

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE.

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"Chores" as Education.

Dr. Balliet's dictum, reported last week, that reading, writing and spelling are the novelties—the real fads and frills of education—and that nature study, manual training, cooking and sewing are, and always have been, the essentials, needs explanation, if not defence. Are writing and book-study things of but a few hundred years? Had not Imperial Rome its pedagogi and rhetors, and were its schoolboys not required to learn the twelve tables of the law? Cato and Cicero taught their children to read and write. Ancient Egyptian youths may have learned their country's history from the papyrus, and China had its schools and bookish education before Moses was born.

Of one arguing along this line, Dr. Balliet might ask, "Are you not confusing school exercises with education? The book-learning of the Chinese was at the root of their national stagnation. Their school studies were mere recapitulation—nothing but marking time, not a forward step. Book-studies have always been the frills; the essentials have been the experiences that trained the youth to do things, to react on environment, and to adopt means to accomplish desired ends. These activities developed the physical and executive powers of the youth, and made him strong, resourceful and useful. Which," he might ask, "is more educative, to sit in the school-room and read about sheep, about wool-combing, and cloth-weaving, or to take part in feeding the sheep, washing the wool, shearing, carding, spinning and weaving it, and shaping the homespun and hoden gray into needed garments?"

The experience of a farm boy is in most educative respects richer than that of his town cousin, who has few or no home duties, and the experiences in the homes of the pioneers being, as a rule, more varied and strenuous, may have been more educative than they are in most farm homes to-day.

In one of the most expensively-equipped elementary schools in the country, having connections with a great American university, a con-

siderable part of the education is given through the industries and arts practiced or observed by the children in the homes of the pioneers; carding wool, ginning cotton, weaving upon simple hand-loom—in short, inventing, devising, adapting means to accomplish ends that the teachers adroitly lead the children to deem important.

Dr. Balliet would seem to claim that these are the lines along which the race has journeyed to its victory over self and nature. Books can tell us of our inheritance from the ages; but there is force in the argument that, to enter rightly on its possession and enjoyment, we must have training or education of like quality to that which has provided it.

The honor roll of all our legislative bodies contains a large proportion of names of men who learned when boys to bear the responsibility of discharging home duties. As farmers' boys, which many of them were, the daily "choring" developed their strongest qualities. It was not simply that these morning and evening duties accustomed the boy to work; they sharpened his intellect by supplying him with a variety of practical problems for the solving of which he had to find a way or make one. These experiences endowed him with intellectual alertness, self-reliance, physical power and endurance—the very qualities needed for successful and useful citizenship. Looking back, he might well exclaim, "Blessed be chores!" A boy who has not learned to work and bear reasonable responsibility before he is eighteen years of age, has an incomplete and lopsided education. His chance of making a successful life is risked.

Books and book-learning are of incalculable value to those who have learned how to make proper use of them. The tendency of the exclusively bookish education is to cause its subjects—should we say, its victims?—to try to escape work. The product of such an education is the Chinese mandarin, proud of his claw-like fingernails, which prove that he never does any work. An ideal education teaches work; it lifts work above toil and drudgery; it invests work with ambitions, and beautifies and idealizes it. One wishes for the time to come when he may not need to work; another, that the time may never come when he cannot enjoy work. Which wish is better?

About the Only Man's Job Left.

