BOYS ON THE FARM.

Agricultural Education in the Common Schools.

THE TEXT BOOK REQUIRED.

Mr. Thomas Shaw on the Great Want of the Day.

MINISTER DRURY'S SENSIBLE IDEAS.

The twenty-eighth convention of the Ontario Teachers' Association was concluded yesterday afternoon at the Normal School, Toronto. The President, Mr. J. H. Smith, occupied the chair.

The following officers were elected for the ensuing year: President, R. McQueen, Kirkwall; Recording Secretary, R. W. Doan, Toronto; Corresponding Secretary, D. H. Hunter, Woodstock; Treasurer, W. J. Hendry, Mimico.

The President introduced to the convention Mr. Thomas Shaw, Secretary of the Central Farmers' Union, who read a paper on "Agriculture in Our Rural Schools." After complaining that agriculture was not taught in the public schools, Mr. Shaw went on to speak of the coming text-book on the subject, dealing closely with what it should contain. The following are the prominent thoughts advanced in the paper:

The reasons why agriculture has not received more attention at the hands of our educational authorities are not far to seek. It has been sought by those who need it most—the farmers. Hitherto they have been so largely absorbed with the work of removing physical obstructions on their farms, and getting bread and butter for their families, that they have not given due attention to the nature of the mental food they should get at the school. They have not clamored for the introduction of an agricultural text-book, or it would have come long ago. They have been content with bread when they could have had the butter for the asking. This Province has many thousands of Common Schools, and High Schools by the score, and these are not too many, and yet it has but one school virtually where agriculture is taught. Though the Guelph College were brimful of students, only one farmer in 1,500 could send his son there. The sons of the 1,499 must go without instruction in what is to be their future life-work, or get their instruction at home—a sweeping reflection this on the ignoble content of the farmer. Thus it is that the flower of rural communities are drafted away into the cities, that in the governing voice of the country the farmer gets a place amongst the thirty rather than the first three, and that in the social scale he is pressed tightly against the wall. We are without a text-book. Why? Book-making is a good deal of a trade. It is largely governed by the law of supply and demand. Now that farmers clamor for it, it will come. The old national series of school books come from Britain. A book adapted to the wants of Canada cannot come from Britain or any country but Canada. The soil of Canada forbids it, the climate of Canada forbids it, and the honor of Canada forbids it. It must be written by a Canadian. The reasons why the study of agriculture should be introduced into our rural schools are not far to seek. There is first its relative importance to the farmer, whose children almost exclusively fill the forms of rural schools. It is to him both meat and drink, and clothing and money. It is the steed he rides from the cradle to the grave, and the funeral car that conveys him to his last resting place. Why shouldn't he be taught this from his earliest infancy? We know of no study so well calculated to stimulate the perceptive faculties at a tender age as the study of agriculture. Then there is its relative importance to the whole community. The prosperity of every one is largely bound up with that of the farmer. The number of the spokes in every wheel of business, the number of wheels and the number of revolutions are largely determined by the success attending the operations of the farmers. About two-thirds of the population of this country are farmers. I believe they own more than two-thirds of its property, and they furnish more than two-thirds of the brains that stock the professions. The part they play in the commonwealth is nearly all in all a two-thirds' factor, and therefore they are surely entitled to a two-thirds' consideration at the hands of our educational authorities. A boy who, to the practical training he gets at home, adds sound theoretical instruction from a school text-book will beat the boy at farming who has only the first. Whatever, then, tends to improve farming should be countenanced by the whole community.

A TEXT-BOOK NECESSARY.

There is no doubt in my mind as to the best mode of introducing agriculture into our Common Schools, though I am not so clear as to all that the medium of instruction should contain. It should be introduced through means of a text-book worthy of the name. I do not in the meantime favor the erection of any additional schools of agriculture, but I do favor the wholesale utilizing of the rural schools we have for teaching agriculture. When this is done the want of departmental instruction in the higher schools will force itself upon public attention, and these for the time being will become nurseries for the Agricultural College.

