

One cannot but be struck in both the United States and Canada with the good work being done by agricultural, co-operative, and other associations and institutes, and the community interest displayed by all sections in agricultural matters. Dr. Creelman, the President of the Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph, who visited the Dominion in September, 1914, in reporting on his visit to the Minister of Agriculture for the Province of Ontario, said, *inter alia*, "The people in Australia and New Zealand were not so progressive, or perhaps were more dependent upon the Government aid, and more inclined to blame any one but themselves when things went wrong." Whether this summing-up is just or not is not for me to say, but the fact remains that if a disaster or a pest overtakes any farming community in the United States or Canada the farmers themselves, the bankers, the business men, and all are out to investigate and endeavour to prevent a recurrence. Besides this there is a great spirit of inquiry abroad in regard to agricultural matters. They believe that "agricultural progress has been made by men who were not satisfied with what was good enough for their grandfathers." The farmers like to get together and have a "talk"—that is, some one of them speaks on a subject, and then those who are conversant with it join in the discussion which follows and exchange experiences, the consensus of opinion being in the direction that "No man knows all that there is to be known about farming; let us all get together and learn from each other." What seems wanting in New Zealand is an organized rural life in which farmers are willing to work together for the common good of the community in such matters, instead of working as isolated unorganized units.

The cultivation of Indian corn, or maize, originally merely the primitive food grain of the aborigines of tropical and semi-tropical regions of the Western Hemisphere, has within a few centuries extended to all continents. Its exceptional productiveness in both corn and fodder, and the many uses made of its grain, stalk, pith, leaves, and cob, have won for it the fame of being America's most valuable contribution to agriculture. In the United States the annual acreage under maize is more extensive than the total surface under all other cereals. In Canada also a considerable acreage is grown annually. The value of the luxuriant foliage of the plant has been so universally recognized that its cultivation for fodder has extended into countries where the seasons of warm sunshine are too short for the grain to mature, hence maize is grown for forage to a greater or less extent in many countries of northern Europe, even as far north as Scotland.

To see this plant grown so extensively in the United States and Canada on different soils and under varied climatic conditions, &c., impresses one that the possibilities of this plant have not received the attention they deserve in New Zealand. In the North Island as well as in some parts of the South Island successful grain crops on small areas are being produced, but so far very few tests have been made in the direction of ascertaining early-maturing and heavy-yielding varieties suitable for different localities where the season of warm sunshine is sufficiently long to mature the grain. It is, however, in regard to its use as a soiling and silage crop, particularly in districts where dairying is the main industry, that its value should be advocated and brought under the notice of farmers. For this purpose it is well known that it can be grown successfully in most parts of the North Island, and also in the South Island at least as far south as Balclutha. For soiling purposes it comes in at a time, and is an excellent stand-by, in dry seasons when pastures are beginning to suffer towards the end of January, February, and beginning of March. If not required for soiling purposes it is readily made into ensilage, and can be so converted either in a silo or in the stack.

Success in the growing of maize depends to a great extent on the selection of proper varieties to suit the conditions in different localities. This can only be ascertained by tests of varieties over a number of years, by selection of specially adapted types, or by developing types having the necessary characteristics suitable to the requirements of the locality. In well-arranged rotations of crops, so strongly advocated in the improvement of agricultural practice in Canada, maize takes its place in the rotation immediately after grass and clover.

Naturally, in both the United States and Canada much attention is given to wheat-growing; particularly is this the case in regard to Canada, wheat and its product (flour) being the primary export. In America in former years the variation of wheat giving the largest yield was the first consideration of the farmer, little attention being paid to the question of quality in flour-production. Now, however, the quality as well as the quantity of flour that can be obtained from the grain are the factors which govern the price. In Canada the spring wheats, as a rule, are harder than the winter varieties, contain a higher percentage of protein, are more valuable from a nutritive point of view, and generally sell at a higher price. The requirements of the chief wheat-importing countries of Europe also have a bearing on better prices being given for hard spring varieties, as the wheat produced in these countries is of a soft and starchy character, therefore these importations are in the direction of securing wheats of a hard and flinty character containing a relatively high percentage of protein. Over thirty years ago the New Zealand and Australian Land Company (Limited) introduced some four or five varieties of these hard wheats from America, and grew them for about four years on their Parcora Estate in Canterbury, and Totara Estate in Otago. Whilst undoubtedly they were wheats of high milling-quality, they did not yield within 15 bushels per acre of the old-established wheats then and still grown—viz., Velvet Chaff and Red Chaff. Millers were not prepared to pay a higher price for these than Velvet Chaff, although admitting their excellent quality, so the company discontinued growing them. Red Turkey, one of the present favourite hard wheats grown in the United States, has been tried in variety tests of wheat conducted throughout the South Island for three years. The results have been disappointing, the yield being on the average quite 20 bushels below ordinary varieties, and compared with these the sample of the grain was thin and shrivelled in appearance, and only saleable as second-grade wheat, although its weight per measured bushel