

Prospects in New Ontario.

At a time when the National cry and necessity is, "Produce", and the ever rising cost of living is forcing the practice of the most rigid economy, it is natural that many should for reasons both patriotic and economic seek to effect an entrance into an agricultural sphere of activity. It is also natural that among this number some should be considering the possibilities of the much advertised Northland of Ontario, and it is with a view of assisting those so minded, of relieving some of the many doubts and difficulties which naturally exist, and for the purpose of discussing some of the advantages and disadvantages of the country that this article is written.

The change from urban to rural life, though extreme in character is not so difficult of accomplishment as might be thought upon early consideration of that change; in agriculture, as in all else, experience favors success; but in the Northland the start is often on a small scale, and operations can be extended as experience and proficiency increase. Among the essential requisites of a farming district are: good soil, sufficiently long growing season to enable crops to mature, reasonable proximity to markets, suitable transportation facilities, and good roads.

Northern Ontario, when examined in the light of the foregoing essentials, will compare so favorably as to warrant the serious consideration of the would-be agriculturist.

The soil of the clay Belt is fertile; of that there can be no doubt. The opinions of the many agricultural experts who have from time to time reported on this matter are unanimous. Here are millions of acres of land as good as the best in Old Ontario, ranging in character from sand to clay with all the intermediate

graduations, capable of producing much of the food-stuff now in world-wide demand. An examination of the crops grown here will produce incontrovertible evidence of soil fertility: barley, oats, wheat, peas, hay and roots may all be found producing yields that will compare favorably with the average for these crops. Oats invariably yield grain heavier than the seed purchased from the South; barley, both spring and fall wheat all give fair average yields; clover grows as a weed on the roadsides, and produces phenomenal crops when cultivated. Roots, mangels, turnips, etc., grow to an immense size. Dealing with hoed crops, however, the country is pre-eminently suited to the production of potatoes, particularly seed potatoes. The climate is such as to favor the production of immature seed, such seed having proved to be possessed of the greatest vitality, and conducive to the heaviest yields. Northern grown seed will be in big demand in the potato growing districts of Old Ontario, and arrangements are being made to ensure an adequate supply.

The growing season here is shorter than in the southern part of the province, and crops such as corn are liable to damage from the early fall frosts; fruits and vegetables susceptible to frost must be protected at night to eliminate risk of injury. The country generally is liable to summer frost, and for this reason care must be exercised in selecting the hardiest and earliest varieties of grain, etc. There is good reason to believe that as land clearing progresses, as the cultivated area becomes more extensive, the frost risk will become materially reduced. However, to compensate for the somewhat short season, the long hours of sunshine are productive of the most rapid growth, the short time required for grain to reach maturity occasions considerable surprise to the farmer unfamiliar with northern weather conditions.

Fortunate indeed is the farmer in New Ontario with regard to markets for his produce. The Northland