WHAT IT SHOULD BE.

I do not know who the writer of that text book will be, but I can tell you, as already more than hinted, that he will be a Canadian, and I may add that his hands will bear upon him the marks of hard and honest manual toil. As to the style of this bock it will be written in the plainest Anglo-Saxon, its language so simple that a child will understand it, and in so pleasing a manner that both young and old will love to read it. It will be rather under than over scientific, bearing upon its every page the stamp of the intensely practical. The strong meat of science is rather for maturer minds, though, if finely minced, some of it is good for children. It is almost impossible to convince the average farmer of Ontario that a cattle beast, during the first year of its life, when properly fed, will gain two pounds of flesh per day on a less feed ration as readily as it will gain one pound during the third year of the same. But there will be no difficulty in convincing his boy if taken in time. It is a hopeless task to endeavor to convince the farm matrons of Ontario that their methods of making butter are defective, but their daughters may be easily convinced if taken young. These truths, simple as they are, mean millions to Ontario every year.

CONTENTS OF THE BOOK.

It will treat of the soils of Ontario—their formation, composition, and more especially the crops they are best capable of producing, hence the style of farming to which best adapted; will give the different modes of draining, and the benefits that follow when this is properly and judiciously done; also the modes of tillage most suitable to them, noting in a general way the allowances to be made for the class of farming adopted, whether mixed or special. It will treat of a rotation of crops, having a due regard to variations of soil and subsoil, the disturbing influences of climate, and the resources to which recourse must be had when this rotation is interfered with, through lack or excess of moisture, snow or frost, causing failure to one or a number of crops. The principles that underlie successful farming will be made prominent. Here we refer to adaptation of animal and plant life to locality, having reference to market facilities as well as to sustaining them in an ever increasing vigor; the proper utilization of labor and labor facilities, and the great wisdom of being forehanded in everything. It will include the wide subject of fertilizers, and the deep subject of the principles of feeding animal and plant life. The right treatment of this section will throw firebrands into the scrub stock system, and thin the ranks of land robbers, who are ruining the agriculture of our country, and it will slay the intruding weeds of Canada by the hundreds and the thousands. There will be a

CHAPTER ON WEEDS

and insects, their habits and the best means of destroying them, with plates of the most dangerous of the intruders. The methods of destroying them must have a due regard to locality, for those almost diametrically opposite succeed best in different localities sometimes. A goodly section will treat of live stock and products, possibly of their origin, certainly of their utility, characteristics, and a summary of the principles of management.

FARM ARCHITECTURE,

with plans and drawings. We have good models of dwellings and outbuildings now. A description of the most suitable modes of fencing would be valuable, and so much at least of forestry as treats of windbreaks, and the trees most suitable for reforesting this country with the best modes of planting them. Horticulture will come in for its share of attention, including the useful varieties of fruits, adaptations and outlines of management, with the principles of successful gardening. The farmers' garden with a diagram will serve an excellent purpose. There might be room too for the statement of the general principles of bee-keeping, and the beautifying of home and surroundings.

THE FARMERS' DEMAND.

The farmers of this country are soon going to ask that agriculture be taken down from the shelf in our High Schools and given a place among the first three, and when they ask it it is going to be done. But it is infinitely more important to get it first into the common schools, where the masses may be reached. When these get into the fairyland region of agricultural study they will extend their explorations, which shall soon reach the higher schools, where their hunger must be ministered unto.

DEPARTMENTAL REGULATIONS.

