



A delightful Summer Vista.

Agriculture in the "Great Clay Belt"

Hon. Mr. Monteith Gives His Impressions of New Ontario—
A Bright Outlook

The Honorable Nelson Monteith, Minister of Agriculture, who has just returned from a trip to Temiskaming, was asked by THE FARMING WORLD to give its readers the benefit of his conclusions regarding the prospects for agriculture in the "Great Clay Belt." "You will of course understand," said Mr. Monteith, "that in the brief time at my disposal it was impossible for me to inspect more than a limited area in the immense tract of agricultural land lying to the north and west of Lake Temiskaming. What I saw convinced me, however, that the land is capable of producing excellent crops of cereals, legumes, roots, etc., providing varieties suitable to the district are introduced and proper cultural methods are adopted. Experience alone will decide these points and you will understand, therefore, what I mean when I say that in this respect agriculture is as yet in its experimental stage in that new country. The splendid crops of wheat, oats, etc., that I saw there would convince anyone of the undoubted richness of the soil. Clover and peas are especially luxuriant, and the heavy yields and freedom from insect pests should make the growing of these crops for seed a very profitable undertaking. I see no reason why stock-raising with its attendant industries should not be successful as soon as sufficient land has been cleared to provide grazing, forage, and root crops. The whole of the clay belt is covered with a dense growth of timber, consisting chiefly of spruce, tamarack, balsam and poplar, and the work of clearing is necessarily a somewhat tedious operation, although not nearly as much so as it was in the hardwood districts of Ontario. At the same time the material which the forest provides for fences, buildings and fuel compensates the settler for the time it takes him to clear the land.

"I find that the remarkably rich silver discoveries that have been made in the vicinity have unsettled those engaged in agriculture, to some extent, to the detriment of farming operations, but this will doubtless retard development only temporarily, for it will be realized that work done upon the land will produce more reliable if less spectacular results."

"If, as you say, farming in that country is in the experimental stage, it would seem that some time must elapse before the capabilities of the district are fully ascertained and the best results secured?" Mr. Monteith was asked.

"Assuredly, if the settlers are left to work out the results for themselves, it will take some time to accomplish this, just as was the case in Manitoba."

"Would not this be a matter in which your department could be of assistance?"

"Yes, my department might very properly render aid in this respect by substituting systematic experiments for haphazard ones. Results secured in the older sections of the country cannot fully apply where conditions are obviously different. Here, in older Ontario, where conditions are known, it is possible to ascertain with fair accuracy the most suitable varieties and methods for any particular district through the experiments conducted at Guelph and by the thousands of co-operative experimenters scattered all over the province who conduct tests under the auspices of the Ontario Experimental Union. In this district, however, close investigation is required, and there is room for much experimental work to be done."

"What is the character of the settlers in that country, Mr. Monteith?"

"Most of them have come from the older sections of the province and a more intelligent lot of pioneers it would be difficult to find anywhere. Mr. Cochrane and I had the pleasure of meeting about two hundred of them at Melberta, which is in the centre of the organized municipalities. The spirit prevailing among them is one of buoyancy and confidence in their ability to secure for themselves comfortable homes and

eventually an ample competence in that new country. It was a great pleasure and an inspiration to meet these men, and our conference with them enabled us to appreciate their difficulties and requirements as we could in no other way. One of the most serious drawbacks in this as in other new countries with which the early settler has to contend is the lack of roads to afford means of access and communication. This state of affairs we hope to do something to remedy."

"What about markets?"
"As for markets for agricultural produce, the demand is already far greater than the supply, and the development which is taking place in mining, milling, lumbering and railway construction will insure a continuance of this state of affairs for years to come."

Holstein Breeders Appeal to the Railway Commission

The following memorial, a copy of which has been sent us, with a request that it be published, has been forwarded by the Holstein-Friesian Association of Canada to the Railway Commission:

To the Chairman and Members, Railway Commission, Ottawa, Ont.
Gentlemen,—On behalf of the Holstein-Friesian Association of Canada, an organization representing at least five hundred breeders of purebred Holstein-Friesian cattle, and having a paid-up membership of over two hundred, whose organized purpose is to keep the records of the pedigrees, the records of the proven performances, and all other valuable data concerning this breed, and to promote the best interests of the Holstein-Friesian cattle and their owners in the Dominion of Canada, we desire to lay before your honorable body some information regarding the formation of Canadian National Records for live stock, and the threatened withdrawal by the railways of the reduced freight rates on purebred stock not registered under the national scheme.

Our apprehensions are largely based upon statements made by the Dominion Live Stock Commissioner, F. W. Hodson, at meetings of the various live stock associations last winter, and officially reported in THE FARMING WORLD in February, 1905, (a copy of which is attached). The address may be found at pages 129 to 132, and the passages relating particularly to freight rates are marked.

Our association is negotiating with the Hon. Minister of Agriculture in regard to moving our office to Ottawa, but thus far we have not decided to do so, and we fear that the rail-



Breaking for the first crop.