

Junior Work of the Ontario Department of Agriculture*

W. Bert Roadhouse, Deputy Minister of Agriculture for Ontario

IN its program for the extension of the junior work throughout the province the Department of Agriculture is endeavoring to interest the boys and young men in agriculture in much the same way as the adults have been interested in it by means of the Farmers' Institute and other organizations which have been at work.

In some counties work had been done along this line before the Department took hold of it. In Waterloo, for instance, school fairs were being held. In 1912 we took charge of the work and proceeded to extend it. It was our aim to supplement the work of the school by furnishing work to interest the children when out of school. That year we started with 20 rural school fairs. Each year has seen an increase of the work and this year we held 230 fairs with the work extending practically over the whole province.

* Organization of the Rural Fair

Each fair is under the supervision of the District Representative of the county, who groups the schools in the most convenient way for the holding of fairs. Each group has an executive to which delegates are elected, one from each school. The choice of delegates is the duty of all the children attending the school.

The delegates meet under the direction of the District Representative. They choose their president, secretary and other officers and then proceed to consider the business of outlining their summer and fall program. After this has been outlined the delegates return and report to the various schools who are then in a position to receive their seeds and eggs. When these are to hand work is proceeded with. During the summer the District Representative inspects and scores the plots and in the fall prizes are awarded. These are generally paid by cheque, and everything is conducted in a strictly business-like fashion.

For the financing of the various schemes in connection with their work the boys generally send a delegation to the school trustees with a request that they be given a grant of \$5. From the township they request and generally receive a grant of \$25. The general expense occurred by inspection is paid by the Department, and though this is considerable, it is considered well worth the money from an educational standpoint.

The real value of the work is to be found in the care, work and prizes that are put upon the plots during the summer months and in the business training which the boys and girls receive in carrying through and financing the various schemes and the conduct of the work demands.

In connection with the fairs there are prizes on the best methods of caring for the plot. Lately we have introduced oratorical contests, and the efforts of some of the boys in these contests are truly astonishing. Speeches are made by boys only 12 or 13 years of age that would be credit to boys well on in our high schools and colleges.

The object of all this work is to give agriculture a fair show with the boys in their choice of an avocation. Then the work has a valuable effect on the social life, and the agriculture of the province. The effect of the work is seen not only

on the children but upon the adults as well. Men who thought that agricultural education was a fad and a fancy are now coming to realize that it is a matter of greater prosperity and that it means more dollars and cents to them.

Short Courses and Competitions

Another feature of our junior work is the agricultural short courses in agriculture, of which there are at present about 40 in working order. Out of these have grown the Junior Farmers' Improvement Associations, of which there are now 30 with a membership of over 800.

Acres profit competitions, in which the emphasis is laid not on yields but on the profit per acre, is another phase of our junior work. These competitions have been held all over the province, and this winter over 80 young men attended short courses at the Ontario Agricultural College, which they had won as scholarships in the competition in their district. These young men are gathered from all over the province, from Fort William district and Sarnia in the west to the counties on the St. Lawrence in the east. The highest profit in oats was \$23.90, on mangels \$150 and on silage \$100 per acre, with equally startling results in other crops.

These are some of the ways in which the Department is endeavoring to improve the agriculture of the province by interesting the boys in better agriculture and furnishing the necessary instructions which will enable them to pursue it.

Ruralizing the Ministers

EDITOR, Farm and Dairy.—Should the rural minister be a trained agriculturist? Dr. Creelman, of the Ontario Agricultural College, assures us that he should, and special courses have been instituted at the college to give rural ministers training in the principles of scientific agriculture. My own answer to the question would be, "not by a long shot." I would like to bring it to Dr. Creelman's attention that the policy he and the department with which he is connected are adopting, is a sure and certain way to divide the people of this country into castes and reduce the independent yeomanry of Canada to the status of peasants. Paternalism, to quote a well known Ontario farmer of radical tenor, which is, in effect, "demoralizing and pauperizing" the farming class, and this attempt to ruralize the ministers is part and parcel of the general policy.

I agree that a minister should be sympathetic with the problems of the farm. I disagree that they should be qualified to give instruction in agriculture. Their work is the cultivation of souls, not of soils. Whoever heard of a city minister advising his flock on the business problems of office, factory or store? The city minister must know something of the conditions under which his flock work, but he is not supposed to be an expert in their lines. Why this general impression that the farmer is the only man who needs teaching in his own profession? For my part, I prefer my minister who knows his own business well and takes a sympathetic interest in mine, even as I try to understand the cultivation of my farm and take a sympathetic interest in the work of my minister. I do not consider it necessary that I should know all about preaching any more than the minister should know all about farming. This system of paternalism is becoming exceedingly distasteful to at least one—"Farmer Democrat."



It cost less to buy a DE LAVAL than to buy experience

EACH year some 40,000 farmers, who have bought at one time or another "cheap" cream separators, discard their inferior, cream wasting machines and replace them with clean skimming De Laval's.

These men bought the "cheap" machines because they thought they were "good enough" or "just as good" and that by purchasing such machines they could save a little money. They actually would have been better off in most cases had they bought no separator; for they lost most of the money they spent for the "cheap" machines, besides all the cream these machines have failed to get out of the milk.

No one ever saved money using a "cheap" cream wasting separator or an old or half worn-out machine. No one ever got back the money spent for such a machine by continuing to use it. Those who bought "cheap" machines and got out of the difficulty best are the ones who quickly discovered their mistake, discarded the inferior machines and put in real cream separators—De Laval's.

There are nearly 2,000,000 farmers who have bought De Laval's, and every one of these had just as many opportunities to buy "cheap" separators as any one else. They did not do it, and are now money ahead. They have avoided paying the high cost of experience, and their De Laval's have paid for themselves many times over. It always pays to buy a separator of proved, known superiority.

The nearest De Laval agent will be glad to let you see and try a De Laval on your own farm, without obligating you in any way. It is better to take advantage of this opportunity than to pay dearly for your own cream separator experience. If you don't know the local De Laval agent, simply address the nearest main office as given below.

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*Synopsis reported of an address delivered by W. Bert Roadhouse before the annual meeting of the Ontario Experimental Union, at the O.A.C. January, 1916.