

# The O. A. C. Review.

The Dignity of a Calling is Its Utility.

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## Editorial.

**T**HE burning question, at the present time, among the officers and student body, now in attendance at the College, together with some of the prominent of its graduates is: how is it that with a staff of officers and equipment of every department second to none in any similar College on the continent, that we have not a larger attendance. It can be claimed, and claimed justly, that instead of the two or three hundred who attend this institution yearly there should be more than double that number. This year shows a slight decrease in the number of students in attendance but we certainly do not take this as a proof that the College is not doing better work than ever done in the past.

The present student body, although below the average in numbers, certainly makes up for it in other respects. The great majority—in fact over five-sixths—are Ontario farmer's sons who are here for good hard work and will no doubt make a success of the course. The foreign element is all that could be desired and the students comprising it will no doubt be a credit to the College wherever their lot may be cast.

In the last issue J. F. C. gave some valuable hints as to how the attendance might be increased. In this issue L. W. L., a well known Associate, makes a few more valuable suggestions, which the authorities might follow with profit. The main thought in each of the articles is, that if the farming community only knew what advantages are to be derived by a course at an institution of this kind, the great problem of increasing the attendance would be solved. The imparting of such knowledge would no doubt have a tendency in that direction, and it is pleasing to note that in the course of lectures to be delivered at the Farmers' Institutes during the coming year, the subject, "The Ontario Agricultural College" is made one of the prominent ones. These lectures will no doubt have an influence in enlightening the people on this question.

Now, the next question is: would there be a very marked increase in the attendance after all the various means propounded by J. F. C. and L. W. L. have been used? It would certainly have some influence, but the great majority would give them but a passing thought. Why the reason of this deplorable state of affairs? It is simply, that the great majority of farmer's think that if "Bill has

skulin enough to read, write and cipher a little it's all he requires for farming"; hence they advocate the idea of sending their sons to an agricultural college. On the other hand, "John," who has an ardent desire to swell the already too large list of preachers, lawyers, and doctors requires the most of his father's spare cash in order to complete his course.

Another reason for the comparatively small attendance at agricultural colleges generally, is the prevalent idea among the farming classes that a course at an institution of this kind has a tendency to develop in the boy a distaste for manual labor. In some colleges, where no practical work is required of the students, this is to some extent true. After he has served some two or three years gathering theories which he has not been constantly asked to put into practice, he becomes imbued with the idea that it is his life work to instil these scientific theories into others and becomes very desirous of their putting them into practice. But we are pleased to say that at this college a student, during the first and second years, is compelled to do a certain amount of practical work. In this way the great difficulty of developing a distaste for manual labor is overcome.

Throughout the Province of Ontario there is the erroneous feeling that this is a political institution—a "Reform hot-bed," fostered by the present Reform Government. This is plainly shown by the fact that we have so few Conservatives among the students. Last year, on taking a vote in the Literary Society, it was found, to the great surprise of many, that about five-sixths were Patrons of Industry, who had been principally Reformers, before becoming enlightened, while the remainder were either pronounced Grits or Conservatives. This institution, although supported by the Government whether Reform or Conservative, is not, in the strict sense of the term, a political one. We have officers belonging to both of the old political parties, and no attempt whatever is made to influence the political beliefs of any student, by lectures from any of the Professors. Therefore, no farmer need be concerned about the political beliefs of his son being changed by the officers of this College. In fact, we are of the opinion that a young man cannot attend an institution of this kind without having his political views considerably broadened. Our reading room is supplied with the best representative papers of the three political parties. Political debates take place in the Literary Society. The important subject of Political Economy is ably lectured upon, and through these and various other means the student is taught to give some reason for the belief he holds.

It is almost invariably asked, by a farmer, when consulted as to the advisability of sending his son to an Agricultural College: "Will he be enabled to make any more money on a farm by taking such a