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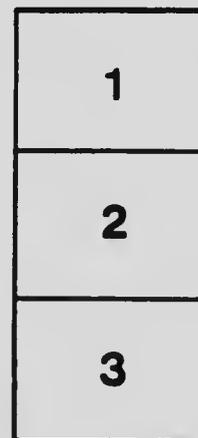
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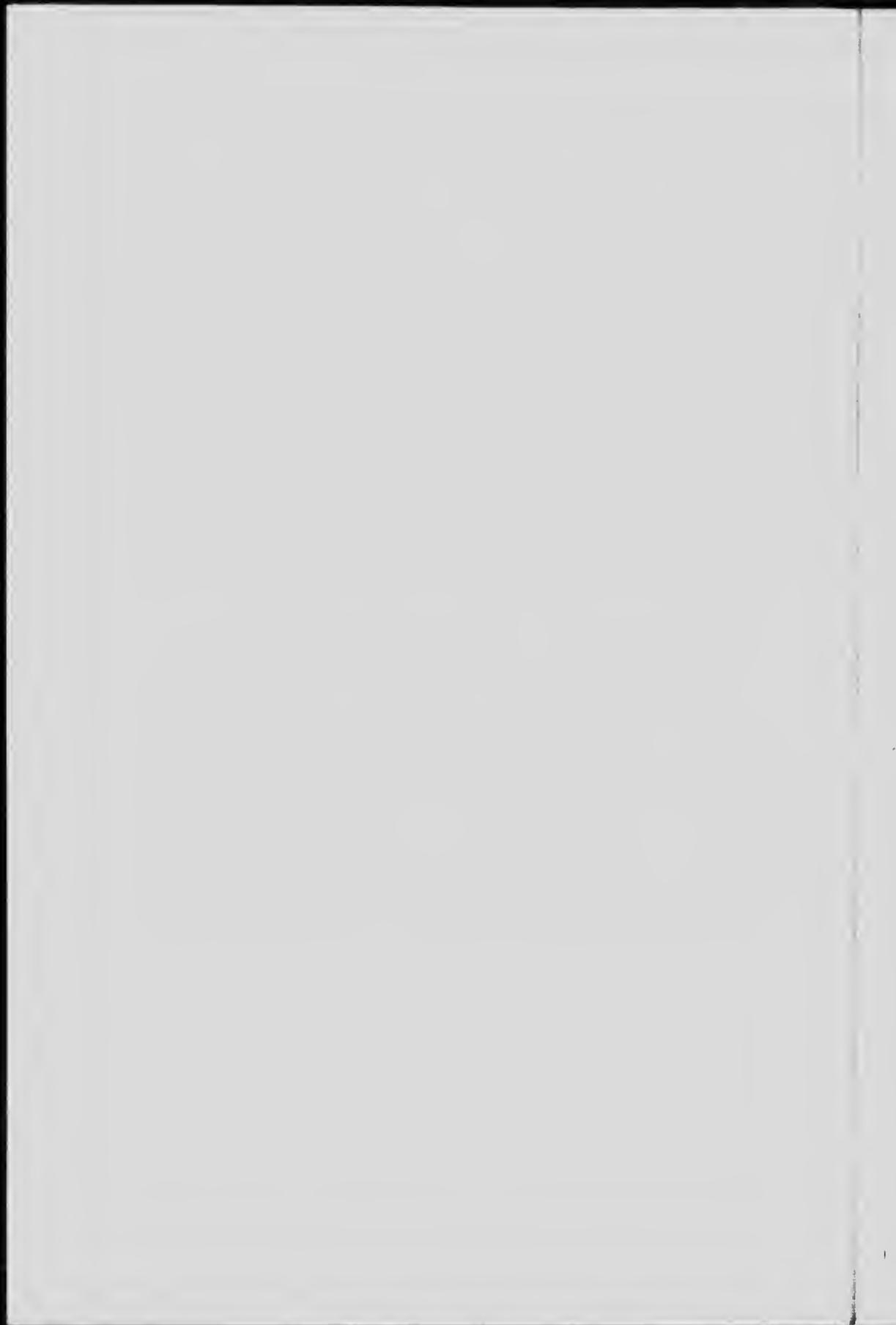
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THE
ONTARIO
GOVERNMENT
AND THE
FARMERS

*Let the Facts
Speak for Themselves*

1919?



