

per cent., so that the difference between the two if comparable is 33.25 per cent. It is further proven by the decreases in rural population that the number of farm employees must necessarily be less and in keeping with this their wages must be greater. If, then, in the item of small relative increase in the price of the farm products to the farmer and an increased cost of production, we find yet more potent reasons for the desertion of the farm by the rural population of Ontario and of all the other older Provinces, absolutely or relatively, it is plain that Governments, leaders in commerce, every intelligent citizen must lend their energies to the solution of this of all problems, the greatest, since it lies at the very root and basis of our common prosperity, the happiness of our people, and the physical and moral health of the nation.

The several elements entering into the solution of the problem may be now readily comprehended and easily understood. As illustrated by statistics they are:

1st. Lessening the cost of agricultural production.

2nd. Preparing and conserving all products of the farm in the most perfect manner possible until they reach the consumer and for which the highest practical prices are paid to the producer.

3rd. The transportation of farm products as cheaply and as directly to the consumer as possible.

I. Dealing with the first element of the problem it is evident that it depends essentially upon the agriculturist himself and necessarily involves:

(a) Sufficient capital to purchase labor-saving machinery as in every up-to-date factory.

(b) Skilled men to handle and care for machinery and sufficient capital to employ such.

(c) Organized methods for setting laborers to work, which means business ability.

(d) Preparation of soil for an assured abundant crop, which means in most cases in Canada proper sub-soil tile drainage which demands both capital and labor (and well-applied tillage).

(e) Care in securing seeds of high producing varieties and of assured vitality,

which again involves intelligence and some capital.

(f) Equal care in harvesting each crop in turn and in storing it so as to maintain its highest market value. It will be apparent that nothing less than scientific knowledge and business training, applied to agriculture as to any other manufacturing or commercial concern, can serve to fill these essentials to success and which, indeed, involves education and knowledge of the widest range and most thorough character.

But the last item leads clearly to our second element in the problem, viz.:

II. Preparing and conserving all products as perfectly as possible, which means:

(a) Selection of crops, which long experience has shown different localities to be fitted for.

(b) A local supply of labor not only for efficient cultivation, but also to harvest each crop properly when mature. These points touch upon the problem constantly being illustrated by the statistics given. There must be a larger rural working population, which means for them some method whereby their labor will be constantly engaged profitably, which means more varied and intensive farming such as that supplied by gardening, greenhouse working, and the feeding of cattle and poultry in winter. All this means doubling the crops by increasing soil fertility and local wealth by the employment locally of more energy and labor.

(c) This means in regard to general prosperity the employment of methods for preserving meats, eggs, butter, and fruits after the manner best known to science that is by careful picking, preparing, packing, and preserving by cold or in other words adopting modern refrigeration methods, which more than any other means will enable the farmer to control the market price of his products instead of this being determined by the middleman, not a producer, in some city hundreds of miles distant from the place of production.

III. The transportation of farm products from the producer to the consumer at the lowest cost possible, in keeping with the reasonable profits of the transporting method, whether wagon, railway, motor van or steamship.