

The Farming World

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Note and Comment

Unless one has seen it, the change in the appearance of the country since the advent of warm weather can hardly be realized. Growth has been most marked during the past two weeks and the farmer, who was somewhat despondent as to the outlook, is now rejoicing in the prospect of a fair crop, more particularly of spring grains. Fall wheat and meadows, though somewhat improved, will give less than an average yield. The wire worm has appeared in a few sections, leaving ruination to the growing crop in its wake. The only remedy is to plow and sow some late crops such as Hungarian grass, rape, etc. It is to be hoped, however, that the ravages of this pest will not prove at all widespread.

Haying will be late this season and there will be little cutting, even of clover till well on in July. Farmers should make every effort to save the crop in the best condition. If the yield is light there will be much gained by having the quality of the best. Two tons of well-cured hay are worth as much as three tons of badly cured stuff, that stock will not relish. Elsewhere in this issue some information on the curing of hay is given by several practical farmers.

The old complaint of governmental reports being late has loomed up again. Last year there was some improvement. But this season the old order of things prevails and July has arrived with comparatively few of the reports distributed. These reports record the transactions of the various agricultural associations of the Province and contain information of practical value to farmers. Such reports should be distributed not later than March, so as to be digested by the farmer before the busy spring season opens up. Cannot something be done to remedy matters? The horse commissioners finished their labors last fall and it is now July and no report of this important commission is yet in sight. Truly we are a patient people.

The labor problem seems to be little nearer a solution than it was a year ago. A large number of immigrants arrive in Toronto daily, but somehow or other they fight shy of the farm. Out of over 3,000 applications the Ontario Bureau of Colonization has received this season, only from one-quarter to one-third have been filled. The men have arrived to fill them, but they prefer to run chances in getting something to do in the cities rather than go on the farm. Why this is the case is hard to say. Perhaps the farmer is somewhat to blame. There are not a few farmers who make it their sole business when they engage help of this kind to get fifteen to twenty hours of work each day, where only from ten to twelve should be taken. Men engage with them and leave on the first opportunity. These report the treatment they receive to others, and as such stories travel fast they soon find their way to the old land and to the new arrivals. The Bureau, we understand, has a black list of these farmers. They do not deserve to have help supplied them and prevent the deserving farmer from getting his share owing to the bad reputation the country gets for the treatment of its farm help by their actions. We are glad to note, however, that the number of those who use the farm laborer more as a beast of burden than a human being is not large. The Government is now looking after the men and has sent inspectors out to investigate cases of ill-treatment. This will do much to counteract the evil effects which this ill-usage has.

Whether farm help be scarce or not it is rather costly these days. The farmer, therefore, should know how to utilize his help to the very best advantage. Systematic and careful planning of the work so as to accomplish it in a way that will give the best return is necessary. To allow expensive help to do the work in a slipshod fashion without regard to economy of time and labor is a costly procedure. The farmer should know how to do the work himself in

the best way, whether it be the building of a fence or the running of a binder, in order that he may be able to instruct his help correctly. And much of it needs careful instruction. There is great waste on many farms because of lack of knowledge of how to do things in the best way.

When the Government decided to discontinue the bonus to the sugar beet factories many thought that this industry would not be able to survive. But the Dominion Government has come to the rescue and granted them privileges that may enable the factories now doing business to profitably continue their operations. These consist in allowing them to bring in free of duty two pounds of raw sugar for refining for every pound of beet sugar they produce. This will enable the factories to run for a longer season, though it is estimated that only about one-half of last year's acreage of beets is being grown this season. This falling off is largely the fault of the manufacturer in not carrying out his agreement with the farmer, a very foolish thing to do as he is solely dependent upon the latter for his yearly beet supply.

The difficulties reported sometime ago in connection with the consolidated rural school at Guelph have not been removed and present indications are that it may be discontinued. This is to be regretted. Located as it is near the Agricultural College it was considered a model and its ill-success will have a deterring effect upon a movement that has in it so much of value to rural education. The difficulties at Guelph, however, have arisen not because of some inherent weakness in the system itself, but from local causes and jealousies. The city of Guelph intervenes between some of the school sections interested, necessitating extra cost in carrying the children to and from school. This would not arise were the school located in the centre of adjoining sections.