3

W. S. Johnston & Co'y, Limited, Printers
106-108 Adelaide Street West, Toronto

THE ONTARIO GOVERNMENT AND THE FARMERS

The farmers of this Province are taking their rightful place in the consideration of public affairs. It is the purpose of this pamphlet to discuss matters respecting the attitude of the Ontario Government on subjects of special interest to the farmers of the Province. It is recognized that the farmers are citizens in the fullest sense of the word. In common with citizens of all other occupations they take a keen and proper interest in all matters of public policy and administration. Subjects such as temperance, public ownership, education, and honest administration affect alike rural and urban citizens. Opportunity will be afforded to discuss these matters fully, but for the present it is desired to present some facts on the subjects which are by popular consent of special interest to farmers.

Misrepresentations and misunderstandings are abroad. Beware of these. Because they have been the subject of misrepresentation it may be in order to point out clearly that Provincial jurisdiction does not include any one of the following subjects:—

- Tariff,
- Embargoes,
- Military service,
- Price fixing of wheat, cheese or other commodities.

These and many other similar matters are entirely outside of Provincial jurisdiction and are not properly subjects of discussion when considering Provincial issues.

RURAL DEPOPULATION.

Men are saying that the Provincial Government is not entitled to a continuance of confidence because the rural population of Ontario has declined. Many are sincerely concerned about the problem and to these a few facts may be of interest.

Rural depopulation is not a local matter. The rural population has declined in Great Britain—is the Ontario Government responsible for this? The rural population has declined in Europe—is the Ontario Government responsible for this? Rural population has declined in most of the States of the Union across the line—is the Ontario Government responsible for this? It is well known that the decline in rural population is due to a general trend and to changing conditions and that these world-wide conditions are enhanced in a young country where the lure of new lands is irresistible. The part that Ontario has played in peopling and building up the West is well known and is on the whole a great asset to the nation. On top of these factors there has been the unsettled condition brought about by the war which makes it absolutely unwise as well as unsound to draw definite or final conclusions from changes of the past few years.

POPULATION AND PARTIES.

It is stated, however, that the rural population of Ontario has declined to the extent of 139,000 since 1881 and an effort is made to create capital out of this against the Government. Of this decline a total of 120,000 occurred between 1881 and 1905, when the Liberal party went out of office. The balance presumably has occurred since. It is clearly unjust therefore to charge this decrease against this Government when 80 per cent of it occurred while the Liberal Government was in office. It is obvious that no government can be justly held responsible for a world-wide social phenomena such as has occurred during recent decades and exists under all systems of civilized government.

POPULATION AND PRODUCTION.

Sometimes those who talk about decreased population also talk about decreased production and represent that agriculture in the Province is going back because the agricultural population of the Province has shown some decreases. Such statements are absolutely false and are a libel on the skill and industry of the farmers of this Province. Various comparisons can be made to prove this statement. Comparisons have been made with the population of 1881. Compare other features of rural life in the same way, or take a thirty-year period from 1883 to 1913. It is found that the total value of farm crops in 1883 was 114 million dollars

and in 1913 160 million dollars, or in 1918 365 million dollars. In 1883 the value of farm buildings was 163 million, and in 1913 345 million, or 370 million in 1917. In 1883 the value of live stock was 99 million dollars and in 1913 237 million and in 1917 290 million dollars. These figures deal with values. It is equally true that whether comparison be made on the basis of acres cultivated, yields, improvements, live stock or values the progress shown is remarkable.

Take more recent figures. In 1918 the total area under crop in the Province slightly exceeded 10 million acres, which was the largest acreage ever cropped in the history of the Province, and this in spite of the shortage of labor due to war conditions which were especially acute. Not only was this the case, but record yields were shown in spring wheat, barley and oats, proving the fertility of the soil as well as a favorable climate.

Further, during the four years under war conditions a total of 564,000 more acres were cropped than during the four years previous.

Men who ignore these facts and picture the decadence of the Province are belittling the achievements of the farmers as well as being unfair to their own country.

