

Like the other divisions of farm work, this branch has a large correspondence, numerous enquiries being received daily from all over the Dominion from farmers wishful to obtain advice and information respecting the treatment of soils, the composition and application of fertilizers—natural and artificial—the relative value of cattle foods, &c., &c.

As far as time permits, analyses are made for farmers of matters pertaining to agriculture, when the results would be of interest and value to a large portion of the community. In this connection it may be stated that most useful work has been done by the examination of farmer's water supplies and in calling attention to the danger of drinking water polluted by drainage from the barnyard. For health in the farmer's family, for thrifty stock and wholesome dairy products, pure water is indispensable.

The naturally occurring fertilizers of Canada, peat, mucks, marsh, mud, marl, &c., have been examined in large numbers during the past five years, so that now a large amount of data has accumulated on this important question.

Original investigations have been pursued to learn the feeding value of various Canadian fodder crops. To this end a large number of native grasses have been analysed at several stages of growth, and extensive chemical examinations of the fodder crop have also been made.

The virgin soils, representing large areas in the Dominion, have been under examination for some years past and the reports of this division give the analytical and physical data obtained, with deductions therefrom and suggestions as to profitable treatment of the soil. It has been shown that Canada possesses many soils of equal fertility to the most productive in the world, these remarks having especial reference to the prairie soils of Manitoba and the North-west Territories and the alluvial soils of both the Pacific and Atlantic coasts.

Practical assistance to special branches of agriculture, such as horticulture and the dairying industry, has been afforded, and a perusal of the annual reports will show that already a large amount of most useful information for the guidance of Canadian farmers has been obtained and published.