

Grafton Short Course Literary Society

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EDITORIAL

Agriculture - B. Robinson

It is needless to say that of all industries agriculture is the most important. For after all who could get along without the farmer? Even if, at times, he may be called an "old hay seed" by some individuals, nevertheless, those same individuals would probably starve if it were not for that old "hay seed."

Although agriculture is the most important of other industries in that they are all dependent on it, agriculture in this age, at least is far from being the most popular vocation to follow, or the one that returns anything like the highest financial rewards for the time and effort spent. This condition is not very enticing for the modern youth of to-day. As a result many forsake the farm and pursue some other profession, or obtain positions in the city which, to them, is much better. Among those young people who do stick to the farm it will probably be found that they are sons and daughters of prosperous farmers or farmers who are having a measure of success. Of course there are those who stick to the farm even if the going is hard because they like it and resolve to make a go of it and with this resolve they will likely do so. Then there may be those who are forced to stay on the farm because they could not very well do anything else.

The question is how is agriculture going to be made more attractive and more interesting to encourage the younger generation to stay on the farm and to offer them something worth while for their efforts? If agriculture is the most important of other industries, surely it commands a better position and outlook than at the present time. How can it be raised to a higher level? Are attempts towards improvement being made? Yes, many steps are being taken to better agriculture. Our government, through the department of Agriculture has always been interested in helping the farmer, more probably, than the average farmer realizes. There are many ways in which the Department of Agriculture is seeking to improve agriculture, and one very good example of this we know and have experienced ourselves. This is by Short Courses. How do they improve? The answer to this seems very obvious. Hasn't this course impressed on us the necessity of improvement in our system of farming by pursuing more efficient and effective ways; and haven't we been taught these ways practically as well as scientifically? And have we not indirectly been taught the necessity of better education and developing ourselves and in so doing we will improve our profession? So then, improvement in ourselves must proceed improvement in our calling. One way for improvement is undoubtedly by a better education. Surely the farmer of to-day needs to be educated to make even a living on the land. A high school education is very valuable to the modern farmer in many ways. It teaches him physics and chemistry, thus giving him a knowledge of the principles of science which he can use to great advantage in understanding the soil and its requirements. By this knowledge, too, he will know the feed value of the crops he grows and will know how to feed his stock the proper rations to suit the particular case. This is only one of the ways that his high school education will aid, and as has already been mentioned, there are many other ways in which it will prove of real value. However, if a high school education has not been obtained it doesn't mean that a knowledge of science cannot be had. For instance, the young farmer may learn sufficiently about science from the local public school teacher to understand its principles. Or, he may learn this information from a simplified form in a book. Once he understands the rules, he can extend his knowledge by further reading. In fact, there is a wealth of knowledge he can obtain in almost any direction by reading. Reading the daily paper is very profitable.

Co-operation and organization will aid much in improving agriculture. Surely the farmers can help themselves by getting together