Take still another point. Just a few years ago before abnormal conditions or account of the war set in Dr. C. A. Zavitz of the Ontario Agricultural College made the following calculations:—

“If we divide the last thirty-two years into two periods of sixteen years each, we find that for the latter as compared with the former period there has been an actual increase in yield of grain per acre of some of our principal farm crops as follows:—Barley, 20 per cent.; fall wheat, 10 per cent., and oats, 9 per cent. These averages in increase in yield per acre if applied to the average value of the crops of Ontario for the past ten years would mean an annual increase for the Province about as follows:—Oats, \$3,267,836; barley, \$2,174,147, and fall wheat, \$1,414,244; making a total of \$6,856,227. This represents simply the annual market value of the increases of the three principal grain crops per acre when we compare the last sixteen years with the sixteen years previous.”

While therefore rural population in response to world-wide conditions has declined, rural progress and production has gone forward. It is to be noted that those who are so ready to blame the

Government for a decrease in rural population are not ready to credit the Government for the part which its assistance has played in the progress and production of the Province.

With a decreased rural population and at the same time an increased acreage under crop and a record agricultural production, a person may well ask how this is possible. The answer is easily found in the one word *machinery*. This is the age of machinery and it is now recognized that with the aid of modern agricultural implements much manual labor is saved and the same amount of farm help is not now required.

THE GOVERNMENT AND FARMERS' ORGANIZATIONS.

It is charged that the Government is antagonistic to farmers' organizations. Investigation proves this assertion false. The following are the facts:—

- (1) The Government has placed on the statute books legislation to facilitate the organization of co-operative companies, to protect the use of the word "co-operative," to make possible the securing of a charter at a nominal cost.
- (2) The Government has for years carried on a propaganda showing the value of co-operation among the farmers and has assisted in organizing upwards of 400 Farmers' Clubs in the Province, giving full information as to organization and business, but leaving the conduct of the business affairs to the farmers themselves who were vitally concerned.
- (3) The Government has for the past five or six years maintained a special branch of the Department of Agriculture for the purpose of facilitating co-operative organization and has devoted special attention to the organization of live stock shipping associations, which a year ago shipped co-operatively upwards of two million dollars' worth of live stock.
- (4) Assistance has been rendered to the Ontario Sheep Breeders' Association by which their wool has been marketed co-operatively, aggregating as much as 750,000 pounds in one year.

These facts and many others which could be adduced prove clearly that not only has the Government not been antagonistic to farmers' organizations but has assisted farmers in securing a proper organization and getting it on a proper business basis. It is not too much to say that 75 per cent. of the co-operative effort of the farmers even at the present time is due to the foundation educational work which has for years been carried on by the Department of Agriculture.

FARMERS' ORGANIZATIONS AND POLITICS.

Possibly the charge that the Government is antagonistic to farmers' organizations is based on the attitude of the Government to the introduction of politics into farmers' clubs. It is true that the Government has felt that the introduction of politics into organizations which were brought into existence for non-political purposes would not be in the best interests of such organizations. In this view the Government has followed the lines suggested by experience in Ontario and elsewhere. Many people in Ontario have personal memory of a previous attempt to introduce politics into farmers' organizations. Students of the subject know that farmers' co-operative organizations in other countries are kept free from politics. Even within the past few months leading agricultural papers in the United States have sounded a note of warning on this subject, as the following quotations show:—

“No farm organization has ever lived when politicians were given consideration or when it sought political power. The moment an agricultural organization begins to devote time to playing the game of politics, that moment its usefulness ends.”—“Hoard's Dairyman.”

“If by organization is meant the attempted enrolment of all farmers into a so-called agrarian political party. The Gazette for one has grave doubts as to results, for the simple reason that it would almost surely become a mere ladder upon which demagogues would mount, or seek to mount, into the limelight for selfish personal purposes.”—“Breeder's Gazette.”

There is not the slightest foundation that the Government desired to suppress the political interest or activity of any body of

citizens, but there seems to be a feeling that the business and social interests of the farmers, like the business and social interests of other classes of the community, could be better served apart from politics.

AN AUTOCRATIC PROCEEDING.

