effected improvement. Here is the substance of a typical news report from the Toronto Globe of recent date:

"Several farmers on 100-acre farms, (Norfolk Co.) have no help save that furnished by women folk. Farms are changing hands and owners retiring to cities and towns. Scarcity of help is given as the reason in most cases. In another county never have there been so many sales of farms. Some are retiring on account of infirmity and old age, others are going west while others are quitting on account of the scarcity of suitable help and high wages. Other farmers have seeded their land and are turning to grazing stock instead of raising grain. But for the help of school boys in another district farmers could not stick it out. High School students will be needed as much this year as last both for outdoor and domestic work.

In other localities mention is made of farmers taking up store-keeping, agencies and auctioneering sometimes as a side line. A certain amount of shifting about may always be expected but this unrest can hardly be looked upon as healthy. Places sold may of course be occupied by other persons but often they become part of larger farms.

"The Farmer's Advocate" has indicated the underlying cause of the main drift as economic, that is the matter of returns from the farm for the labor, intelligence and capital required. For years correspondents of the paper have presented a great variety of reasons with corresponding suggestions, especially in relation to young people. The school system has been censured and drudgery in farm work specified, overlooking drudgery and drawbacks in other pursuits. What with rural phones, motor cars, boys' clubs and many other young people's societies, women's institutes, school fairs, rural church doings, and home improvement rural life is not quite so devoid of interest and pleasure as some town folk imagine. The next man you meet will likely assert that as a primary cause of the drift, lack of recreation has about as much to do with it as the curl of a pig's tail with the tides. Young people say they want to better themselves financially. Normal young men and women desire to settle in homes of their own before they grow grey headed but with farms growing bigger and the outfit more costly the prospect looks remote so they hike for town.

The ills usually attending urban congestion are admittedly many and serious. Just now costly food looms large. Notwithstanding labor-saving machinery, farmers because of the pressure of work which the "new time" fad accentuates in some cases, do not have the requisite leisure desired for self-improvement. If he covered a larger acreage in war time he wrought harder. If people are to get the best out of life they cannot maintain such a pace. Parliamentary representation also, shifts with population and readers of the weekly reports from the Ottawa House, see clearly some of the consequences. Now, instead of the Legislature adopting an amendment patting the farmer on the back for being a fine war time producer and another congratulating the Government upon its activities, which nobody disputed, why not have faced the real issue. Useful county surveys regarding the profits of dairying and other subjects are being conducted. Here is an unsettled question of vital concern to the whole province. Without resort to an elaborate commission surely a capable committee representing both sides of the House could have got together and, setting a wholesome object lesson in dropping party politics, devised or conducted an enquiry that would have afforded the public representative hearings in order to ascertain the extent of the decline in country-side population and its causes. It was objected that because of present unsettled conditions the proposed investigation was inopportune. Exactly the reverse is the case. When the province is entering upon a reconstruction period is the very time to courageously take up the subject. Out of a multiplicity of ascertained or ascertainable fact, opinion and suggestion an authoritative body of information could be collected and sifted in order to framing a deliverance that would clarify the subject, afford the people a clearer apprehension of the advantages of rural life and pursuits and formulating measures public and private tending more effectively to a better distribution of population.

Middlesex Co., Ont.

W. T.

Clover-Leaf Weevil Present This Spring.

The clover-leaf beetle, or clover leaf weevil, as it is sometimes called, has made its appearance in certain counties of Ontario this spring. R. A. Finn, Agricultural Representative for Middlesex, reports its appearance in London Township, and E. N. Neff, Representative for Norfolk County has also discovered it there. This is not a common pest but it is worthy of attention when present in the fields. The adult is a plump beetle about three-eighths of an inch in length. It is quite commonly seen during the autumn on roadside plants and sidewalks, and on buildings. It is in the larval stage, however, that most of the damage is done. A Michigan State bulletin describes the young grubs or larvae and their work thus: "At night they venture boldly out and devour the leaves, but during the daytime are more or less concealed near the bases of the

plants. In appearance these larvae are almost slug-like, footless, and green in color, with a lighter stripe running down the back. They reach the length of about half an inch when full grown, at which time they spin beautifully fine-meshed, lace cocoons, usually though not always at the surface of the ground."

