

work of the experts who form the body of the Branch's organization.

A service less directly for the farmers but of inestimable value to the public is in the correspondence carried on with similar departments of the public service in other countries. The communication of information concerning weeds goes on constantly among the experts in the service of the different governments, together with the exchange of samples. The collection in the Seed Branch of Canada is already extensive and of the highest educational value, and Canada, on the other hand, is doing her part toward guarding the world's agriculture against weed pests.

A different laboratory with its special outfit is necessary to carry on the work of testing seeds for germinating power. Here again, the methods are simple and direct, but, being carried on with skill and under expert direction of a high character, the results are most satisfactory. A sample of the seed being taken, the seeds are forced into germination under conditions reproducing, as nearly as possible, those of nature. For seeds whose germination depends upon heat and moisture only, electrically warmed ovens or cells are provided. The distribution of moisture in these cells is regulated in a most ingenious manner by a device made by one of the officers of the Branch. For grasses and other plants which germinate best where the force of light is added to those of heat and moisture, a special frame is provided before a great south-facing window. The seeds are placed on dishes of unglazed porcelain which absorb moisture and heat, and the tiny plants soon answer the forcing to which the seeds are subjected. By making sure that the seeds set for germination fairly represent the sample to be tested and then by simply counting the seeds and also the plants actually produced, the officers are able to tell to a nicety just what percentage of plants the farmer may expect from seed like the sample if that seed be sown under favorable conditions. As can be imagined, this

whole work of testing seeds for purity and for germinating power is most interesting. There is no lack of enthusiasm among the officers engaged in these duties.

To develop seed of strong character and to extend the use of such seed among agriculturists throughout the country, the seed branch has made itself the principal link between the Experimental Farms and the people who raise the crops. The specialists on the experimental farms are constantly carrying on investigations and experiments with a view to improving the strains of seeds in use. Among the farmers of Canada are a large body of intelligent, skillful and public-spirited men who are ready to second and support in every way the efforts that are thus put forward by the servants of the public for the benefit of the great staple art of agriculture.

The connection between this official and this unofficial body of workers is made in a simple way through the Seed Branch. The Canadian Seed Growers' Association has been formed and is carried on under a bonus from the Dominion Government. Seed produced on the experimental farms is handed over to the members of the Association who undertake to increase it while maintaining its purity. All over Canada small seed plots are worked by the best farmers, who not only increase the seed but also make valuable reports upon the conditions of growth.

By the channels thus made the best of seed is distributed throughout the country. And so, many a farmer who knows nothing about the Seed Branch, and who, perhaps, has the supercilious disregard of pure ignorance for all "book farming", is nevertheless protected and benefitted by the work of this splendid organization.

All this is what may be called the extra and, for the purposes of such an article as this, the more interesting work of the Branch. But, as stated above, the main business of this part of the Service is to administer and enforce the Seed Control Act. This is the law which regulates the sale of