

## Little New Agricultural Legislation Passed by Parliament.

The session of the Dominion Parliament which concluded on Thursday, May 18, was fruitful of very little legislation directly affecting agriculture. There were no new laws enacted relating to the work of the Department of Agriculture itself, but a slight amendment to the Canada Grain Act was passed which is of interest to Western farmers.

The policy of the Department of Agriculture, in keeping with other branches of the Government, has been to curtail general expenses as much as possible, and to introduce practically no new lines of work which will involve heavy expenditure. The appropriations for the whole Department show a decrease of \$45,000.00 compared with the previous year. The amounts for the various branches are as follows:

Details	1916-17	1915-16	Compared with estimates of 1915-16	increase	decrease
Patent Record.....	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$	\$	
Experimental Farms—Maintenance of Central Farm and establishment and maintaining of additional branch stations.....	846,000.00	785,000.00	61,000.00		
Branch of Entomology.....	20,000.00	20,000.00			
For the administration and enforcement of the Destructive Insect and Pest Act.....	75,000.00	100,000.00			25,000.00
For the development of the dairying industries and the improvement in transportation, sale and trade in food and other agricultural products.....	155,000.00	\$150,000.00	5,000.00		
Fruit Branch.....	115,000.00	113,000.00	2,000.00		
Towards the encouragement of cold storage warehouses for better preservation and handling of perishable food products.....	150,000.00	200,000.00			50,000.00
Exhibitions.....	100,000.00	250,000.00			150,000.00
For renewing and improving Canadian exhibit at Imperial Institute, London, and assisting in the maintenance thereof.....	5,000.00	5,000.00			
Health of Animals.....	570,000.00	540,000.00	30,000.00		
Dominion Cattle Quarantine Buildings, repairs, renewals, etc.....	15,000.00	15,000.00			
For the administration and enforcement of the Meat and Canned Foods Act.....	292,000.00	275,000.00	17,000.00		
Publications Branch.....	20,000.00	15,000.00	5,000.00		
International Institute of Agriculture to assist in maintenance thereof and to provide for representation thereat.....	20,000.00	20,000.00			
For the development of the Live-Stock Industry.....	600,000.00	550,000.00	50,000.00		
To enforce the Seed Act to test seeds for farmers and seed merchants to encourage the production and use of superior seeds, and to encourage the production of farm and garden crops.....	150,000.00	140,000.00	10,000.00		
National Biological Laboratory (Revote).....	25,000.00	25,000.00			
For the administration and carrying out of the provisions of the Agricultural Instruction Act.....	25,000.00	25,000.00			
Grant to Dominion Exhibition.....	50,000.00	50,000.00			
	\$3,263,000.00	\$3,308,000.00			\$45,000.00

It will be noted that there is a considerable increase in the appropriations for the Experimental Farms Branch. This is to provide for the necessary increased expenses of the general system and for further extension work in connection with agricultural fairs.

In the Health of Animals Branch provision is made for indemnity to owners of animals which may be slaughtered on account of contagious diseases, and for further expenses which may be necessary in connection with inspection and quarantine regulations to control possible outbreaks of disease. Assistance is now offered to cities or towns with a population of not less than five thousand for the eradication of tuberculosis in the dairy herds from which the milk supply is secured. When a municipality complies with certain conditions, the Branch provides inspectors free of charge who test all the animals supplying milk to the city, and direct the handling of the herds in such a way as to eliminate to the greatest possible extent the danger of communicating tuberculosis to human beings through the milk. When animals are slaughtered under these regulations compensation is allowed the owners.

In the Meat Inspection Department of the Health of Animals Branch allowance is made in the estimates to meet extra expenses in connection with the greatly increased work due to war conditions. During the last fiscal year our exports for bacon increased about fifty per cent., which caused a corresponding increase in the work of inspection.

The appropriations for the Live-Stock Branch show an increase to meet the demand for further extending the policy of distributing pure-bred sires and to provide for the work in connection with market expansion.

The Seed Branch increase is principally to provide for further assistance toward the production of home-grown root and vegetable seeds. Since the outbreak of war special efforts have been made to encourage the production of these seeds in Canada, as our regular sources of supply are seriously threatened. Subvention is offered on the principal kinds of root and vegetable seeds grown in Canada, and special officers are being employed to supervise the work of seed growing.

An amendment to the Canada Grain Act was passed widening the powers of the Board of Grain Commissioners to order a supply of cars for shipping grain. Section 207 of the 1912 Act provides that the Board may, in its discretion, order cars to be supplied contrary to the general provisions of the Act, under certain conditions. To these has been added the following:

"Whenever after due examination the Board considers it necessary and advisable in order to facilitate the despatch of grain which is insufficiently housed and liable to become damp or injured."

