

Better Farm Machinery

(Speech given in Massey Hall, O.A.C.)

BY GEO. J. ARNOLD, '18

THE withdrawal of over one hundred thousand men from our Canadian farms during the past three and a half years is most seriously handicapping the production of more food. Despite the tremendous efforts we are making to make up for this shortage of labour, it is a question whether we can do much more than maintain our present food production. Could it be otherwise? If we take one hundred thousand

is the tractor and then in only a very limited way.

How can we materially increase our food production in these days of scarcity of help when our seed drills will sow but little more than our forefathers could sow by hand? When we have to stook and load our grain by hand because there is no machinery to do it for us? When we have to pick our potatoes and pull our roots by hand because there is no machinery to do that for us, or if there is, it is out of reach of the ordinary farmer? How can we grow more crops to-day when our fields are overrun with weeds, as never before, because of the lack of help and the lack of machinery to make up for that help—(A man twenty-five years ago could hoe and scuffle practically as much as he can to-day.)

How can we grow more crops to-day when there is insufficient help to control the insect pests and diseases of our crops with the present-day spraying outfits? According to the Dominion Entomologist the losses on our Canadian potato crop last year through insects and diseases that could be controlled by spraying, amounted to sixteen million dollars. Now at the Front they are gassing whole regiments of soldiers; *where is the spray outfit that will enable a man to stand at the corner of a ten acre field and gas all the potato bugs on it?* It is the war then that is bringing home to us the inefficiency of our farm machinery, and can we wonder if we yet have to import Chinamen to help us out?

The reason why the improvement of our farm machinery has been so slow is because we have left it to the



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strong, sturdy men off the farms, and can only replace them by children, old people, and men physically unfit for the army, how can we produce more food?

Only by giving these people vastly superior machinery than we have to-day, can we increase the total crop yields to any marked extent. The only instance where we have been able to put better machinery onto the farm