In the general directions of the departmental regulations I find the following in reference to the use of the authorized text-book: "Special attention should be given to such points as how plants grow, and what they feed upon, how farms are beautified and cultivated, the value of shade-trees, what trees to plant and when to plant them, the relation of agriculture to other pursuits, the effects of climate on the habits of people, poetical selections on rural subjects; talks on natural history, should form part of the instruction of every Friday afternoon." I don't know who wrote those regulations, but with all due deference to the gentleman I fear he was a "book farmer." It is very well to know "how plants grow and what they feed upon," and something of this should be embodied in the text-book. Nor is it unimportant to know how to beautify farms, but less so than to know how to make them profitable. The relation of agriculture to other pursuits is not of little moment, but the study of it is certainly better adapted to maturer minds. "The effects of climate on the habits of a people" might prove a profitable study for pupils in the High School or the Agricultural College, but it is surely more important for young persons to know the effects of climate on the habits of plants by which life is sustained. The poetical selections on rural subjects I would relegate to the farmers' wood fireside, and leave the "Talks on natural history" as part of the Friday afternoon exercise. In the compilation of our text-book it should never be forgotten that the large majority of those who study it will never attend a higher school, and therefore the overwhelming importance of having it filled brim-full of knowledge that is intensely practical.

CONCLUSION.

It is quite possible that all the landmarks that fix the limit of its claims upon other classes may not be very easily pointed out. That agriculture has claims upon the favorable consideration of the whole community has already been shown, but the extent of those claims has not been defined. The forest of the vision here is so thick with underwood that I frankly confess I can scarcely see the light on the further side. Agriculture in Canada is unquestionably the first mustard tree, and the fowls that repose in its branches should be encouraged to do so, but how far they should be compelled to eat of its fruit is an open question. The lawyer of the city might not wish his son to spend time in the study of agriculture, while the member of the school board might choose differently in the case of his son. But the obscurity that hangs over this part of our subject will be dispelled before the advancing light of the expression of public opinion, which will ultimately make known the desire of majorities, as to how far the landmarks that mark the limit of the use of this text-book shall extend. In the meantime let us have the book at the earliest possible moment, and may it be a worthy forerunner of a magnificent Canadian agricultural literature that is yet to be.

Hon. Charles Drury.

Mr. Drury, Minister of Agriculture, who came in while the paper was being read, was called upon to address the association. He said he had come to the conclusion that there was something wrong in the system of education in looking at the effect produced upon the young men who pass a step beyond the Public Schools. He regretted to state that the young men who attended the High Schools, Collegiate Institutes, and universities seemed to be imbued with an idea that labor with the hands was undignified and unbecoming to a gentleman. The result had been that those who had been looked forward to as the hope of the future of agriculture in this country had gone into other pursuits. There had been a measure of disappointment in the effect which education had had upon the tastes and inclinations of the young men. He had always looked forward to the time when the farmers of this country would be well educated men in the broadest and most liberal sense. He saw no reason why the farmers should not aim to educate their children, but he had known many instances where, after farmers had had their sons educated in the high schools, they refused to return to the farm. He did not know where the fault lay, but this was a great matter of disappointment in the educational system. If the introduction of a text book upon the subject of agriculture would meet the case it would be a boon to the country. All of the professions were at present overcrowded. Canada could furnish unlimited means for the employment of tens of thousands of our best men in the field of agriculture. There was a feeling abroad that for a man to spend his life upon a farm was to "waste his sweetness on the desert air," and that if a man was in possession of sufficient means to spend his life as a gentleman farmer he ceases to be a gentleman when he is obliged to work with his hands. He had once heard a clergyman say that he had been a farmer, but that he had got above that sort of life. (Laughter.) He was not sure but that the same gentleman would have been a better farmer than a preacher. Whatever could be done to promote a better judgment as to the true dignity of labor, and whatever could be done to educate our young men to believe that there is a field of usefulness for them upon the farm would be a lasting benefit to the community. He trusted that the Minister of Education would at an early day see his way clear to place in the Public Schools of the Province a text-book upon the subject of agriculture. (Applause.)

Mr. G. W. Ross, M. P., Minister of Education, made a brief address, in which he assured the association that he was always glad to receive their advice. The position of Minister of Education was not without its difficulties. He was proud of the system of education in Ontario, and knew of no better system in the world, though of course it was capable of much improvement. He advised the association to act with caution and prudence. (Applause.)

After passing various votes of thanks the association adjourned *sine die*.

A Runaway Street Car.

