

APPENDIX No. 1

A. I quite agree with you, and I may say we have never made any efforts to supersede Red Fife. On the contrary, we have tried our best to increase the area of Red Fife grown, and to maintain its purity and high quality. With this in view we devote a large part of our land at the North-west farms every year to the growing of pure Red Fife wheat, and we distribute the crops among the farmers in Manitoba and the North-west so as to prevent deterioration of this excellent wheat. As long as we can produce in the North-west Red Fife wheat of the high standard that we now have, we want to maintain and increase the area devoted to its cultivation, but it must be borne in mind that there are other parts of the Dominion beside Manitoba and the North-west, and we have to consider these also, and in the testing of varieties to ascertain their relative quality and crop-producing power. We have found that it is a great advantage to have them tested side by side on uniform land, such as we get at Indian Head and Brandon.

Then also it is very important to find out the relative earliness of the different sorts, and there are some districts in Saskatchewan where farmers would rather grow Preston even if it graded a point lower than Red Fife, because it comes in four days earlier and thus gives them a better chance of harvesting the crop. None of these wheats are in any way taking the place of Red Fife, nor is it our wish or desire they should, unless it can be shown they are quite equal to Red Fife in point of quality as well as productiveness. That will take a little while to work out, in the meantime I desire it to be distinctly understood that no one advocates the growing of Red Fife wheat more than I do, and I doubt if there is any one in the Dominion who has done as much to encourage its growth and maintain its purity.

By Mr. Robinson (Elgin) :

Q. Is it not a fact that all wheat deteriorates and that the Red Fife may deteriorate ?

A. That is quite true. Every kernel of wheat is self fertilized, and where self fertilization is carried on for an indefinite time there is apt to be deterioration. We find it takes place very quickly with cattle, but not as rapidly with wheat and other cereals, but how long the Red Fife will continue to maintain its present high standard no one can say. I think it is the duty of a government institution such as ours to be ready with other varieties in case the Red Fife should fail.

By Mr. Wright :

Q. Does not that tendency run in all grain, and not in grain only but in roots. For instance, potatoes run out more quickly than grains do.

A. That is true. I do not think we have now in cultivation a single variety of potato that was grown fifty years ago, and probably not one that dates back farther than thirty years ago.

By Mr. Robinson (Elgin) :

Q. Then it will be quite in order for you to keep on experimenting in that way and getting new varieties ?

A. I think quite in order. We want to aim at getting new wheats as good as any varieties now known. We want something as productive or more so, and we want to aim at the production of varieties which will be early in ripening and have greater freedom from rust.

By Mr. Boyd :

Q. I think the change on the new soil in the west will tend to keep up the strength of the wheat ?

A. I think perhaps it will, but that is only an opinion. We know that Red Fife taken from Ontario has done better in the west than it has here.