

District	Value of 1931 Production	Field Crops	Dairy Products	Livestock	Fruit and Vegetables	Forest Products
		%	%	%	%	%
1. Fruit Belt.....	\$ 8,500,000	30	10	10	45	5
2. Central Dairy.....	4,500,000	44	25	16	4	11
3. Northern Dairy.....	4,000,000	48	25	16	4	7
4. Northern Cape Breton.....	3,000,000	50	17	15	3	15
5. Cumberland.....	2,500,000	48	17	17	5	13
6. Lunenburg—Queens.....	2,000,000	37	15	17	11	20
7. Yarmouth—Digby.....	2,000,000	38	18	16	8	20
8. Cape Breton Co.....	1,500,000	40	27	16	7	10
9. Antigonish.....	1,500,000	48	14	25	3	10
Total for Province.....	32,000,000	40	18	16	14	12

from the census figures and shows to some extent at least, the types of farming characterizing the various districts.

Field crops bulk largest in all except the fruit belt, but other categories provide most of the cash income. There are three important dairy districts in which 25% or more of the farm production is in the form of dairy products, while in

only one county, Antigonish, do other livestock enterprises reach a similar prominence. In most of the remaining districts there is a semblance of balance between the two types of animal husbandry. Forest products bulk large in some of the districts, and in the outlying parts of the province they are even more important.

Colonization in the Province of Quebec

By J. E. LAFORCE

ALTHOUGH the Province of Quebec covers over 600,000 square miles, it is populated only along the St. Lawrence and a few of its tributaries, and along the shores of the Baie des Chaleurs. In addition, a new area is now being opened up, in the west of the province—the Abitibi district where some 70,000 settlers and miners are at present creating a new Quebec.

There are some 136,000 farmers in the Province of Quebec, settled on about 13 million acres of land. Hence, vast terri-

tories are still available for improvement either through mining enterprise or by timber exploitation. Moreover there are opportunities, for more extensive development of water-power as well as industries connected therewith, and especially for a fuller development of agriculture in all its branches.

During the past fifty years agriculture, like other industrial activities, has undergone certain changes. Farmers today, instead of cultivating sixty acres as formerly, find it worthwhile to work anywhere from 120 to 180 acres. Many factors have contributed to this trend in agricultural activity. In the first place,

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr. Laforce is Deputy Minister of Colonization for the Province of Quebec. He has to a large extent been responsible for the work described in this article.

the development of machinery has made possible a more extensive type of farming. Secondly, those farmers who contracted debts during the years of prosperity, who purchased large farms at high prices, who bought expensive implements, or registered stock at prices equal to their weight in gold, have had to give way to those who were more cautious or who had better fortune. Finally, hundreds of others sold their farms during prosperity, and moved to urban areas with the idea of going into business. Thus the number of farmers has decreased while the area of farmed land has increased.

Many of the farmers who gave up farming for one reason or another, have drifted towards American as well as Canadian cities. A large percentage of those individuals who started small businesses were unsuccessful. Those who sought other forms of employment were affected by the industrial decline resulting from the prolonged depression. As a result, a large number of these ex-farmers, at the present time, are staying in villages and accepting any possible job to earn a living for their families.

The number of those families who have lost or sold their farms certainly reaches ten thousand in the Province of Quebec. There are still a few thousand others who, for various reasons, are too far in debt to be able to keep the farms they now occupy or who, at least, would be unable to help their children settle in the immediate surroundings. These farmers in the main, would benefit by selling what is left of their farms and proceeding to new districts with their children.

There are also, in the Province of Quebec, some 60,000 farmers' sons, old enough to be settled and it is the duty of the province to keep them on the land. Many of these youths, influenced by "modern" ideas do not feel any attraction towards mother earth. In fact, a number of these individuals feel that the land will not provide them with an adequate means of livelihood.

A further consideration, in the light of present conditions, is the case of many farmers' sons, married but not established,

who for the most part live with their parents, on the father's farm, until they are properly settled. When the father is financially in a position to aid in the purchase of a farm, the matter is then easily arranged, but when, besides his son, there are still four, six and sometimes ten other sons left on the father's farm, who all have to be established some time, it is very clear that the head of such a family, with all the best intentions in the world, can never be able to meet such a tremendous obligation.

After eliminating those rurals or ex-rurals who would not consent to return to the land, or who are not qualified to open new areas of colonization, there are at least 40,000 families and farmers' sons who should be settled at once. Nearly all those have no resources to start anew in either the old parishes or on abandoned farms. The settlement or re-settlement of such a population is complicated further due to the fact that means, dispositions and tastes are quite different in most of these families.

To meet the needs of this population, there are available about 100,000 lots (each lot covering an area of 100 acres), which have been classified as suitable for the creation of good agricultural establishments. However, in view of the speed that Quebec is maintaining in colonization, in a few years there will be very little tillable land available for settlement. It is to meet this contingency that new methods of settlement are now being considered.

The Quebec Government, in an effort to establish its people, now takes into account the means, tastes and dispositions of the individuals. This policy is based on the conviction that a family established in a district not to its taste, and along lines not in accordance with its wishes, and under conditions unfavourable to its development, can but rarely succeed.

Under the guidance of Honourable H. L. Auger, Minister of Colonization in the Province of Quebec, four different methods are being carried out, adaptable to the different classes of families who wish to remain or return to the farm, namely: the Rogers-Auger agreement,

the Provincial plan, the settlement of farmers' sons, and the establishment on abandoned farms.