"Fortunately the clover weevil which has all the characteristics of a first-class pest is kept in check by a fungous disease. Curiously enough, larvae attacked by the disease are impelled to climb up on spears of grass around which they wrap their bodies and die. The spores or seed-like bodies of the fungus are thus thrown some distance, and falling on other larvae spread the disease."

The fungus which keeps, or helps to keep, the clover-leaf weevil in check is, however, poisonous to live stock when eaten in sufficient quantity. Serious illness in cattle, due to eating quantities of the dead larvae, has been reported in the past although we know of no fatalities resulting therefrom.

The weevils seen this spring are apparently very effectively infested by the fungus and their spread is unlikely.

Some Catch Crops For a Backward Season.

The work of seeding and planting has been so seriously delayed by the rainy weather that many fields may have to be planted to crops which do not receive much consideration in a normal season. Fields have been drenched with water for weeks, and altogether quite unsuitable for cultivating and drilling. A few fine days up to the end of last week permitted farmers to seed small fields, or parts of larger ones, and where the work was done some time ago both grain and small seeds are coming along nicely. However, there is this consolation and encouragement, the season is late; vegetation of all kinds is backward, and in this respect farmers are not so far behind in their seeding as the calendar would indicate. The situation is serious enough, but when vegetation is late one is safer in seeding past the customary dates than when everything is early. A great many will prefer to sow oats very late in May or early in June rather than resort to less desirable crops such as buckwheat or millet. Even if oats do not mature properly and produce a heavy, well-filled kernel they will surely make a nutritious hay and, taking everything into consideration, we do not consider it wise to make serious changes in the crop rotation just yet, except in regard to spring wheat or barley, for which it is already too late.

It is not advisable to change from regular crops to catch crops until it becomes absolutely necessary. When it becomes too late for grain, mangels can still be sown, which is better than summer-fallowing the land. One does not, of course, care to plant mangels or dity land, but anything intended for grain would likely be all right for mangels in this respect. One should be able to produce a very satisfactory crop of mangels, planted as late as the first week in June. Where the season is altogether too late for this type of roots, there are still Swede turnips. They are a splendid succulent roughage and go well along with hay or straw. They will yield almost as much as mangels; they require a little less labor, and can be sown even to a late date in June with a fair chance for success, although one should endeavor to get them in by the middle or 20th of the month. The one great trouble with roots is the labor involved in their production, and under present conditions it is unreasonable to expect that a farmer, finding himself too late for grain, could, unless happily situated in regard to help, put a very large acreage down to roots. Nevertheless, with a slight readjustment of plans one might enlarge on the area intended for corn, seed a small area to roots, and thus make up for the deficiency in cereals. The yellow leviathan mangel, which is of the intermediate type, is a favorite. It varies somewhat in productiveness according to the source of the seed, but on the whole it is a popular variety and quite trustworthy.

In some districts potatoes might suggest themselves as a substitute, and if the farm promises to produce enough grain and roughage to carry the live stock, a cash crop such as this might not prove unprofitable. A large area of potatoes, however, requires special equipment, thus necessitating an expenditure which the grain and stock farmer would not care to lay out. However, potatoes offer one alternative that can be considered by many up to the middle of June, and in some sections well on to the end of the month.

Any of the crops so far suggested do not solve the problem where a shortage of grain and straw is feared. Where the season is considered too late for oats, buckwheat might be resorted to. Buckwheat is all right in a mixture of grains for shotes, and growing stock, and the straw is useful as bedding. In the Eastern Provinces, where considerable buckwheat is grown, it is mixed with other grains and fed to good advantage. It tends to produce a soft flesh, and the results are much better when there is a liberal proportion of corn in the ration, especially in the case of hogs, and more particularly near the end of the finishing period. Eastern farmers find a wide and varied use for buckwheat, and it would not come amiss this year where straw and cereal grains are likely to be in short supply.

