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An Essential in a Good Potato.

The tendency in agricultural lines is more and more towards knowledge of the products of the farm. It is not alone sufficient to produce things, but the article produced must be the best possible. To render such a result possible, it is incumbent on the producer "to know a good thing when he sees it." In potatoes, size, as far as is compatible with smoothness and soundness, is desired, as is also the mealy texture, about which the Farmer's Gazette has the following to say:

"Why is it that the potato on being boiled becomes so floury or 'mealy' in texture? When cut up in the raw state the flesh or substance of the tuber is quite soft and juicy, whereas the same tuber after being boiled becomes quite crisp and mealy in texture. The explanation is that in the process of cooking the starch grains which are stored up in such large quantities in tubers become so acted upon by the heat that they burst the little cells or coatings in which they are enveloped, and in this way give the peculiar floury appearance, so characteristic of a well-cooked potato of good quality. The higher the percentage of starch present the more mealy the appearance which the tuber will present after being cooked. A simple test of the quality of a potato may be applied by cutting it in two and then placing the cut edges against each other so as to get them into the positions which they occupied before cutting. One of the sections should then be taken hold of and the other allowed to depend or hang down. In almost all cases the lower portion will remain attached to the upper, but by jerking the hand slightly the two can be made to part company. The more difficult it is to shake them apart in this way the better the quality of the tuber, the explanation being that the pieces are held together by the adhesive nature of the starch, and that the more starch that is present the more difficult it will be to part them. On the other hand, the less starch there is present and the more water, the softer and less floury the flesh will be when cooked."

George Rankin & Sons, Melrose Stock Farm, Hamiota, Man., March 15th, 1902: "Please accept my thanks for the knife which I received last mail. I think it is a good knife, well finished, a desirable one for a farmer, and I am pleased to have one."

The Ontario Agricultural College.

To the Editor "Farmer's Advocate":

Sir,—The above institution is one of which Ontario, and, indeed, Canada, may well be proud, yet self-satisfaction must not be allowed to blind us to the fact that even the O. A. C. course is not perfect or in no need of an occasional awakening. This Canadian college may be considered, for all practical purposes, the pioneer agricultural college of the continent, from whose loins have sprung teachers who have led the way in the colleges south of the line. These men have gone further when permitted to, and have been quicker to see than their Alma Mater the course of instruction best suited and most attractive to the average farmer. The attendance at the O. A. C. has increased, but not as rapidly as it should have done when compared with the more successful colleges across the line. Lack of funds is not a valid excuse to advance for the slowness in the increase of students. The fault must be, and is, that the course has not been heretofore shaped to attract the farmer. When the farmer sums up the course, much as we deplore the fact, the ethical is by him outweighed by the material. He wants to know whether the college course will enable his son to earn money more readily in the pursuit of agriculture, and unless he can see the dollar (\$) at the end of it, the son rarely gets to an agricultural college.

The live-stock end is not made as much of as it should be, and as further evidence in favor of my contention for more work in animal husbandry, I quote from the last-published report of the O. A. C., 1901, page 56, in which Prof. Day states that "animal husbandry is the most important branch of agriculture in Ontario," etc., a statement which no fair-minded man can dispute; consequently, more time should be given to the live-stock end of the course, so that students may get lots of practice in stock judging, and right here the appropriations should be liberal to enable the purchase of good stock for student work, to become familiar with the laws of breeding and general management. The Hon. John Dryden, referring a short time ago to the work done at the two-weeks' courses, stated that the instruction in horse judging was one of the most popular subjects of the lot. Horse judging has only been taken up at the O. A. C. within the last 18 months. The non-acquaintance with points of horses was the reason given in the public press for the Guelph man not getting higher honors in the international judging competition at Chicago, 1900. In 1901 we understand it was, among other things, the judging of horses that carried the Minister's son, Mr. Wm. A. Dryden, into the list of prizewinners.

Food for thought will be found in the following table, compiled from statistics furnished by the several agricultural colleges:

THE ATTENDANCE AT SOME AGRICULTURAL COLLEGES.