Contrast to this the attitude of the political branch of the United Farmers of Ontario. Remember that the local clubs were for the most part organized for business and social purposes. At their inception there was no thought of political activity and no question asked as to the convictions of any man on public questions. Then read these statements by the President of the United Farmers of Ontario. The first is from an interview in a Toronto paper on July 22, 1919:—

“Members of the U.F.O. have no business attending in the capacity of delegates conventions of either political party. From the press reports it is clear that a number of U.F.O. members were at the South Bruce convention. Several of them addressed the convention and one or two acknowledged or declared themselves as good Liberals as ever. I am going to see that they are expelled, or, if their branches do not expel them, the branches will be put out of the organization.”

Then in a speech in Oxford County on July 25, 1919, he expressed the same sentiment in different words reported as follows:—

“I am going to talk plainly. I am going to hew to the line, let the chips fall where they may. We United Farmers have built up a platform of which we are proud and of which we have every reason to be proud. It is independent and has no Grits or Tories in it. We will never have a Grit or Tory on this platform even if we have to use our bare knuckles to keep him off.”

In other words, farmers are to be denied the social and business advantages of club membership unless they surrender their convictions on public questions. No more autocratic procedure has been witnessed in the public life of the Province. It is none the less autocratic because of being done in the name of independence and freedom.

GENEROUS FINANCIAL SUPPORT.

In its agricultural policy the Government has been actuated by a desire to promote the prosperity and welfare of farmers in all sections of the Province without respect to class or creed. It was recognized that the carrying on of this work required generous financial support and the figures show that nothing has been withheld in this regard. The increase may be best shown by a comparison of the appropriations for agriculture in the past year and in the last year of the Liberal Government:—

1904	\$ 475,678.00
1918	1,506,946.47

Along with the amount consideration should naturally be given to the question of the manner of the expenditure. That the apportionment has been progressive just as the amount has been generous is indicated by the fact that the appropriations have passed the Legislature without any criticism from either side of the House. This was true last session as in previous sessions. There was no criticism either from the Liberal opposition or from United Farmer members. Neither has there been criticism from the press. These facts are substantial proof of the fact that the appropriations have been both well planned and reasonably adequate.

IMPROVING FIELD CROPS.

Every farmer in the Province grows field crops and consequently every farmer has been, consciously or unconsciously, benefited by the work which the Government has carried on. One of the outstanding features of this work has been the maintenance of extensive experimental plots at the Ontario Agricultural College and the trying out of new varieties of grain on these plots through the members of the Experimental Union and in other ways in different parts of the Province. In this way new varieties have been introduced and adopted generally throughout the Province. This work naturally requires years of development, but during comparatively recent years the following new varieties have been introduced by the Department and adopted by the farmers:—

Mandschenri and O.A.C. No. 21 varieties of barley;

O.A.C. No. 72 and O.A.C. No. 3 oats;

Dawson's Golden Chaff and O.A.C. No. 104 winter wheat;

Petkus winter rye, O.A.C. No. 61 spring rye;
 Common emmer;
 Rye buckwheat;
 Early Britain and Canadian Beauty peas;
 Pearce's Improved Tree beans;
 Hairy vetches;
 Golden Bantam sweet corn, White Cap yellow dent, Wisconsin
 No. 7 white dent and Salzer's North Dakota white flint corn;
 Early Amber sugar cane;
 Ontario Variegated and Grimm alfalfa;
 Yellow Leviathan mangels;
 Green Mountain, Empire State, Davies Warrior and Irish
 Cobbler potatoes.

OUTSTANDING FEATURES.

Here are a few of the outstanding features of the agricultural policy of the Government:—

Has established an Agricultural School at Kemptville for the convenience of Eastern Ontario.

Has carried on an energetic campaign for drainage of farm lands, making surveys of 141,272 acres and conducting 526 demonstrations as to the laying of tile and the advantages of drainage.

Has inaugurated and carried out special work in the interests of the large vegetable growing industry in the Province, maintaining a staff of experts devoting attention to this important subject.

Has carried on field crop competitions through members of the agricultural societies attracting the interest of 7,500 farmers each year.

Has assisted over 70 local Poultry Shows.

Has supported Horticultural Societies with a view to beautifying conditions in towns and villages and has shown an increase of practically double interest and double membership in this work.

Has provided a fund for insurance against wet weather for Agricultural Societies and thus been the means of saving many societies from practical ruin on account of the weather.

Has carried on special work in behalf of agriculture in New Ontario.

Beekeeping has been fostered and a staff of inspectors maintained to assist in combatting diseases.

