

### The Agricultural College for Saskatchewan

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:—

The inauguration of universities in each of the above provinces has directed attention to the relation these institutions will bear to the agricultural colleges and the scope of these latter institutions.

Up to the present time little has been said on this important subject, although if correctly reported in the press one of the presidents has spoken of the agricultural college being in his province as under the control, and an integral part, of the university now in process of formation.

The warning given to Manitoba farmers six and seven years ago through the columns of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE is timely now to the farmers of the young sister provinces.

Briefly, the following are essential in my opinion to the permanent success of the agricultural college in each of the prairie provinces:—

1. Complete autonomy and freedom from university domination and interference; this not to be taken as in any way to prevent harmony between the institutions.

2. Strong two-year courses and the avoidance of long (four or five year) courses.

3. Location of the agricultural colleges in such a position that sufficient land may be had for a fair sized farm (320-480 acres), campus, and experimental plots; three or four quarter sections would be ample.

First—It may be laid down as an axiom that if the agricultural college in either province is to be a part of the provincial university, complete autonomy must, if the success of these colleges is desired, be given them, or in other words, beyond power to confer degrees or nominate examiners for those degrees, the colleges should be kept as free from domination or interference by the university as are the agricultural colleges of Guelph and Madison.

The agricultural colleges, mentioned (Ontario and Wisconsin) enjoy complete and full autonomy; this was not difficult, because the men at the head of each institution were by reason of ripe scholarship and experience able at all times to hold their own with the oldest, ablest and wisest professors of the sister colleges in each university. With complete autonomy, there is no particular reason for the location of the agricultural college in close proximity to the university, the Ontario college is forty miles from the university with which it is affiliated; the Macdonald college is located a considerable distance (far enough to prevent sharing professors or classes) from McGill, while at Wisconsin the agricultural college and farm adjoins the large institution. Guelph and Macdonald have a student's residence, Madison has not, there the students room and board about the town.

Second—Strong two-year winter (from freeze-up until spring) courses should be provided, by so doing the labor problem will not be intensified on the farms, by taking the young people away during the busy season. Arrangements could be made with Guelph, Macdonald or Winnipeg to provide for allowance on the longer course for work done at the home college, should any student wish to proceed further. The desire for the longer courses should not be stimulated, the two-year course is the one giving the largest returns for the expenditure made and therefore warrants the expenditure of public money on its account, which the longer courses cannot justly be said to do. It is quite possible that persons wanting the long courses started will endeavor to appeal to that vulnerable spot, provincial pride, by pointing to other provinces. It is to be hoped that the powers that be, will be fully informed enough, broad enough to see through this sophistry and that they will evidence sound Canadian patriotism and practical citizenship to resist the dangerous plea. Three advantages will accrue by so doing, (a) a great saving of money in unnecessary equipment and duplication of work, men and material, waste or extravagance cannot be excused even for education!

(b) The widening of the view of the students who decide to go on for the long courses and degrees, who will thus become better Canadians as a result of spending part of their student days outside the province among fellow citizens from other parts of the Dominion, thus saving them against the narrow sectionalism so apt to spring up from misdirected provincial pride.

(c) Young men will not be educated away from the farm and towards professional life, the avenues of which are so crowded.

It may be stated that to institute a long course tends to attract, on account of the residence and the cheapness of the education afforded, a crowd of undesirables, either town youths with no serious idea of engaging in agriculture or men from overseas whose parents think the course would be valuable discipline.

Third—With a farm of the size mentioned it would be possible to carry on experiments on a scale sufficiently large to approximate to the conditions under which many farmers labor; it would also afford opportunity for extensive experiments in live-stock, rotation of crops, forage and fodder crops, tests of new implements, and the feeds needed could be homegrown. It would also be possible to carry on plant breeding and whatever experiments were considered necessary in horticulture and forestry, it would not be advisable or economical to duplicate the splendid work along these lines being done at Indian Head. I have written these lines because from an experience as a student at two agricultural colleges, Guelph and Iowa, and as a teacher in a third, Wisconsin, I am firmly convinced of the soundness of my premises, and am also alive to the menace to the establishment of a real college for farmers, which university domination means.

ARTHUR G. HOPKINS, B. S. A.

**Next week the mails will carry twenty-five thousand copies of the special, enlarged, profusely illustrated Christmas number of the "Farmer's Advocate and Home Journal." This holiday number makes an excellent Christmas gift for a friend living at a distance and will be mailed from here to any address in the world for 25 cents. It is not necessary to assure those who have seen our recent holiday numbers that the issue for December 16th, will be well worth the money, but we might just mention that something entirely new in cover designs will be found on the front page, being a colored portrayal of Mr. Kipling's description of the prevailing type of Canadian beauty, the reading matter will in addition to articles of the customary character also contain several special articles dealing with the production and marketing of farm commodities.**

### Flax for New Settlers

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:—

I noticed a query in your columns, issued on the 25th Nov., re Fall Breaking. Your correspondent says he has a certain number of acres under fall wheat, and some ready for spring wheat, the rest being prairie, and, to use his own words:—"If I do not put in some crop on what I break between now and next summer, I shall not get much crop until 1910." You proceeded to give him some excellent advice, as far as it went, but I think your correspondent would do better if he were to follow the methods of up-to-date Yankee farmers along the Soo line and the districts around Milestone, etc., south of Regina.

