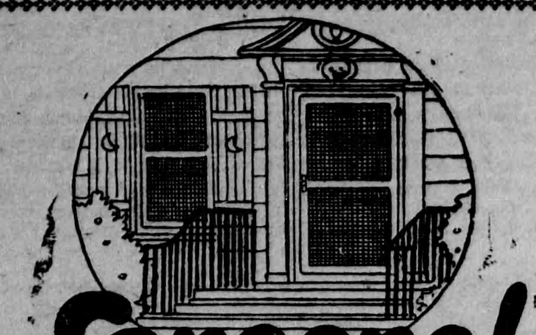

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Man On Farm Requires Better Education Than Ever Before

The fololwing address was given by Mr. Herbert Corbett at the last meeting of the Ontario Educational Association, and has been in The Advance office for some time, having been unable to be printed on account of space. It was of such importance that we believe it will be of special interest to all those interested in educational affairs.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome so large a congress of people from the rural parts of Ontario in attendance at this great educational parliament of our province. It speaks well for the interest the rank and file of our people have in the great educational enterprise. No matter what newspaper we read or what great agricultural or industrial problem we discuss, those who are most vitally interested in the project usually conclude that any advancement along agricultural, industrial or even national lines calls for a more intensive education, not only for the children and young people, but of the adults of our great country.

Before entering upon my address, I wish to comment upon the great interests Canadian have manifested in the recovery of our belovd sovereign from his recent illness I am confident that I am voicing the sentiments of all the rural delegates today in commending our Federal Government in their consideration of a Day of Thanksgiving on behalf of our King.

I am going to confine my few remarks to a subject that has been on my mind for some time, and that is "Will the farmer of the future require a better education than that received by the farmer of the past?"

We sometime hear people remark that what was a good enough education for them should be good enough for their children and their grandchildren. I would like to say in this connection that I have yet to find the man who will admit that the education he received was good enough for him. I venture to say that every person in this vast audience regrets the inadequacy of the early training received in the public schools of our country. Admitting this fact, therefore, the logical step for us to take is to endeavour to provide such training for the youth of today as will most adequately fit them for the duties, privilges and responsibilities of citizenship in this fair country, wherever their lot may be cast, and whatever their vocation in life may be.

There is no doubt in my mind, that Public Schools established in pioneer days in this country made a sincere effort to provide such training for the youth of those days as would fit them for life in the early days of settlement. Our Grandparents and Great Grandparents have related to us many of the experiences of those pioneer days. There was the little log school house, and the teacher who in many cases wre a pensioned officer from the old land. The had many difficulties to contend with, amonyst others the raising of sufficient finances to maintain the institution. These pioneers have told us of the education received in their day and generation. They were taught how to measure a cord of wood, weigh a load of grain, calculate the size of a field intelligently read the news of the day as published in the weekly papers. The rural school boards did their best to adapt the training of the children to the needs of the time.

The times have changed. It is a question if Sir John A. MacDonald or Sir George Brown, the great political leaders of seventy-five years ago would recognize this old Canada if they were privileged to come back to see it today.

The young man on the farm today requires to know a great deal more than merely how to calculate the size of a field, measure a pile of wood, weigh a load of grain or hay. He deals more in the weight of livestock, he seldom handles any wood as most of our fuel comes from Pennsylvania. He has discovered that he can no longer depend upon the fertility of virgin soil, because many of the farms in Old Ontario have been cropped to death, and a large number of them are encumberd with weeds. He requires to know something of soil analysis, world markets, co-operative efforts in marketing his produce, banking systems, and be able to intelligently read the magazines and books that will help him keep abreast of the times in the business of farming.

Farming is a business today, as much as any other enterprise. The study of animal husbandry is of great importance to farmers today, as they derive their greatest revenue from the sale of livestock. The greatest need in rural life today is the application of skill and intelligence in the pursuit of agriculture. I recall addresses delivered at this convention by Principal Bell of Kemptville Agricultural School, by Dr. J. B. Reynolds, Principal Emeritus of the O. A. C., by the Hon. John S. Martin, Minister of Agriculture, in all of which these leaders in agricultural pursuits and country life have stressed the need of better education on the part of the young ment and young women who purpose living in the country and choosing agriculture as a vocation.

It was customary in pioneer days to keep a few cows, hens and pigs to supply the milk, butter and eggs and meat for home consumption. Nobody thought of making much money out of them. Progressive farmers today, however, find a handsome source of revenue in this province, while farmers following in the footsteps of the pioneers are simply maintaing boarders in their livestock and poultry.

The young man of today who milks a dairy cow wants to know what profit there is in the labour. He is not going to keep a flock of hens merely to be ornaments to his barnyard. He regards live stock and poultry as department of a great farming industry, and like any other business man strives to make every department of his enterprise not only self supporting, but a contributor to the general revenue of the business.

Some people acquire this education for farming from experience, while others take a course of instruction in an Agricultural School. To my mind it does not matter so much where the younv man or the young woman gets his education, so long as they get it. Wherever he gets his training for the big job of farming, there is no doubt that the application of skill and intelligence to agriculture will bring results as in any other vocation of life. I understand they will not employ a young man in the commercial or industrial field unless he has a few years of high school training. If he answers an advertisement, applies for a position on the staff of some bank or commercial organization he wil be asked if he has his matriculation, or how many years of high school training he has received? If the applicant can say that he has passed his matriculation examination they will give him some consideration, but if not, his application is thrown into the wastepaper basket as soon as he leaves the premises.