One hundred and thirty tractors were operated two seasons to assist farmers in overcoming labor shortage, and between 40,000 and 50,000 acres were ploughed and about 7,000 acres disked and cultivated.

In keeping with the trend of the times 32 Short Courses in Farm Power were conducted last year, attracting a total attendance of 12,270 and disseminating useful and timely information on tractors and other modern implements of farm power.

The potato industry is being placed on a better basis by the standardization of varieties, the improvement of seed, and the combatting of diseases.

The dairy industry has received a great deal of attention, a staff of inspectors being maintained for cheese factories and creameries and a system of butter grading established to maintain the quality of Ontario butter.

In connection with the fruit industry much work has been done, including demonstrations in modern methods and a staff of men to assist growers in combatting diseases and insects in the chief fruit growing districts and also by the inspection of nurseries.

A special service has been inaugurated and maintained in the interests of those engaged in commercial vegetable growing and has proven of great advantage to this industry.

Farm management surveys have been carried on with a view to giving the farmers the advantage of the latest information on this important subject.

The Ontario Veterinary College is maintained to train men to protect the valuable live stock industry against the ravages of disease.

A Fruit Experimental Farm has been developed at Vineland to assist in the solution of the problems being met by those engaged in the fruit industry.

Bulletins on practical subjects written in an understandable manner are issued from time to time and distributed in large numbers free of cost to farmers all over the Province and have proven of great value.

The Government was the first in Canada to adopt the use of motion pictures, and motion picture equipment has been adopted generally by the Department of Agriculture as part of its educational facilities for use in the country districts. Following Ontario's lead, motion pictures are now being used by all the other Provinces of the Dominion.

AS TO THE FUTURE.

Summed up, therefore, the policy of the Ontario Government of special interest to the farmers may be set down thus:—

1. Legislation to facilitate co-operative organization and to protect the interests of the farmers wherever possible or necessary.
2. Adequate appropriations to carry on all necessary work in the interests of agriculture.
3. A comprehensive system of education including:—
 - (a) The Ontario Agricultural College and Kemptville Agricultural School for special practical and scientific training.
 - (b) School Fairs and agricultural instruction in the public schools for boys and girls and agricultural classes for the young men at points of convenient access.
 - (c) Experiments, demonstrations and short courses to bring to the attention of the adult farmers all improved methods in agriculture which may be desirable from time to time.
4. Assistance and co-operation with the Women's Institutes for home improvement and community welfare.
5. Well organized system of employment agencies to distribute all the available farm labor and an effort later to supplement local labor by additional supplies from the British Isles as before the war.
6. A comprehensive policy of road construction which will mean the ultimate improvement along permanent lines of all the highways in the Province.

FARM LABOR.

Recognizing that one of the most serious difficulties with which the farmers have to contend is the shortage of help, the Government has organized a number of Employment Bureaux and has given special attention to the placing of help on the land. In addition to the offices in the larger centres, the local office of the Department of Agriculture in every county is connected with the Labor Bureau and applications for help may be placed through this office. Every effort has been made to distribute the labor which has been available, and during the war period special plans were inaugurated including relaxation of the regulations of the Education Department so as to permit boys to work on the land during the summer and the organizing of camps of girls for the fruit districts. These plans undoubtedly helped the labor situation a very great deal. With the organization at hand it is safe to say that the subject will receive every consideration in future years, and it is expected that as shipping becomes available the local supply of labor will be supplemented by the bringing in of additional help from the British Isles each year.

GOOD ROADS

In 1904, the last year of Liberal Government in the Province, the total expenditure of the Province towards good roads amounted to about \$91,000. Last year it was nearly ten times that amount, and when the comprehensive highway policy announced by the Government is under way, the amount and the contrast will be very much more marked. In view of these striking figures it is scarcely necessary to say that the Government fully appreciates the importance of good roads as a matter of primary interest to the farmers and as a factor in the general development of the Province. Accordingly the policy of the Government as announced and as now being put into effect includes Provincial aid to many more roads than were ever included in the past, and must inevitably in the course of a few years result, both directly and indirectly, in the improvement of all the roads in the Province.

It has been found that under modern conditions of transportation the construction and maintenance of rural roads should not be left to the farmers themselves but should be distributed over the whole community, which is now using roads to a greater

extent than ever before. The good roads policy therefore classifies the roads into three classes and provides that such roads as are used by the larger number of citizens shall be paid for to a large extent by the general treasury of the Province.

