

The following information regarding agricultural conditions in the Province, about the middle of May, has been issued by the Ontario Department of Agriculture:

Fall Wheat.—While correspondents are not nearly unanimous, the general tenor of reports regarding fall wheat is favorable. In most cases the crop entered the winter a little short in top, but snow fell early, and lay on the ground nearly all the season, thus affording good protection, except on knolls, where the young plants were exposed, and in some corners contiguous to fences, where the crop was smothered. Early-sown wheat did better than that put in later, and the crop did best on rolling land. The greatest injury to the growing wheat was caused by the ice forming in low places during the wet and cold days of the latter part of March and the beginning of April, resulting in a number of patchy fields. There will be only a small area plowed up, however, as most of the thin or bare spots will be sown to spring grains, chiefly barley, in order to save the catch of grass. The lesson of the year is the old one of the benefit of drainage, as several correspondents point out that most of the injury to the crop occurred on low-lying and undrained land. There is but little difference to note in the condition of fall wheat in the various districts, although the best showing must be credited to the Lake Erie counties.

Clover.—Correspondents are much divided in their opinions regarding the condition and prospects of the clover crop, descriptions ranging from "excellent" to "poor." A number of the returns from the Lake Erie district claim that the fields never looked better at this season, and other Western counties send more or less cheerful reports; but some of the returns from the Eastern half of the Province are far from encouraging, although a number of good fields are also reported. The drouth of the early part of last summer hindering a successful "catch," the too close pasturing of fields by live stock in the fall, owing to scarcity of fodder, and the trying effects of the frosts of early spring on low and wet spots, are given as the chief causes of failure by those who report unfavorably. Very little will be plowed under, as the warm rains falling, as correspondents wrote, were reviving the fields wonderfully. Several correspondents speak of al-sike as doing better than red clover.

Vegetation.—The spring promised to open early, but cold, wet weather prevailed later, and delayed growth. As correspondents wrote, however, warm rains, with bright weather, were rushing vegetation along, and although growth was a week or two later than in some seasons, it was nearly a week earlier than last year. Grass is relatively more advanced than tree growth.

Live Stock.—All classes of live stock faced the winter with a poor prospect of fodder supply, as hay and grain were both scarce and dear. In order to meet the situation, a large number of horses, cattle and swine were sold at sacrifice prices, but even then fears were expressed by some as to the possibility of bringing the remaining animals through in any form better than that of mere sustenance. It is the general opinion that the average condition of live stock is much better than was expected, and the provident handling of fodder supplies has shown that Ontario farmers as a class are well capable of meeting such an emergency. No disease of an epidemic nature has been reported amongst live stock. Horses are described as being rather thin, but they are in fair working condition. Aside from mild forms of distemper, and indigestion—attributed by some to so much chaffy stuff having to be eaten—they may be counted as being in good general health. Some correspondents complain of too many old horses being kept. Cattle have not fared so well as horses, and, as a rule, were quite thin when turned on the grass. Some correspondents complain that lack of straw for bedding has resulted in some cattle being affected by a stiffening of the limbs. It is also claimed that more barrenness has prevailed amongst cows, and that a larger proportion than ordinarily of those calving have died. The general opinion is that fewer cattle than usual will be exported this year. Fat stock are scarce, and store cattle are not as plentiful as in more recent years, although a few correspondents claim to have the usual supply of stockers on hand. One return is to the effect that it will be another year before Ontario cattle conditions will right themselves. Sheep have done better than any other class of farm animals, and have been most fortunate in lambing. Some complaints are made of "grub in the head," and the dog nuisance is referred to several times. Swine are thin, and are not to be found in as large numbers as last year. So many brood sows were sold just before winter, owing to the scarcity of feed, that it is doubtful if the fall delivery of bacon hogs will be anything near the record of more recent years. A form of crippling among swine, attributed to rheumatism, is reported in various localities. The good growing weather of the middle of May was greatly welcomed by owners of live stock, and many animals were then on the grass.