To the thousands of agricultural families attracted to cities or villages during the depression, the Rodgers-Auger plan becomes indispensable particularly when these families are without work and must count upon State relief for their living. Between June 1937 and December 1938, 2,137 families have been settled under this agreement.

The families colonizing under this plan receive from the State an amount of \$1,000 distributed over a period of four years, of which amount a sum of \$820 is paid within the two first years of establishment. When these families are settled in a new area, and this applies to most of them, the Province must, in addition to providing the means for actual settlement, open up new roads, build schools, presbyteries, and churches. The Province also distributes clearing, ploughing and seeding bonuses to the settled families, which bring the total expenditure for each family to approximately \$2,600, of which \$333.33 is provided by the Federal Government.

The Provincial plan consists in the granting of a piece of land of 100 acres, with a bonus of \$250 to assist in the construction of a house. To aid in the clearing, ploughing and seeding, bonuses of \$25 per acre, plus an occasional bonus of \$10 or \$15 per acre for special clearing or ploughing are given. The Provincial Government pays the transportation costs both for the families and their household effects. It provides schools, presbyteries and chapels. Also, it facilitates the development of local industries. Finally it encourages these settlers, by all possible means, to clear and to improve their farm as quickly as possible, so that these families may become self-supporting. 4,863 families of settlers were established under the Provincial plan, from September 1936 to December 1938.

Due to the fact that each Quebec family has numerous children, that the cost of establishment is high, and that many heads of families have limited

means to assist their children's settlement in the old parish, the Government of Quebec gives to each head of family who established one of his sons on a farm, a special bonus of \$100 per year during three years. 3,966 farmers' sons have been settled in this way.

There are, in the Province, a number of farmers who, for various reasons, have lost their farms but who still own cattle, agricultural implements, and sometimes a few hundred dollars or more. When they settle on an abandoned farm, to help them start anew, the Government grants these farmers the sum of \$100 per year during three years. They can also take advantage of a loan of not more than \$500 without interest, to be reimbursed beginning with the fourth year. This loan is authorized in order to enable the farmer to make the necessary repairs and adjustments. To obtain this loan, however, the farmer must own a sum representing fifty per cent of the amount he wishes to borrow. 1,347 families have been settled under this plan.

If the totals of families mentioned above are added, the grand total amounts to 12,313 families, settled on new land or on farms in old parishes, from September 1936 to December 1938: this represents a population of approximately 60,000 people.

There are yet other establishments assisted by the Department of Colonization of the Province of Quebec. Let us mention those of the sandy district of Joliette County, where cigarette tobacco is now being cultivated on land that was absolutely unproductive until the day when the Member for this county, Mr. Antonio Barrette, organized this specialised culture. The original harvest was 28,000 pounds in 1936, it was increased to 450,000 pounds in 1937 and to 2,500,000 pounds in 1938.

Aside from the clearing, ploughing and seeding bonuses, the Department of Colonization has assisted in the construction of more than 5,000 houses for the settlers. In one fiscal year, it has distributed bonuses for the construction of 540 stable-barns, 330 hen-houses, 39 bakehouses, and 330 vegetable cellars.

It has also paid bonuses to 260 settlers who have manufactured pairs of wheels for carts, to 43 who have installed blacksmith shops, to 26 who have installed carpenter shops; and it has paid for the boring of 79 wells in districts where drinkable water was difficult to reach. To this list must be added the building of 11 parish halls to be used for meetings, 36 presbyteries and 63 chapels in the new centers. The Department also has paid bonuses to 231 settlers who have organized themselves for the production of maple syrup, to 5613 who have cultivated truck-gardens, to 426 who have cleared away stones from their lands, to 65 who have drained their farm-lands, to 1562 for the purchase of a first draught-ox, to 2511 for the purchase of registered hogs, to 1212 for the purchase of ploughs. During the same year, \$480,837 has been paid to settlers for statutory land clearing and ploughing bonuses, and \$366,436 for special clearing bonuses.

During the past two years, the Department of Colonization of the Province of Quebec has built 1,342 miles of new road through forests, it has remade and rendered suitable for traffic 5,064 miles of paths that were formerly impassable, and has repaired 1,818 miles of roads that were hardly tolerable and made them fit for heavy traffic. This represents 8,224 miles of new roads, paths

remade into good roads, roads unfit repaired and made suitable for heavy traffic: this is equivalent to the length of a road from Halifax to Vancouver and return through San Francisco, New York and Saint John, N. B.

The Province of Quebec has devoted itself to such a tremendous task because it was realised that thousands of its agricultural families and thousands of its farmers' sons have to be kept on the land, and that the most practicable manner of reducing unemployment is to make the Canadian soil bring forth a daily living, provide clothing and—in a land where wood is easily available—ensure timber for shelter and firewood to keep its people warm. It is apparent that in this realization, the Province of Quebec is far ahead of all the other Canadian provinces. It has done much, but it could do more, if it received from the Federal Government that help which is its due, because it is an admitted fact that colonization is of vital importance for the country, and Quebec can at the present time settle hardly half of those who should and could be established each year. In spite of this, however, Quebec has made a tremendous effort in attempting to settle its people, and it has attacked the problem along practical and methodical lines.