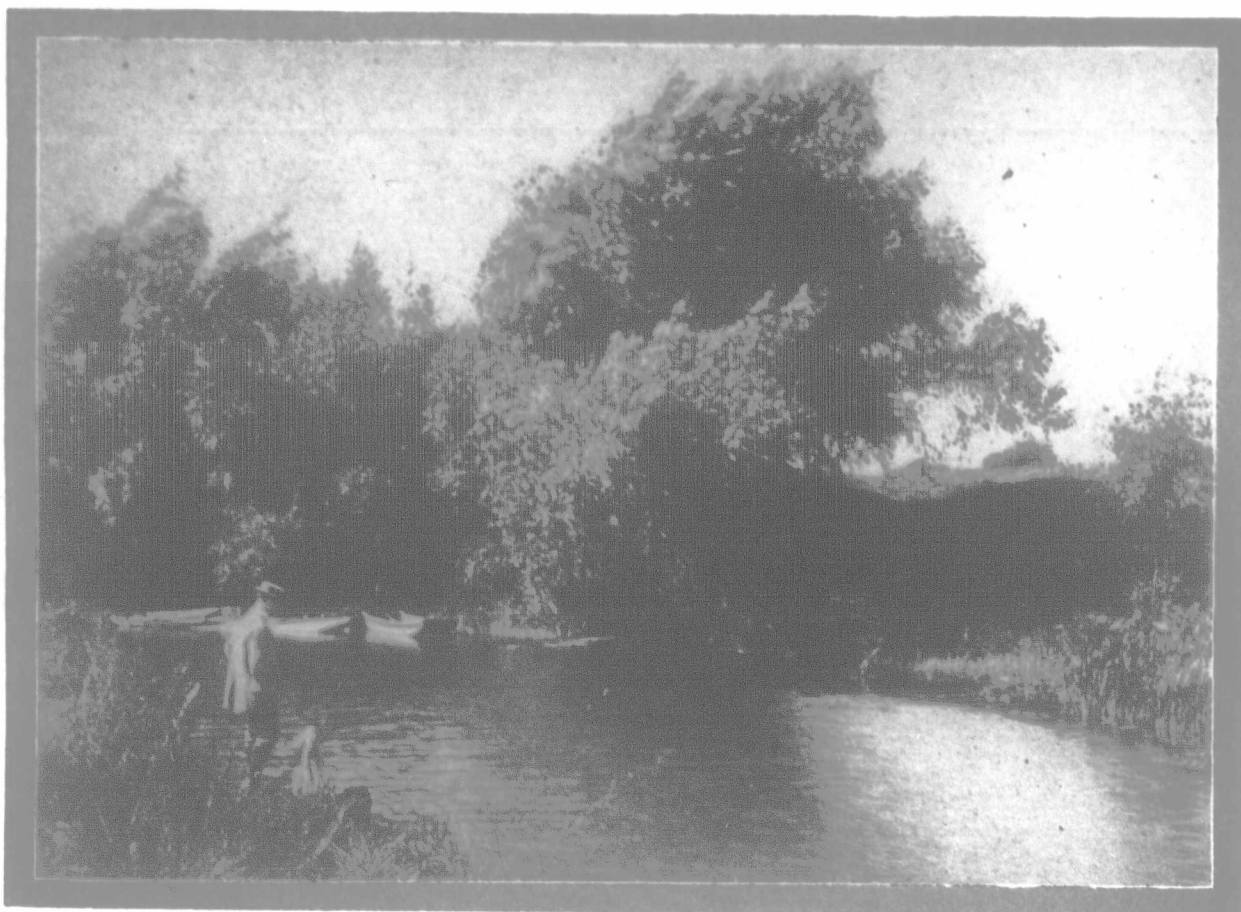
including, as it does, the richest and most productive mining areas, containing large tracts of mineralized rock, possessing untold possibilities, enjoys the undoubted asset of a readily accessible market, and a market capable of infinite extension. Large producing mines, and lumber camps employing many men are ready buyers of much produce; local markets at Haileybury and Cobalt absorb considerable foodstuff produced in the surrounding country, and Toronto with its connections to numerous market centres is but a day's journey from the heart of the Clay Belt. A government operated railroad extending North throughout the more settled area ensures for the farmer economical transportation and provides quick and easy access to the Northern markets. The Northland is probably as favorably situated with regard to markets as any part of the Dominion, and as the vast mining areas are developed, resulting in the accumulation of an extensive consuming population, which from an agricultural point of view is non-producing, must necessarily result in a market for all classes of farm produce, and the Northern farmers by reason of their proximity to these markets should successfully compete with producers at a greater distance.

The various sidelines which often prove a valuable adjunct to a farmer's income without adding unduly to his labor, may be as profitably followed in the North as elsewhere, and the following figures should tend to prove that poultry could reasonably occupy a more prominent position on many a Northern farm than a mere sideline.

During the year 1917 eggs sold to a local store-keeper realised from 35 cents to 50 cents per dozen, the lower price ruling for one week only, and from January to March 1918, 60 cents per dozen was readily obtainable, whilst at Christmas and New Year's holiday, eggs sold briskly on the Cobalt market at 75 cents per dozen. There is a good demand for live fowl, the Jewish element buying considerable at certain seasons. Potatoes and all garden produce can invariably be disposed of at prices often in excess of those quoted at Toronto and Southern markets. Strawberries are, in a favorable season, a good crop in many parts, and those growing them state that they can in no measure satisfy the local demand, it is rarely necessary to ship berries any distance. To the farmer desirous of engaging in dairying the country offers considerable inducements; and the splendid pasture, with abundance of good water and the essential shade trees, offers untold possibilities for extensive beef raising.