Buckwheat can be sown late in June or the first week in July. In fact, one gets a better crop of grain when it is not sown too early. Three pecks to the acre is a reasonable amount to sow, but some seed a little heavier, and others claim to get good results from less than three pecks. However, where grain is the aim it would be safer in the long run to use not less

than three pecks of seed per acre. At the Ontario Agricultural College, where varieties have been tested for 13 years, the rye or rough buckwheat has proved itself the best grain yielder, but not quite so good as some other kinds in regard to straw.

Millet has been used on many past occasions to partially overcome difficulties such as we are experiencing this year, and most farmers are now acquainted with this crop. It makes a fairly good roughage for cattle, but it is not, of course, to be classed along with clover or timothy hay. It yields heavily; it can be sown when the season is past for the staple crops; it smothers out weeds that would surely grow on idle land, and in other ways commends itself in an abnormal year. Both millet and buckwheat can be left unsown until the land is well worked down, and the weeds and grass now growing are killed or brought into subjection.

If the seeding is done early in June Japanese panicum will probably prove to be the best yielder, but if seeding is delayed till very late in June or July the Hungarian grass would be more dependable. Dr. Zavitz reports that the best yields were obtained at Guelph from seedings made on June 1, but of course millet can be sown on the later dates with satisfactory results. From 25 to 30 pounds of seed per acre is considered about right.

Farmers could yet well trust considerable land to corn, but early-maturing varieties should be planted. We have, in the past, seen corn planted in Middlesex County during the first week in June, and it made good silage. It would be better now to sacrifice some volume in the crops for maturity. The autumn may be an open one, but on the whole one is safer to use an early strain of White Cap Yellow Dent, or a variety that will ripen as early.

As this is being written some fall-plowed fields have already become so grassy that perhaps, in the end, a summer-fallow followed by wheat would be the wisest treatment. Summer-fallowing in Ontario is generally considered unnecessary, but if the land continues wet and one has no use for buckwheat or millet there will be no other practical alternative. Many will be inclined to take chances this spring, planting oats, corn and roots much later than usual; in such cases early-maturing varieties should be selected. Get in touch with your nearest experiment station and learn the opinion of those in charge concerning crops and varieties. They will also be in a position to state the number of days usually required to bring the different varieties to maturity. There will be much haste when the land becomes fit to work, but the results will be more gratifying if caution is not abandoned.

CANADA'S YOUNG FARMERS AND FUTURE LEADERS.

Father and Son in Share Farming.

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

In the issue of March 27 I saw a question by I. T. Cole, re working a farm on shares. There are different ways of working farms on shares; the one way to work a farm would be to work on third shares, and the other to work on half shares. I have worked a farm both ways, and shall describe the conditions under which I operated.

I shall first discuss farming on the one-third share plan. In this case the farmer should furnish the farm and all the live and dead stock, furnish all the seed to crop the farm, and bear all the expenses in regard to stock and machinery which will be his property. The man who works the farm is to have one-third of all that is grown and raised and one-third of all the increase in the stock. The different items I had to pay were as follows: I had to do all the work on the farm and what I could not do I hired done; paid one-third of the threshing bill and cost of binder twine; did the road work, and carried the fire insurance on my third share. Of course, I had the privilege of selling my third of the grain and hay off the farm.

To work a farm on half shares the farmer would need to have all the stock and machinery valued, then each party should own half of said stock, bear half the losses and expenses on all that is grown and raised on the farm, pay half the taxes and half of the insurance on the grain and stock, and the farmer should insure his own buildings and keep up the repairs on them. Of course, I am writing as an outsider, but if a farmer's son is working a farm on either condition the son ought to have better privileges than a man from outside. I think there ought to be a little give and take on both sides; that would be the best way to get along. Of course, most farmers know their job, and it is just as well for the man who is working the farm to take some good advice from the owner. If the farmer can see where he can make a dollar in regard to working the farm, there would be fifty cents coming to you, so the only way to get along is for both to pull together.

Norfolk Co., Ontario.

J. M.

Father and Son in Partnership.

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

As there are a great many different cases with regard to father and son working together, it is quite difficult to discuss the most appropriate one to suit I. T. Cole's case, mentioned in the issue of March 27. One point I should like to impress on readers, more especially upon farmers' sons, is never to insist on getting your father away to town, making him believe his working days are over and that it would be easier for him to live

retired.

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