Supplies.—Hay was so scarce and dear last fall, that much anxiety was felt by many as to whether they could pull along until the new growth was available. Some farmers were forced to buy hay, but the bulk of those owning live stock, by careful feeding, came through the winter without having to resort to purchasing, and a number of persons who were holding surplus hay over for famine prices are now willing to sell at from \$4. to \$6 a ton less than was offered for it in the fall. Oats have not been so scarce and

high in price for years, although here and there a few farmers report a fair supply on hand. Most of the wheat has been sold, and the supply in the barns is much less than usual at this time of the year. More farmers than ever are buying flour, and are feeding or selling all their wheat.

Fruit Trees.—Orchards have come through the winter in good condition, having suffered less than usual from severe cold, ice storms, mice, etc. The San Jose scale and the oyster-shell bark-louse are reported at various points, but the spraying campaign is being more vigorously entered upon than ever, and more attention, generally, is now being paid to orchard trees. Fruit buds promise a good yield should rain hold up during the period of bloom. In short, the spring outlook was never better for Ontario fruit.

Spring Seeding.—In the Lake Erie district, seeding was almost completed by the middle of May, and in some of the other Western counties work was also well advanced, although hindered somewhat by rain. In the Eastern half of the Province, more particularly in the St. Lawrence and Ottawa counties, heavy rains have kept farmers off the land, except in most favorably-situated places, and much spring sowing remained to be done. Early in the season the land everywhere was in more or less good tilth, but in many sections the wet weather had made the soil rather sad and lumpy for best results. The bulk of the seed sown has caught nicely, and with favorable weather continuing spring grains will get off to a fair start. Fears are expressed by some correspondents that corn, potatoes and roots will be rather late in planting.

An informal conference of dairy experts was held in Ottawa on Wednesday, May 27th, to discuss means of preventing the practice of shipping green cheese. Those present were J. A. Ruddick, Dairy and Cold-storage Commissioner, Ottawa; Geo. H. Barr, of the Dairy and Cold-storage Commissioner's Staff; Geo. A. Putnam, Director of Dairy Instruction in Ontario; Frank Hearn, Chief Instructor in Western Ontario; G. G. Publow, Chief Instructor in Eastern Ontario, and E. Bourbeau, Chief Dairy Instructor in Quebec. The subject was discussed from every standpoint, and letters read from various firms, all strongly protesting against the practice of shipping cheese green, claiming that it induced the making of cheese with too much moisture, and that, when stored, the cheese lack body and keeping qualities, and become somewhat insipid in flavor. They were all anxious that something be done to bring factorymen and buyers to realize these facts. Among those heard from were: The Home and Foreign Produce Exchange, of London, Eng.; The Bristol Provision Trade Association, of Bristol, Eng.; The Liverpool Provision Trade Association, and several others, including The Montreal Produce Merchants' Association. After thorough canvass of the situation, it was decided that, for the present, Mr. Barr and Mr. Publow would attend the Eastern Ontario cheese boards; Mr. Bourbeau, those in Quebec, and Mr. Hearn, those in the West, and make another appeal to all concerned. It is persistently claimed, by those who should know, that the Montreal cheese firms have little at stake in this matter, and that it is the patron who stands to lose by the impairment of Canada's reputation in the Old Country. It is argued that if the continued shipment of green cheese weakens demand, stocks will accumulate, and prices go down, but that the cheese firms will continue doing business with an equal margin on a smaller price per pound, thus making the same profit with less working capital. However this may be, it is certain that Canadian dairymen have much to lose through any impairment of our reputation as the exporter of the best Cheddar cheese received in Britain. The evil is worst in Eastern Ontario and Quebec, within that radius where the cheese are shipped subject to Montreal weights and inspection, as the salesman is sometimes over-anxious to get the cheese off his hands for fear defects may develop. Practical remedies are not easy. The buyers favor legislation, but legislation is awkward to frame, difficult to enforce, and might, in some cases, work a severe hardship, as in the case of factories with hot and unsatisfactory curing-rooms. A suggestion was offered that the Government might bonus factories which instal cool-curing rooms, which would largely do away with the temptation to ship from the hoops, and, after which, mandatory legislation would be less exceptionable. While it is scarcely likely that such action will be taken, it does look as though something more will be required than general appeals. What that should be is a problem.

Geo. A. Putnam, Dept. of Agriculture, Toronto, and T. G. Raynor, Seed Division, Ottawa, have arranged a series of about forty special meetings in June, in Ontario Farmers' Institute divisions 1, 2 and 3, in the interests of the production of good seed and weed eradication. The speakers are: Messrs. Raynor, T. H. Mason and W. S. Fraser. These meetings will all be announced locally.