The roads of the Northland are, generally speaking, in fairly good condition; as might reasonably be expected there is room for considerable improvement, a good country road cannot be constructed all at once, time and traffic are necessary before a good bottom and a wear resisting surface are obtainable. The Government have annually spent a large sum of money on road development and improvement, and as the country opens up the road system will naturally enlarge and improve. After due consideration of the foregoing, and when it is remembered that there is usually ample opportunity to obtain employment during the winter months if necessary Northern Ontario certainly deserves the serious consideration of the would-be settler. In many cases the timber sold from the land will pay for preparing it for cultivation. The stumps of the prevailing trees, spruce and balsam, readily decay, and a year or so after timbering and following a fire, a team of horses can usually pull sufficient stumps to permit of using almost any implement; in fact, the difficulty of land clearing cannot be compared with the troubles that beset the path of the pioneer in Old Ontario. In conclusion it may be said that the country offers in addition to the material benefits of wild meat, fish, and wild fruit, a bracing and invigorating climate, dry and cold in winter but conducive to the best of health; it offers scenery sufficient to satisfy the most exacting, it satisfies the call of the wild present in many breasts, and is providing a living for an ever increasing population.

NORTHERN SCRIBE.



A Secluded Nook.

Canada's Young Farmers and Future Leaders.

Essentials in Successful Farming.

Columella, a Spanish-Roman writer of the first century A.D., once said that three things are necessary for successful farming: knowledge, capital and love of calling. So true is this statement to-day that it is frequently repeated. No two out of the three essentials will produce a successful farmer; all three must be present. Sometimes it seems as though exceptions could be found, but upon closer examination they will show a close relationship to this old axiom. Sometimes men believe that capital will do everything, and, because they have more capital than the average farmer in the neighborhood, undertake to show him how to farm. These men, however, very frequently lack in knowledge and often, too, in a real liking for farming. The farmer with less capital, but who possesses knowledge and experience, will very often progress slowly, but no less surely, and in the end win out over his richer neighbor. Could we find out how much money has been sunk in over-expenditure on the farms of Ontario alone, and could we determine how many heritages have been lost through lack of knowledge in farming, how many of us would even grasp the enormous advantage of knowledge and experience in the battle of the farmer against the vagaries of weather and the ravages of pest and disease. How priceless in time of strife and possible privation is the man whose experience is such as to enable him to draw from the soil the last

bushel of grain, and who can carry the parched corn through a time of drought and hardship until the rain shall come? The power of knowledge is everywhere recognized, and nowhere is it more to be revered than in the tillage of the soil, or in the feeding and care of domesticated animals, especially when knowledge is reinforced by experience. Knowledge unattended may give rise to vanity; experience is knowledge but of a different tempering, and bespeaks for its possessor the respect of all who meet him.

Capital of itself is of tremendous importance in agriculture. It is becoming increasingly important as the years go by, and our methods undergo a gradual change toward larger machinery and labor-saving appliances. Moreover—and here is an essential factor for all prospective young farmers—our standard of living is being elevated. If we dare predict, the standard of living on farms will be elevated from now on far faster than has been the case between our time and the time of our forefathers. All honor to those hardy pioneers who with axe and saw and patient oxen hewed their way through the virgin forest of the new world and made for us a place of freedom. They planted among the red man's country and among the rivers and woods of Canada the spirit of democracy, for which we even now are fighting in recognition of their far-seeing wisdom.

But times have changed. No longer do our mothers and sisters sit at the spinning wheel and weave for us our suits of homespun; no longer is the tallow candle

with its flickering light the only means of thrusting daylight into darkness. Our fathers no longer trudge wearily, mile upon mile, under the burden of a bag of cornmeal to get it ground at the only mill for forty miles. Towns and cities have sprung up everywhere, factories have arisen and manufactures of unimaginable variety supply our every want. Great railway systems pierce the rugged face of the land from ocean to ocean, and towns are brought into daily touch with each other although hundreds of miles apart. Electricity and the telephone have solved our heat problem and have made us independent of distance. The initiation of the steam engine revolutionized our industries, and the utilization of gasoline has made possible the automobile.

We have passed from the old days of barter to the days of capital. Money is the medium of trade. In the days of our great grandfathers labor was cheap and reliance was placed upon it entirely by the sturdy settlers—but it is possible no longer. Every added comfort, every new factory and every new pleasure which time has brought us has made our civilization more complex and raised our standard of living. For many of these additions to the simple civilization of yesterday we have paid, and will continue to pay, the penalty, but we will go on. We must; it is the history of civilization itself.

But to our subject. The change from barter to coin and currency as a medium of exchange has had a

vast influence in the method of value with land. Now the labor must share the potency of Money lying idle too frequent, use on the far clearly or with the need for cash that our farmer's small incomes, so by virtue of co-operation a better system of young men and city also bears statement. Can chinery, greater

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