

Words of Advice from President Mills.

In answer to the question, "How can the ex-students of the Ontario Agricultural College make the best use of the lessons learned during their College course?" Dr. Mills delivered the following address to the ex-students and students at their annual supper, Dec. 12, 1893. In offering it to our readers we hope and feel that they will give it a careful perusal. It contains words of sound advice, which all ex-students will do well to take into serious consideration. Coming, as it does, from one who has made a success of life, it cannot help but have a lasting influence on the lives of those who have a personal acquaintance with the writer.

1. Do not find fault with what you see around you. You may notice bad methods, poor appliances, and the most striking evidence of neglect and mismanagement—things deserving the severest censure; but you must hold your tongue. Farmers will not take advice from headless boys, nor even from well developed young men, if they are fresh from College.

2. Improve your farm. Do much, say little. Instead of finding fault and giving advice, take off your coat and go to work. Do something. Make an intelligent, persistent effort to improve your farm. There is great room for improvement on many farms. The soil is poorly cultivated, weeds are plentiful, fences are out of repair, and things about the farm buildings present an appearance of the most discreditable neglect—stones here, sticks there, a pile of rails or boards yonder, and an old sleigh or a broken implement somewhere else—all seeming to say that the owner is lazy or devoid of taste. Untidy men ought to give up farming. They are a disgrace to the beautiful country in which we live; and, like the old Quaker, I am disposed to say that the man who allows wild mustard, wild oats, quack grass, or other noxious weeds to take possession of his farm, is working too much land, is lazy or does not understand his business.

Straighten and repair your fences; then keep them in order. Remove all piles of stones from your fields; you can haul them away to the woods or somewhere else in winter. Rest not, night or day, till your farm is clean—till you have all noxious weeds thoroughly under your control and most of them destroyed. Tidy things up and keep them tidy, around your house, in the yards, and about the farm buildings; and plant some trees (maple, elm, pine, and spruce) to shelter and adorn your home.

3. Implements. Take good care of your implements and do not buy any more than you really need. The annual waste under this head throughout the Province of Ontario is enormous. Implements of various kinds—plows, harrows, waggon, &c., left out, exposed to rain, frost, and snow! What a disgrace, and what a loss to the owners! Yet many incur this disgrace and suffer the loss involved therein; and such men, young and old, often have a weakness for buying implements which they could do without, getting them on credit and wearing them out before they are paid for. Do not be guilty of such folly. Keep all your implements, waggon, sleigh, and carriage under cover. Keep them in good repair; and let no one persuade you into buying what you can do without till you have the money in hand to pay for it.

4. Attend closely to your business. Hard work is the price

of success in all honest vocations; and, in these days of low prices and intensely keen competition, the man who frequents hotels or spends much time away from his farm, need not expect to succeed.

5. Be Punctual. Punctuality is an important factor in all kinds of business, and it is to be regretted that farmers generally are looked upon as less prompt and punctual than men in commercial and professional life. Lying is among the disgraceful vices. Men everywhere resent the imputation of falsehood; and yet a great deal of practical lying is done in every-day life by persons, young and old, who thoughtlessly make promises which they neglect or forget to fulfil. Think before you make promises or enter into engagements; then keep your promises and fulfil your engagements to the letter.

6. Make up your mind to be something more than a mere laborer. Many farmers' sons in this province are not making a good use of their time. Far too large a proportion of them are living very listless, useless lives, not well satisfied with their position, but doing little or nothing to improve it, going through the dreary routine of their daily life—eating, working, sleeping, eating, working—without any well-directed effort to rise above the condition of mere laborers. Labor is honorable, and no one is degraded thereby; but human muscle alone counts for very little in these days of steam and electricity—very little in the keen competition and amidst the unceasing progress which we see in almost every line of human activity. If any of our ex-students have been dreaming in Sleepy Hollow, we would urge them to wake up, open their eyes, and look around. Those who do so, will be surprised at the great changes which have taken place since they fell asleep.

7. Observe, read, and think. In every community, the educated classes are the ruling classes:

For just experience tells, in every soil,
That those who think must govern those that toil.

Your education is very defective and you are doing nothing to improve it. Begin to read. Nearly all great men are great readers. It is not necessary to go to a High School or a College to get an education. Some of the best educated men in the country are self-educated—self-made men, and you can acquire a good education, if you will only observe, read, and think. Read papers, magazines, and good books. Read closely, read thoughtfully, and think over what you read. It is wonderful what a man with even one talent can do, when he makes a good use of his time.

8. Take at least one agricultural paper. You need the information contained in such a paper. It will be of much practical value to you—value in dollars and cents; and, without it, you cannot keep in touch with the leading agriculturists of the country.

9. Attend meetings in which matters pertaining to your own occupation are discussed or illustrated, such as meetings of the Farmers' Institute, the Horse Breeders' Association, the Cattle Breeders' Association, the Sheep and Swine Breeders' Associations, the Dairymen's Association, the Creameries' Association, the Fruit Growers' Association, the Poultry Association, and the Bee-Keepers' Association; also the annual Fat Stock Show, and one or two of the leading fairs—not all of these, but as many as you can, and especially those which bear most directly upon your special line of work. But