College.	When established.	Population of State or Province.	Courses given.	No. of students in long courses.	No. of students in short courses.	No. of students in dairy school.	No. of students at special 2-weeks courses.
Guelph.	1874	2,167,978	4 years, 2 years, 2 weeks, Dairy.	176	Included in preceding column.	75	258
Michigan.	1857	2,420,382	4 years, 2 years, Dairy.	162	75	24	
Indiana.	1874	2,516,462	4 years, 2 years, Dairy.	36	85	21	
Ohio.	1873	4,157,545	4 years, 2 years, Dairy.	86	66	50	
Wisconsin.	1886	2,000,000	4 years, 2 years, Dairy.	20	295	130	
Minnesota.	1878	1,751,385	4 years, 3 years, 2 weeks, Dairy.	26	440	116	35
North Dakota.	1890	319,116	4 years, 2 years, Dairy.	20	200	30	
Illinois.	1863	4,500,000	4 years.	200			
Iowa.	1869	2,231,853	4 years, 2 weeks, Dairy.	100		150	300

It will be noticed that the total attendance in two colleges, Guelph and Iowa, is greatly increased by the large attendance (which, by the way, evidences the popularity of the step) at the two weeks' special course in stock judging, etc., given by those institutions. The number of students given in the long course at Guelph is 176, of which number about 20 or 30 complete the four years; the remainder drop out at varying periods, the majority of whom probably take the associate diploma given at the end of two years. Nearly all the agricultural colleges give special attention to their long course (the one of four years' duration), and in them students drop out from time to time without completing the four

years, thus proving that the short course (of two years, or thereabouts) suits the farmers' pocket and time the better, and therefore it must be considered, for the present, at least, as the most desirable course to strengthen and develop.

Attendance at any agricultural college will show that the greatest interest taken by students is in the live stock, and if there is any place where they "gag," as it were, it is when they come to grind biology, chemistry, etc. They do not see the use of such subjects, and I must agree with them this far, that in the agricultural college, the farmers' professional school, the importance of such subjects is magnified beyond their real or apparent worth to the farmer. Then, again, the farm labor system should be abolished altogether, and a certain farm apprenticeship be insisted upon to qualify for entrance. One of the most ridiculous things, to my mind, is the employment of a body of students at manual labor on the farm, calling for no particular skill, when they are sent to college to get training in subjects which they cannot very well get at home. The farm labor system is a relic of the swaddling clothes days of the college, and was part of the programme instituted to break in the wild colts who arrived from all parts of the world. That day has gone, and the interests of the Canadian agricultural student should be studied ahead of his old country and city confrere.

A perusal of the reports of the O. A. C. for the last six years shows that a steady increase in number of students can be noted, although not commensurate with the increased interest in live stock in the same length of time. The table given below shows the number on the roll for each year, but it does not show accurately the number of students in attendance at the beginning of each session. In the reports, the same students are evidently counted twice, at the beginning of the college year and the end of it; i. e., in April and October, judging from the information given by the table of attendance at the various colleges.

	Students in general course.	Students in dairy course.
1895.....	150	100
1896.....	168	69
1897.....	212	63
1898.....	223	110
1899.....	237	129
1900.....	259	83

In general farm management it will be found that the income is derived mainly through attention to live stock and soil cultivation, next farm dairying and shop work. Following that comes horticulture, which has to do, also, with the pleasures and luxuries of farm life, then agricultural chemistry, farm bookkeeping, bacteriology, etc., and literature, etc., last, if at all. In the two-year course, even in the four-year course,

the practical must be steadily kept in view, or the man with the agricultural-college degree may become the laughingstock of the farmers.

EX-STUDENT.

Col. Dent to Buy More Army Horses.

Col. Dent will inspect horses with a view to purchasing them for army purposes in the N.-W. T., at High River, Calgary, Cochrane, during the first week of June. The N.-W. T. Government expect to hold a sale of brood sows the end of March at Rosthern and Prince Albert. The stock is being purchased in Ontario.