I will try and explain what I have seen accomplished with new prairie this spring, and which I intend to copy myself next year on a raw half-section, and which I think your correspondent, J. R. J., Alta., will do well to seriously consider. To quote an instance. Mr. F— arrived from the States the first week in April with two cars of horses, implements, etc. He immediately proceeded to put up buildings, etc., and started to break with one outfit, and as soon as it was possible to get on the land with a steam outfit, he broke with an eight-plow attachment.

Floating followed right behind the plows, and seeding behind the float. Thirty acres of oats were sown the first week in May, which yielded an average of thirty-eight bushels of fine, clean, plump oats; 290 acres were plowed and floated, and after the oats were sown, flax was drilled over the remainder up to the 7th of June, at the rate of three pecks to the acre, of good, plump, well-cleaned seed, which averaged thirteen bu-

hels, elevator weight (four per cent. dockage), two-thirds of which sold for 97 cents, and the remainder, after deducting seed, sold for 103 cents. It is the intention to disc the stubble in the spring and sow a second crop of flax.

Another instance was of a friend of mine who bought a quarter this spring, and with four horses started to break on the 26th of April. He broke sixty-five acres right away, then floated it, and started on the 11th of June to drill in flax at the rate of three pecks per acre. He then immediately broke ten more acres, and seeded that the same, late in June; but in September there was no difference noticeable in the field between the flax sown first and the last. His returns from the elevator, plus seventy-five bushels kept back for seed, were 920 bushels, four per cent. dockage, or over thirteen bushels to the acre, the average price of which was 96½ cents.

A mile south, 300 acres were sown to flax (three pecks per acre), eighty acres of which were broken the summer previous and disced in the fall, also in the spring, and sown first in the beginning of May. It yielded, threshers' weight, twenty-six bushels. The winrows were so close on the ground that I saw the teamsters, during threshing, loading their racks on each side down the rows. The rest of the 300 acres was broken this spring, floated, and seeded up to the 11th of June. They yielded, threshers' weight, just over seventeen bushels. I could cite similar cases all around me. One old-timer, who was the only man who got No. 1 hard this fall in Kronan for part of his crop, intends to sow the bulk of his land next spring to flax. He says it is less trouble, and there are practically no crop failures, and that it pays better than wheat.

I have heard that around Milestone three successive crops of flax have been grown on new land; if that is so, then that would dispose of the theory that flax is harder on the land than wheat.

It would surprise those who have never walked over flax stubble at the "mellowness" of the sod; certain it is, that those who are troubled with buffalo or other small bush, will never get their land in as good a shape for back-setting or disking for a succeeding crop, as those who have grown a first crop of flax.

Strange as it may appear, frost on flax, after it has seeded, is an advantage, as it wilts and dries up the stalks, as anyone will readily admit who has threshed flax a little on the green side. To me, that constitutes its greatest advantage over wheat, as the crop can stand almost any amount of frost or rain without injury. In fact, if the flax was good and dry, I would never cut it till a few days before I was sure of it being threshed, as after it is cut and it gets rain on it, it has to be turned and bunched, which involves extra labor.

I would sum up the advantages of flax over wheat on new land, especially for homesteaders, as follows:—Can be sown right on breaking well into June, later than any other cereal crop. Matures last, giving one a chance to harvest other grains. In cutting, if a special "flax attachment" is used, does away with the extra labor and expense of twine and stooking. Frost does not hurt it, but improves it; practically no shelling, and can be handled any amount of times without loss. No loss of crop through wire-worms. Fetches higher prices than wheat, and yields about the same per acre. Flax or flax stubble is very hard to fire, little or no needs for fire breaks, consequently little danger of loss of crop through fire. With all these good points, is it not entitled to be called "the poor man's crop"?

"REGINA."

Our correspondent has set forth many advantages in flax growing, but it must not be forgotten that his experiences have been on some of the strongest land in Saskatchewan, and also that the district is what might be considered new. Many farmers consider flax hard on land, and have given it up, in fact, it is the general opinion that the bulk of flax grown is on the best land.—Ed.

A work of great scientific value and general interest has been prepared for the use of Mr. C. W. Nash, lecturer on biology, by the provincial department of agriculture. This work is referred to as a distribution of the various species of all the various species of plants and animals. The catalog is most complete and is a valuable addition to the species of the province.