Why should not the farmer do likewise when employing help to take care of his live stock. Is it not of greater importance that the young man who is employed to look after three or four thousand dollars worth of livestock should have a diploma to certify that he has the skill and experience necessary to prove successful than it is to require a diploma from the young man or the young woman who is going to be employed keeping books or writting letters. To my mind, it is indefinitely more important to have skilled training and intelligence employed to handle farming oerations, and particularly the care of valuable livestock on the farm of today, than it is to have skill and training merely to keep books or handle financial accounts.

I have direct knowledge where help has been employed to care for livestock, who lacked experience or education, and through employment of such it proved to be very costly. I believe the day is not far distant when farmers will demand a certificate or reference from an applicant before employing such. To my mind it is not necessary that these certificates or references come from a college or agricultural school, but by having gained practical experience with a successful agriculturalist.

We have today an Act respecting the control of noxious weeds, which adds one more item to the curriculum of agriculture. By this addition we require education which the past generation was not called upon to acquire. Weed control in the future is going to mean much to the one who is going to be a successful agriculturalist and make good in that pursuit.

Within the past few years we have been called upon to produce a certain type of hog, to meet the demands of the markets of the world. Such was not thought of in the days of our grandfathers. In those days, a hog was just a hog, and all were of the same market value. Now-a-days grading also applies to butter, eggs, cheese, beef and wool.

One must now leave a wide gasp of world conditions in order that he may be producing, at that particular time, a certain commodity which is in demand.

We have financial conditions to face that were never thought of by the farmer in the past, both in private and public affairs. Where dollars met the demands a generation ago, it takes hundreds of dollars today. Take for example our County Council which are composed largely of farmers and you will find that not a great many years back, a few thousand dollars met the liability of the County. Today it takes many hundreds of thousands of dollars to meet the ever increasing demands. Much of this increase is accountable to "Good Road" construction, which is required to take care of the increased traffic and needs of the day. The handling to advantage of these larger accounts, demands an improved education to that of former years.

What has all this got to do with our Trustees' & Ratepayers' Association? Why introduce this subject a Provincial Convention? Do the rural school trustees of Ontario believe that we need better education in the country.

The question of better education for the farmer might well be discussed at every county convention. Country people might well consider the quality of education provided for their children in continuation and High Schools. Are they getting an education for the practical affairs of life? Many of them will naturally live on the country and pursue agriculture in some form. Of course every child must be given his own choice in life, but why train him in our high schools for the professional careers only. It would not do the boys and girls any harm if their High School training had a closer bearing on rural life and farming. There are other roots than latin roots, the cultivation of which might be used to develop the mental life of the boys and girls.

If we desire any changes in our school system, such a meeting as this provides a good opportunity to suggest them. That is really the purpose of our whole organization.

HORSE WANDERED FAR AFIELD

Thos. Wiggins, of Creemore, advertised last week in several newspapers in this district that he had lost a bay mare, and offered a reward of a ten spot for her recovery. Through this paper the animal was located, it having strayed to Thos. Weir's in Egremont township—a distance of at least forty miles by direct route. On the evening the horse strayed it was at its home farm at Creemore about 7 o'clock. Before daybreak next morning it was at Weir's in Egremont, having passed through three townships. The barking of a dog caused Mr. Weir to investigate and the animal was found in his yard.

A strang co-incidence in connection with the straying of the animal is this: Western bronchos, when they stray, go a considerable distance and nearly always strike in a westerly direction. Mr. Wiggins remembered having heard of this peculiar trait in western bronchos and immediately struck west to advertise for the lost beast.—Dundalk Herald.

Grey Farmers' Tour

The Farmers' Tour has been all arranged. T. Stewart Cooper informed this paper he had been over the entire route last week making arrangements.

The tour goes to the O.A.C. Guelph for noon on Thursday, where dinner will be served. The next stop is at the Woollen Mills, Hespeler, where the Grey County Farmers will see the manufacturing of some of their wool into cloth. The route goes through Preston, Galt. Paris and Woodstock, where the Oxford Farmers Co-Operative Egg Circle, Hatchery and Store is located as well as the Massey-Harris plant both of which will be visited. Through Ingersoll the route is continued to London where the farmers will remain all night.

On Friday morning they visit Welwood Farm, McCormick's Biscuit Factory and the University of Western Ontario. We then go to Stratford where the Grand Trunk shops are visited. The route then home leads us through Mitchell, Atwood,

IT WOULD BE MIRACULOUS

"What's the use of Dr. Campbell of Markdale opposing Miss Macphail M. P., in the next Federal election? He ran for exercise once before. Miss Macphail voted oftener with the Conservatives than the Liberals during the session of 1929 and it would be a chivalrous act on the part of both the old parties in South-East Grey to let the only lady member in the House of Commons have an acclamation at the next election.

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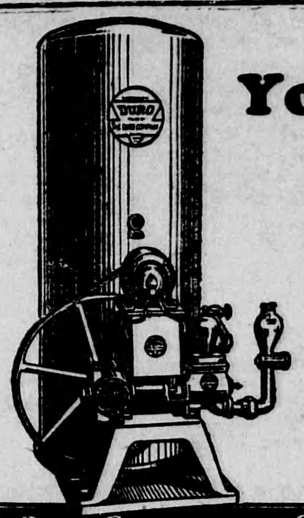

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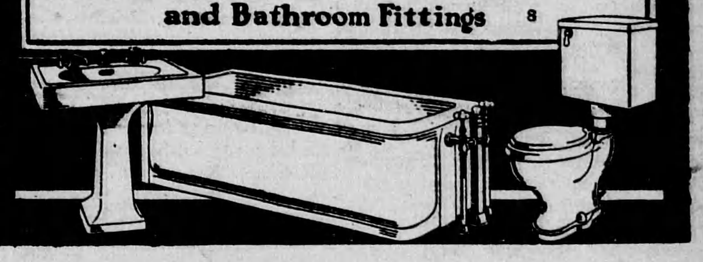

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