Mr. W. P. Bull, K. C., of Toronto, of the firm of B. H. Bull & Son, owners of the Brampton Jersey herd, was a guest of honor at the Grand Rapids, Mich., City Press Club banquet, at Jenison Park, recently. attended by many leading business men and journalists from leading American cities. His speech on the conditions and progress of Ontario, new and old, is described as "the speech of the evening," by "The News" of that city.

FARM DRAINAGE DEMONSTRATIONS.

The Department of Physics, at the Ontario Agricultural College, desires to announce the continuance of its previous offer of assistance to farmers in matters pertaining to drainage. For the past three years we have been authorized by the Minister of Agriculture to go out and assist any farmer in taking the levels of his lands for drainage purposes, in planning the most advantageous systems of drains, and in calculating the grades and sizes of tile for the different drains. A finished map, bearing all the information, is sent to the owner. This serves two purposes: First, it is used as a guide in constructing the drains; second, it may be preserved as a record of the exact location of every drain, so that if, for any reason, it should be necessary in years to come to find any drain, it could be done accurately at a moment's notice.

The number of applications for assistance has increased very rapidly, so that last year we had many more than we could attend to. To enable us to meet this increased demand, the Minister of Agriculture has, this year, given us a special appropriation whereby we have been enabled to double our staff for this work.

A new feature is being added: We have found in the past that frequently the neighbors in the vicinity of the farm being surveyed were interested, and wished to observe the operations. This suggested the desirability of making these demonstrations public, and this will be done wherever possible. Anyone interested will be welcome on all occasions. By this means, we shall be able to instruct a much larger number in matters pertaining to drainage problems.

Anyone wishing drainage surveying done should apply to Wm. H. Day, Department of Physics, O. A. C., Guelph. The only outlay connected with the work is the travelling expenses of one man, including meals, cartage of instruments and railway fare, at one cent a mile each way.

The Department has issued a new pamphlet on "Farm Drainage Operations," which may be had on application.

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An annual summer school for teachers is being inaugurated at Truro, N. S., at the affiliated College of Agriculture and Provincial Normal School, the object being to provide inquiring teachers with a means to study, under the direction of specialists, science in its relation to rural life. By attending its classes and reading along prescribed lines, teachers can qualify themselves to receive the Rural Science Diploma, which it is proposed to grant in future, in Nova Scotia, in place of the "Agricultural Diploma." The course this year will last for a month (July 14th to August 18th), and comprehend instruction in nature study, biology, horticulture, school gardening, agriculture, physics and chemistry as applied to agriculture, geology, manual training, and, probably, photography, music and physical drill. Field excursions, laboratory work and lectures will be provided. The Provincial Government will pay transportation charges of all Nova Scotia teachers who complete the course satisfactorily, and an additional week or two weeks' vacation may be obtained by these. The faculty of the Summer School comprises: M. Cumming, Director and Lecturer in Agriculture; J. Dearnsey, Vice-Principal, Normal School, London, Ont., Lecturer in Biology and Nature Study, and P. J. Shaw, Lecturer in Botany, Horticulture and Nature Study. Rural-school teachers will find it to their advantage to communicate with Director Cumming.

Press despatches from Ottawa announce that an order-in-council has been passed prescribing the following regulations in regard to free customs entry of pure-bred stock :

1. No animal imported for the improvement of stock shall be admitted free of duty unless the importer is domiciled in Canada, or is a British subject, and furnishes a certificate of the record and pedigree by a list of registers, designated, from time to time, by the Minister of Customs, showing that the animal is pure-bred, and has been admitted to full registry in a book of record established for that breed. An affidavit by the owner, agent or importer, that such animal is the identical animal described in said certificate of record and pedigree must be presented.

2. In case such certificate is not at hand at the time of the arrival of the animals, the entry for duty may be accepted subject to the refund of the duty, upon production of the requisite certificates and proof in due form satisfactory to the collector within one year from the time of entry.

When voters cut entirely loose from party shackles, and vote according to impartial estimate of candidates and principles, the cause of good government will have been wonderfully advanced.