"Keep your seats or you'll all be killed!"

The excited individual who thus exclaimed was Conductor Warren, of Allen street car No. 78.

Yesterday he ran extra during the noon hour, his regular route being on Virginia street. The car was on Fourteenth street, near the State Normal School. Suddenly both brake-rods broke, and the car, heavily loaded with men, women and children, started down the grade banging against the affrighted horses' heels. Driver Welch, seeing that he could not stop the car, did not forget the first law of nature and with great presence of mind unhooked his team, turned them to one side and allowed the car with its terrified human freightage to proceed. It was at this juncture that the conductor cried out as above narrated. At the corner of Vermont street a lady, despite the protest, jumped from the car. The West avenue car pulled up from York street and the driver saw the runaway coming. It was too late to pull back, so he turned in, and by thrashing his horses managed to keep ahead. After a while the car slowed and the men were able to get off and block the wheels. The lady who had jumped off was picked up with a badly strained back, was placed in a carriage and driven to her home on Eagle street.—*Buffalo Courier.*

Another Swindling Game.

Numerous complaints reach the police here from the Eastern Townships and from farmers in the vicinity of this city about Yankee swindlers, who, if the report be true, have at least fleeced thirty or forty tillers of the soil out of a good portion of their savings. It appears that these men sell to the farmers reapers and mowing machines and other farm implements on the instalment plan. Part of the money the farmer pays down, and for a part of it he gives a note, which the Yankee copies, forges the signature and returns on the day when the note is due with the cleverly forged note and receives his money from the unsuspecting farmer. Three days later the genuine note is presented to the farmer for collection. The swindler had had the genuine note discounted and of course the farmer has no means but to pay the amount. A detective was engaged this morning by one of the victims.—*Montreal Star.*

Young Frenchman—"Ah, oui. Eet ees fix by custom in Paree, when a young man marry he get certain number francs from the father of the girl." Young American—"It isn't so in this country. Here you must not only be able to support the girl but very often the rest of the family into the bargain. Say, what's the fare to Paris?"

"We don't want any poetry, young man," said the editor; "we have enough on hand to last longer than the paper." "I am not a poet, sir," replied the young man, indignantly; "I am selling a soap warranted to remove oil, tar, pitch or stains of any kind from the finest fabrics of the loom down to three-ply carpets. You do me a gross injustice, sir." "I beg your pardon," said the editor, contritely.—*Life.*

AN OCEAN GROVE GIRL.

She Uses Cork Stays, but Has Considerable Trouble with Them.

She tripped down to the foamy edge of the surf and ran back, screaming prettily as the water ran over her toes. And all the spectators smiled. And then she ran down again and danced on one toe and then on the other, and then on both at once as she got all the way up to her ankles. Then picked up all her courage, and as a big wave rolled in she ran to meet it. It flopped her bang up against the beach, knocked her sailor hat into shapelessness, and, as it receded, drew her out as if she had been a wooden ball. It was almost too much of a good thing and she struggled and wiggled and spluttered. And while she struggled to get a foothold another wave seized her and she flipped over the top of it as light as an eggshell. Quick as thought came a third, and she danced over the top of that also, and every time she tried to get on her feet she was whisked back.

Then she realized that she was beautifully floating out to sea, and she sent up a scream that startled the bathers near her. One of them, young and brave and strong, rushed—for it was too shallow to swim—to her rescue. He seized her by the shoulder, but her feet would not down, and being a wise and thoughtful lad, he towed her into shore. She scarcely stopped to say thank you, and with the red blood of confusion showing in her tanned cheeks, rushed away to change her garments. She might have escaped with that had she not imparted the secret of the episode to a friend. And the secret was this: She was a prudent girl with a proper regard for her safety. She had taken out the whalebones of her corsets and introduced cork stays, and had put another layer of cork in her stockings. She had miscalculated the effect, only to find that while the cork kept her nicely above water, it quite as effectually prevented her getting down also. The story came out, and the girl left Ocean Grove simultaneously.—*Pittsburg Press.*

A Wonderful Offer.

