

and either gratuitously, or at a nominal price distributed by the Board, would create among farmers a general and increasing interest. In order, however, that that interest might become a source of individual benefit to farmers, not merely in gratifying curiosity, but in giving impulse to action, they ought to be prepared for the reception and true significance of the facts laid before them; they should themselves acquire a knowledge of the elementary principles of Husbandry upon which the suggestions they might receive would be based. For it is to a vast multitude of independent farmers scattered through the Province, each with one or two hundred acres of land, that such hints would be given. The only mode which has hitherto been adopted and which indeed seems capable of meeting the case, is by appealing to farmers through the teachers of Common Schools. The Board of Education for Upper Canada has adopted this method of diffusing elementary Agricultural Instruction through the country. His Excellency the Governor General has expressed in words, and, if possible, more impressively in action, the consideration and importance he attaches to the course adopted by the Board of Education. His Excellency has been further pleased to distinguish in a manner eagerly to be sought after, those individuals, who, in the Normal School, exhibit an endeavour to qualify themselves for communicating the elementary principles of Husbandry in their capacity of School Teachers. The Board of Education has determined that the period of attendance at the Normal School shall be increased from five to nine months. It may be reasonably expected that with this additional advantage, many will be able at the expiration of the session, to communicate a knowledge of the principles of Husbandry, not only in the School house, but also by means of lectures in their own immediate neighbourhoods. If the Teachers-in-training at the Normal School could have the advantage of witnessing a course of experiments during a period of nine months, upon a Model Farm, under the control of a Board of Agriculture, much good could not fail to result, and a most influential means of disseminating experimental, theoretical and practical knowledge at once attained. Farmers in their occasional capacity of School trustees, would soon be induced to interest themselves in educational matters, especially those which refer to their own peculiar labors of life. A Board of Agriculture would immediately acquire a new interest in the eyes of Farmers, from the circumstance of those engaged in educating their children or themselves, having been taught by its experience and benefited by its liberality.

I am Sir,  
Your Obedient Servant,  
H. Y. HIND.

Toronto, April 22nd, 1850.

### Miscellaneous.

#### BLACK BOARDS FOR SCHOOLS.

The New-York *District School Journal* gives the following instructions relative to the preparation and use of the plaster black wall, which in every school should take the place of the inconvenient black board.

In the first place, the *scratch coat*, made with coarse sand, is spread upon the laths as usual, and the *brown coat* follows, being left a little rough under the "float." When the brown coat is perfectly dry, the *black coat* is laid on.

This is prepared of mason's "putty," and ground plaster and beach sand, mixed in the usual proportions for *hard finish*. The coloring matter is lampblack, wet with alcohol or whiskey, forming a mixture of the consistency of paste. This is mixed with the other ingredients just as they are about to be spread upon the wall. The quantity of coloring to be used must be *sufficient* to make a black surface; the sufficiency being determined by experiment, no rule can be given.\*

\* Mr. Peter Le Page, Albany, has furnished the following recipe for black wall:

For 10 square yards of black finish, take 1½ pecks of Mason's Putty; 1½ pecks of Beach Sand; 1½ pecks of Ground Plaster; 1½ pounds of Lampblack wet up with 1½ gallons of Whiskey.

An intelligent mason can very soon try experiments so as to insure success. It is to be remembered that the black surface requires much more *working* with the smoothing trowel, than ordinary white finish. It should be finished by being softly smoothed with a wet brush. When perfectly dry, it is nearly as hard as slate, and almost as durable, if carefully used. Great care should be taken not to put in *too much* lampblack. The advantages of this kind of black surface over the ordinary black board, are, 1. The chalk easily takes effect upon it. 2. The chalk is much more easily wiped off. 3. There is but little noise made in writing upon it. 4. There is no reflection of light upon it. 5. It is cheaper, it costs but a trifle more than ordinary *hard finish*.

*Additional Suggestions.*—In building a new school house it would be well to have a belt of this black surface pass entirely around the room, at the proper height. In a common school, when small children are to use it, its lower edge should be about two feet from the floor, extending thence upward from 3 to 3½ feet. At the lower edge there should be a "chalk trough" extending the whole length, made by nailing a thin strip of board to the plank which bounds the black board, leaving a *trough* two inches in width and depth, in which to place the chalk, brushes, pointers, &c; this would also catch the dust which is wiped from the board. The upper edge should be bounded by a simple moulding.

*The Brushes.*—The best thing for removing the chalk from the board is a brush, made of the size of a shoe brush, with a wooden handle on the back side, the face being covered with a sheep skin with the wool on. This removes the chalk at a single sweep, without wearing the surface, and without soiling the hand of the operator. This is a great improvement over a dust-cloth or a sponge.

In all cases let the board be kept dry; never allow a pupil to wet the wiper when removing the chalk.

*Renovation.*—By long use, especially if the surface is ever cleaned with a *wet wiper*, this kind of black-board becomes too smooth and glossy upon the surface; the chalk passes over it without taking effect, and the light is reflected by it. A very simple wash applied with a white brush, will immediately restore it; this wash is made by dissolving one part of glue to two parts of alum, in water, so as to make a very *thin* solution. It is well to have this wash slightly colored with lampblack. Care must be taken that this wash do not have too much "*body*."

The above directions, if carefully observed, it is believed, will be found sufficient to enable any section to procure, at a cheap rate, an adequate amount of blackboard, ready for use at all times. If these suggestions shall tend to promote the welfare of the schools, by improving the means of instruction in the schools, the writer will have a sufficient reward.

#### QUESTION FOR EACH YOUNG MAN TO DECIDE.

I ask of the young man, then, who is just forming his habits of life, or just beginning to indulge those habitual trains of thought out of which habits grow, to look around him, and mark the examples whose fortune he would covet, or whose fate he would abhor. Even as we walk the streets, we meet with exhibitions of each extreme. Here, behold a patriarch, whose stock of vigor three-score years and ten seem hardly to have impaired. His erect form, his firm step, his elastic limbs, and undimmed senses, are so many certificates of good conduct; or, rather, so many jewels and orders of nobility with which nature has honored him for his fidelity to her laws. His fair complexion shows that his blood has never been corrupted; his pure breath, that he has never yielded his digestive apparatus for a vintner's cess-pool; his exact language and keen apprehension, that his brain has never been drugged or stupefied by the poisons of distiller or tobaccoist. Enjoying his appetites to the highest, he has preserved the power of enjoying them. Despite the moral of the school-boy's story, he has eaten his cake and still kept it. As he drains the cup of life, there are no lees at the bottom. His organs will reach the goal of existence together. Painlessly as a candle burns down in its socket, so will he expire; and a little imagination would convert him into another Enoch, translated from earth to a better world without the sting of death.

But look at an opposite extreme, where an opposite history is