Government assistance toward both construction and maintenance has meant millions of dollars to the Province of Ontario and has therefore contributed as well to the prosperity of individual farmers.

LIVE STOCK.

Recognizing that the live stock industry is the basis of progressive agriculture, the Government has endeavored to foster and develop it in every branch. Live stock men have themselves held the view that this could best be done through the encouragement of Exhibitions so that competition may bring out the highest quality. Accordingly ever increasing grants have been made to the Winter Fairs and local Fairs. These shows have, in spite of handicaps, increased in number of entries and in attendance, and have maintained a high standard of quality in all classes of Ontario stock. In addition to the big shows, assistance and encouragement has been granted to similar shows all over the Province. Of the sum of \$35,000 granted to the Agricultural Societies a very large proportion goes to the live stock prize list, so that there has been no branch of the industry and no section of the Province overlooked.

Legislation has been provided to eliminate scrub sires in the horse industry and educational campaigns carried on as to breeding and feeding of all branches of the live stock industry. Legislation has been adopted to protect sheep from the ravages of dogs and providing that the sheep owner shall receive full value for all the losses incurred.

Assistance has been rendered in the holding of Dispersion Sales of pure-bred stock, and these have increased from three or four a few years ago to approximately twenty at the present time and resulting in the more rapid dissemination of pure-bred stock throughout the Province.

Assistance has been rendered towards the shipment of some 500 cars of pure-bred stock to the Canadian West. By assembling the stock for the small breeder the man with two or three animals has the same advantages of market as a big dealer might have.

EXPERIMENTER vs. AGITATOR.

Frankly now, don't you think that the experimenter who does not destroy until he has something better to offer, has contributed more to the prosperity and well-being of the farmer than the agitator who tears down and destroys regardless of whether he has anything better to offer or not?

The Government stands behind the experimenter. The Government has provided financial support and machinery by which the experimenter has had every opportunity of bringing about improvements. When these improvements have been brought about the Government has provided the most energetic system of disseminating the benefits from one end of the Province to the other.

A SYSTEM OF SERVICE.

Service has been the keynote of the agricultural policy of the Government and no one plan has been evolved which accomplished this purpose to better advantage than the appointment of Agricultural Representatives. This plan was advocated and inaugurated by Sir James Whitney and has been developed to a very high standard by the present Government. There are now 48 local offices of the Department, each office a centre of service to the farmers of the county or district. The reason this work has extended so rapidly is because it has proved so effective. The farmers are repeatedly calling on the local officers of the Department for assistance in connection with their problems. If they want information as to where to secure labor, how to deal with a new weed or insect, where to get a certain variety of seed, or where to purchase or dispose of some of their stock, the agricultural office is applied to and invariably able to be of assistance. The innumerable services rendered by these men are now a well-known and established part of the agricultural life of the Province.

REACHING THE BOYS AND GIRLS.

A decidedly important feature of the agricultural policy of the Government has been the plan adopted to interest the boys and girls of the Province in agriculture. The Ontario Agricultural College has, as is well known, been developed and strengthened and its usefulness enlarged, but the Government was not content

to stop there. Through the Agricultural Representatives an elaborate system of educational plans for the boys and girls who are unable to reach the Agricultural College was devised and carried out. During the winter months local Courses have been held for boys from sixteen to twenty-five years of age. These Courses have continued for periods from two to four weeks and they had all the advantages of a short College course. During the past six years upwards of 4,000 farm boys have benefited by these Courses and the greater proportion of these have organized themselves into Junior Farmers' Improvement Associations for continued self-improvement purposes. Then, too, for the younger boys and girls a system of Rural School Fairs has been adopted. Starting six years ago this system has been organized practically all over the Province and its practical features of interest to the boys and girls have appealed to the parents as well. In this way the Rural School Fair has become an institution in the agricultural life of the Province. Its growth is best shown by the following figures for the year 1918:—

Number of Fairs	307
Number of Schools	2,868
Number of Children	71,086
Attendance—	
Children	86,348
Adults	94,888
Entries	117,749
Plots	67,938

An agricultural policy which includes features of this nature must not only be regarded as progressive but contains great hope for the future.

