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"THE PROFESSION WHICH I HAVE EMBRACED REQUIRES A KNOWLEDGE OF EVERYTHING."

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The Dominion Experimental Farms

(A Review)

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IN the year 1886 the Minister of Agriculture, Sir John Carling, provided by an act of Parliament, for the establishment of a Central Experimental Farm and four branch farms for the Dominion. The Central Farm at Ottawa comprising some five hundred acres of land served for Ontario and Quebec; the Branch Farm at Nappan, N. S. for the Maritime Provinces; for the West Brandon was chosen, and for British Columbia, Agassiz.

GROWTH OF THE FARMS SYSTEM

Since the inception of the Dominion Experimental Farms System the call for extension has been strong throughout. Accordingly, in order to cope with the amount and scope of the work, it has been found necessary to add very materially to the number of stations and sub-stations. As a result every province has now been reached by farm, station, or sub-station in order to provide special facilities for the study of the agricultural problems which arise in the different Provinces under varying soil and climatic conditions. Growth has been particularly rapid during the past decade, and the farmers have given the work a decided impetus in their ready response to the efforts of the men in charge of the various branches of research.

No small factor in the expansion of the system other than the need of newly-settled districts for some such institu-

tion within easy reach, has been the multiplicity of problems which have arisen—problems peculiar to each section of country newly opened up. This has been due to a certain extent to the increased interest which has been aroused amongst farmers by the farms system itself. Such an instance is strikingly shown by the western farmer who is coming to realize that instead of robbing the soil of its fertility by continual cropping with wheat, it is imperative for him to practice crop rotation together with the keeping of live-stock, in order to maintain the crop-producing power of the land from year to year.

PURPOSE OF FARMS SYSTEM

This subject comprises a comprehensive range in the different lines of re-search work. Some of the problems undertaken may be briefly stated as follows:

- (a) The value of different breeds of stock and their adaptability to varying soil and climatic conditions.
- (b) The study of milk, cheese and butter production.
- (c) The testing of hardiness, productiveness and adaptability of new varieties of wheat and cereals in general; of field crops, grasses and forage plants; fruits, vegetables and all other farm crops; and the distribution to growers of samples of seed which have given promising results.