For many years the manufacturers of Dr. Sage's Catarrh Remedy have offered, in good faith, $500 reward for a case of Nasal Catarrh which they cannot cure. The Remedy is sold by druggists at only 50 cts. It has fairly attained a wide world-reputation. If you have a dull, heavy headache, obstruction of the nasal passages, discharges falling from the head into the throat, sometimes profuse, watery and acrid, at others, thick, tenacious, mucous, purulent, bloody and putrid; if the eyes are weak, watery and inflamed; if there is ringing in the ears, deafness, hacking or coughing to clear the throat, expectorations of offensive matter, together with scabs from ulcers, the voice being changed and has a nasal twang; the breath offensive; smell and taste impaired; sensation of dizziness, with mental depression, a hacking cough and general debility, you are suffering from nasal catarrh. The more complicated your disease, the greater number and diversity of symptoms. Thousands of cases annually, without manifesting half of the above symptoms, result in consumption, and end in the grave. No disease is so common, more deceptive and dangerous, less understood, or more unsuccessfully treated by physicians.

Ironclads versus Locomotives.

War comes high, and next to it preparations for war. The English Admiralty estimates that a first-class ironclad costs £750,000, or in our money about $3,750,000. First-class locomotives cost about $10,000 apiece, so that 375 locomotives, that serve the uses of peace, could be built for the money put out on one vessel which is good for nothing if not a destroyer of the productions of peace.—*Boston Transcript.*

"Never morning wore to evening but some heart did break," says Tennyson; and the part that ill health often plays in heart-wreck is too great for computation. Uterine disorders especially becloud the spirits and sap the springs of vitality and nervous force. For these distressing diseases, functional irregularities, unnatural discharges constant pains, weak back, lassitude, dullness, sinking sensations, ill temper, and all weakness and derangements peculiar to females, Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription is a perfect specific. Sold by all druggists.

True to Life.

"Let us play we are married," said little Edith, "and I will bring my dolly and say: 'See, baby, papa!'" "Yes," replied Johnny, "and I will say, 'Don't bother me now, I want to look through the paper!'"

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Sentiment and Business.

Young man—I cannot understand, sir, why you permit your daughter to sue me for breach of promise; you remember that you were bitterly opposed to our engagement because I wasn't good enough for her, and would disgrace the family.

Old man—Young man, that was sentiment; this is business.

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Snakes Among the Nutmegs.

Connecticut snake hunters are astonished at the great number of rattlesnakes abroad this season. Until a few years ago a rattler was a curiosity in Connecticut, but since the hill towns began to grow up to brush they have come in. In the beautiful town of Farmington rattlers are especially plentiful. Ten have been killed in that town since the season opened. The other day Jason Peters, of Farmington, killed the tenth rattler just as it was approaching his doorstep on an errand of investigation, apparently, respecting the interior of the house.

ITCHING PILES.

SYMPTOMS—Moisture; intense itching and stinging; most at night; worse by scratching. If allowed to continue tumors form which often bleed and ulcerate, becoming very sore. SWAYNE'S OINTMENT stops the itching and bleeding, heals ulceration, and in many cases removes the tumors. It is equally efficacious in curing all Skin Diseases. DR. SWAYNE & SON, Proprietors, Philadelphia. SWAYNE'S OINTMENT can be obtained of druggists. Sent by mail for 50 cents.

Sir Charles Synge Christopher Bowen is acknowledged as one of if not the best lawyer among the English Lords Justices. He is a grave, pale and almost melancholy looking man, and his manner is gentle and apparently timid, and has a peculiarly gentle voice. All his utterances have an academic ring about them, which peculiarity he has possessed since he made his first forensic speech. Off the bench he is a rather shy man. Strangers on meeting him would scarcely credit that he is a great equity judge; indeed, he is generally accredited with being rather "slow" for public man.

Mrs. Henry Ward Beecher will be the guest this summer of the founder of Sage College at Illinois.

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