## The Excuse for a District Representative.

The District Representative system in Ontario is becoming understood by the farming fraternity, and we do not propose to explain here the advantages or the disadvantages of the institution. Nevertheless the scheme has been on trial long enough to show good or bad results in the counties where offices were first established, and, without any effort either to extol the system on the one hand, or criticize it on the other, an endeavor will be made to review, in part, the work done by these trained farmers who for years have driven up and down the sideroads and concessions of Ontario, preaching the gospel of improved agriculture and better social and living conditions. He who envies them their work is unconscious of the life they lead, for, although they are usually equipped with a smile and genial "Good day", they are not free from worry and their lot is not devoid of labor. Suffice it to say those Representatives who are ambitious and industrious usually bear sufficient responsibility and work hard enough to earn the stipend upon which all Government employees are generally obliged to exist. The common feeling amongst them to-day is that they earn more than they get. However, departing from personalities and leaving the man himself out of the matter, has the system been a good servant of agriculture in Ontario, and has it been instrumental in bringing about improved rural conditions, social and otherwise?

Before attempting to answer this question, allow us to explain one difficulty under which almost every District Representative has labored during his introduction to his county. The general complaint heard amongst farmers was, "we don't want any young fellow coming around showing us how to farm". Whatever the aim entertained by those responsible for the District Representative system might have been, or is, the man "on the job" surely did not, nor does he, intend to directly show farmers how to farm. He considers it his duty to assist them in farming better. Very few of these servants of the people were conceited enough to attempt revolutionizing farming in the various counties. Nevertheless, there was, and still is, a great opportunity to demonstrate the advantages of cow testing, good seed, underdrainage, improvement of live stock, the proper cultural methods of a fruit plantation, the profits in poultry when wisely handled, and a thousand other things incident to production on the farm. Then, and not less important than any line of work previously mentioned, there was the need of organization, which was lamentably lacking. To all

this work and other efforts the District Representative applied himself with energy and devotion to his duty as he saw it. The young farmers of the county were invited to attend short winter courses and learn something more about the different crops, live stock, fruit growing, and above all to get in touch with farming in a broader way by mingling with other young men and visiting farms and manufacturing plants within and without the limits of the county in which they lived. These courses have been instrumental in inspiring many bright, junior farmers to attempt greater things, particularly through experimentation on their own soil under local conditions. The Representative has furthermore listened to the best farmers in the county and made observations on their farms. He has then acted as a medium of communication between the successful agriculturist and those who are looking for suggestions and seeking for ideas along particular lines. The young fellow, whom the farmers feared was coming to show them how to farm, in most cases made himself a servant of the people. He ministered to them, he gathered information for them in the County, Province, Dominion, or in foreign fields, through his connection with agricultural work, and took it to them free of charge. The traditions of agriculture in Old Ontario were observed and revered, the ways of our fathers were not ridiculed, but to these methods were appended the up-to-date and necessary means of profitable production required by a more modern agriculture.

In New Ontario conditions have been different. Many settlers there knew little enough about farming, having left other occupations to start life anew in a young but big country, and to rear, in the pure and open air, a family of boys and girls, whom, it was hoped, could enter a life of greater usefulness than was possible under former conditions. These men who lack the advantages of a farm training in their early days welcomed the District Representative, even if he should attempt "to show them how to farm". In Old Ontario, too, the Representative has been well and openly received. Only in isolated instances has indifference met his endeavor to introduce himself into the farm life of the county.

### Has the System Made Good?

Let us revert again to the question, "has the system been a good servant of agriculture in Ontario, and has it been instrumental in bringing about improved rural conditions, social and otherwise?" In reply to this

query, we shall simply endeavor to review briefly some of the accomplishments of the Representatives and leave the reader to judge. Every county of Ontario and almost every province of the Dominion has felt the influence of the Ontario Corn Growers' Association. This scheme was incubated and brought into existence in the Agricultural Office of Essex County. The demonstration orchards were a good idea and served a good purpose. Egg circles were the outcome of the county system of agricultural education and, although they have had their ups and downs, they were a powerful factor in educating producers of poultry products in the proper care of eggs. Fruit growers' associations were in vogue before the Representative system but they were fostered and encouraged by these men who had a vision of the need of co-operation in the marketing of fruit. The co-operative idea has been enlarged upon until we have breeders' clubs, societies organized to produce particular kinds of seed, such as alfalfa, corn, various kinds of grain, potatoes, etc. Then came the school fairs and the distribution of seeds and eggs amongst the children. During all this time drainage surveys were being made, demonstrations in spraying, pruning and orchard work were held, the farmers were being called together and the Representative was all the while talking better seed, better cultivation, better live stock, and more co-operation.

This relates only in the most general way the results of the system. Each Representative has carried on different lines of work as he saw the needs in the locality where he labored. Of late years the work has become standardized more and more, there being a similarity of purpose and effort in all counties.

To make this treatise more complete and explain what the District Representative attempts to do, aided by the people of the rural districts, we have chosen one county and shall review the results of one man's efforts extended over a period of six years. Durham County will be taken as an example, but similar work has been done in many others. Although it is an injustice in one respect to single out one district and elaborate upon it, when approximately 40 other men are accomplishing much in other counties of Ontario, yet it is necessary to confine our remarks to certain limits in order to fully explain the function of a District Representative and what he considers his duties to be. If any reader in Ontario will take the trouble to enquire fully into the work of the District Representative for the county in which he resides he will probably be surprised at the