"The farming of the future is going to be the best of the learned professions, and the only one in which a man of brains and character can find scope for his individuality and character," declares Peter McArthur, in his weekly letter to The Globe, with some slight exaggeration, perhaps, but with the inspiration of prophecy, all the same. Machinery and organization have changed things about in the towns, till trades have become a thing of the past, machines do the work, and men and women get jobs to wait on them. Human beings are mere automata in the industrial organism. Factory work is machine-driven drudgery, and the man who thinks that kind of work preferable to farming, deserves no better employment. The case of the mental worker is really worse, in one sense, he thinks, than that of the manual laborer. The clamor for dividends converts vast, complex business organizations into soulless, unyielding juggernaut employers. Results are everything, individuals nothing. "In the country, things are different. Such machinery as is used only serves to relieve farm work of its drudgery. Seed-time and harvest still have their olden charm. As for organization, it will be many years before the farmers have enough of it to enable them to get the just returns from their labor. In all their work and business dealings farmers are their own masters, and need not be driven either in matters of work or conscience. And the way scientific farming is developing, the farmer's work can give as much scope to his brain power as any of the learned professions. Neither are the financial returns to be despised. A successful farmer can make as good an income as the average city man. When these things are understood as they should be, I expect to see an exodus of intelligent men from the cities to the country, where they can develop themselves physically, mentally, morally and financially. Indeed, a day may come when we will hear people preaching, 'Boys, don't leave the city.'

"Farming is about the only man's job left."

Government Ownership of Grain Elevators.

Organized grain-growers in the Canadian West have developed such strength as to bring influence to bear not only on the Provincial Governments of the three Prairie Provinces, but also in the Dominion House. Several instances are on record wherein persistent agitation finally brought remedial legislation.

For several years, unsatisfactory conditions in the marketing of the staple crops of the prairies led a certain element among the grain-growers to clamor for Government ownership of grain elevators. For some time the agitation was not considered seriously in legislative halls. For four seasons past, however, the grain-growers' organizations in each of the three Western Provinces have called with no uncertain call for some action on the part of those in power. In 1906, the Royal Grain Commission, at numerous sittings in all parts of the prairies, invariably heard suggestions to the effect that Government ownership of the elevator systems would remove many of the evils that were so obnoxious in connection with marketing grain. The annual meetings of the Grain-growers' Associations each year have resulted in resolutions to that effect, amid enthusiastic cheers. Deputations, also, have waited upon the Government leaders.

Very little notice, seemingly, was taken of the strenuous campaign until the annual meetings of 1908 were ended. The associations had gained in numbers and in prestige, and the call was so loud that the Premiers of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta decided to confer and discuss a plan that would meet the requirements of the three Provinces. The outcome was an announcement from the Premiers that Government ownership of elevators was beyond Provincial powers, and that a special Dominion charter would have to be granted before the Provinces could act.

Disappointing as was this decision of the heads of the three Provinces, the grain-growers did not give up. So strenuous was their campaign during the summer of 1909 that the Manitoba and Saskatchewan Governments, at least, decided to take action. At the Saskatchewan session last fall, the Premier announced that they had learned that the Provinces could legislate in regard to Government ownership of elevators. Within a week, and while the Manitoba Grain-growers were holding their annual convention, at Brandon, the Manitoba Government also decided to accede to the loud request of the organization. The Alberta Government, while appreciating the sincerity of the growers, concluded that, since the Sunny Province was destined to develop into mixed farming, it was not wise to spend a vast sum of money on Government-owned grain elevators. They decided to support other branches, such as live stock and dairying, and at the same time do what they could to protect the interests of the grain-producers.

The Saskatchewan Government decided to move cautiously. A bill, introduced at the last session, provided for the appointment of a commission to look into the question, and report. A few weeks ago, the personnel of the commission was announced, as follows: Prof. Robert McGill, of Dalhousie University, Halifax, N. S.; Geo. Langley, M. L. A., Maymont, Sask., and F. W. Green, Secretary Saskatchewan Grain-growers' Association, Moose Jaw, Sask.

Manitoba Cabinet Ministers, in December, through the Minister of Education, told the Grain-growers, in convention assembled, that they had decided to accept the principle of Government ownership of elevators as suggested by that august body, and to establish a line of elevators. The Association was asked to appoint a committee to meet the Government and arrange details. This committee and the Provincial Cabinet discussed the question pro and con, but the Government could not see the wisdom of accepting all the proposals of the Grain-growers' executive. The result was the drafting of a bill by the Government, and also one by the Grain-growers' executive. Objectionable clauses in the Government bill from the Grain-growers' standpoint, included Government appointment and control of the commission placed in charge of the elevator system; an expropriation clause whereby the Government