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## EDITORIAL.

### Ontario Provincial University.

The Commission appointed by the Ontario Government has made its report upon the Provincial University. It was composed of Mr. J. W. Flavell (chairman), Prof. Goldwin Smith, Sir Wm. R. Meredith, Mr. Byron E. Walker, Rev. Canon H. J. Cody, Rev. Dr. Bruce Macdonald, and Mr. A. H. U. Colquhoun (secretary). As a result, a new Act will be passed, taking the place of that of 1901, and recasting the constitution of the University. The Commission recommends that it be freed from political control, and be vested in a board of fifteen governors, chosen by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, and holding office for six years. The president, as chief executive officer, is to be freed from teaching duties. By liberal public aid—\$275,000 per annum to begin with—the institution is to be maintained at a high degree of efficiency, in keeping with modern educational and investigative institutions. Several points of special interest to "The Farmer's Advocate" readers appear in the report. The Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph, is very favorably commented upon, and it is recommended that an advisory board be appointed to assist the Minister of Agriculture in the direction of the College work, to be composed of the Deputy-Minister of Agriculture (chairman), the president of the college, three graduates or associates of the college, who shall be resident in Ontario, and not members of the staff, and, if thought desirable, two representative farmers, not graduates of the college. This board should be purely advisory, and should not in any way relieve the Minister of his direct control and responsibility. This board would simply take the place of the advisory board provided for by statute in 1887. An annual interchange of lectures between the College and the University is advised. It is further recommended that, if the advisory board be appointed, in addition to the president, one of its members, selected by the Minister of Agriculture, sit on the senate of the university. It will be seen that, substantially, the relations of the college and university remain unchanged.

An important recommendation of the Commission is the establishment of a State Veterinary College in affiliation with the university, after the manner of the agricultural college, brought about by the purchase of the present Ontario Veterinary College by the Government. The term will be lengthened, a proper preliminary educational standard prescribed, and other changes made that will tend, in due course, to raise the standard of the veterinary profession, as has for years been advocated in these columns. The Commission and Government are to be congratulated upon the steps advised.

Another recommendation of importance is the establishment of a Department or School of Forestry, for "the double purpose of providing technical training for young men in an important branch of science, and benefiting in the conservation of its forest wealth by their knowledge and skill." Just where the school should be located, the report does not specifically state, but to locate it in the City of Toronto would appear to be a serious handicap that might possibly eventuate in failure. In our view, the proper place for such a school is in conjunction with the Agricultural College at Guelph, where the environment is favorable, where kindred topics are taught by competent experts, and where the proper stamp of men are available, or most likely to be attracted, for the making of foresters.

### Sale of Drugs and Patent Medicines.

Among the bills introduced at the present session of the Ontario Legislature, was one by Mr. Downey, M. P. P., to further amend the Pharmacy Act, by requiring, in case of joint-stock companies conducting departments in their stores for the sale of drugs, medicines, etc., that each director be compelled to take out a certificate, under Section 18 of the Act. In view of the fact that qualified druggists must possess a very high educational standard, and beside two terms at the Ontario Pharmacy College, must serve four years in learning the business, which is then carefully hedged about with restrictions regarding sales, etc., for the protection of the people, it is not unreasonable that other persons engaging in a similar business should conduct it under proper safeguards; but to require that every director of a joint-stock company which sells medicines as one line of business, qualify as a druggist, seems to us unreasonable, and should be modified before becoming law. Surely some more simple and efficient requirement can be devised so that the sale will be in charge of persons with qualifications corresponding to those of the regular druggist.

Our legislators are also getting after the proprietary or patent-medicine business. In the Ontario House, Mr. A. C. Pratt, M. P. P., of South Norfolk, introduced a bill to regulate their manufacture and sale. It requires that the formula—that is, the ingredients, and exact proportions of each—of all such preparations, except those put up on the written order or prescription of a physician for an individual patient, must appear upon the label of the bottle or package, in plain type, and in case such medicine contains more than six per cent. of alcohol, or more than one-twentieth of one per cent. of morphine, heroin, cocaine, or their salts or equivalents, or any quantity of any article named in Schedule A of the Act (containing about 50 poisonous substances), then the word "POISON" shall appear in bold-face type and red ink on white paper. This applies to all patent medicines made or imported into the Province of Ontario.

A visit to the drug stores will show that the labels on a good many proprietary preparations already bear the names of the constituents, but not the proportions; but many of the more important patent medicines are not so labeled, the proprietors being desirous of keeping to themselves the nature of preparations of great value to them, the acquiring of which may have cost them serious outlays of time, money and research. They do not wish to give away their patents, and there is force in the contention. So long as the public interest is not prejudiced, private rights should be respected. Now, instead of the summary procedure of this Bill, why not as a safeguard to the public, require that the formula of these proprietary medicines be submitted in confidence to a competent Government officer or board representing pharmacy and pathology, who would pass upon it as one suitable to be placed upon the market? The proposed use of the word "POISON" on labels, seems to us unreasonable. It would assuredly kill the sale of the contents. It would, in a host of cases, convey an entirely false impression to the ordinary individual. Thousands of prescriptions, compounded on the order of regular physicians, contain poisons, but in no greater proportions than the proprietary article, and are truly remedial, and not poisonous, as commonly understood, because they are compounded or diluted with other substances. About as well order the druggist or physician to put "Poison" on every bottle, box or package. Patent medicines, like doctor's prescriptions, are to be used according to directions, and not

swallowed holus-bolus. Taken in bottlefuls, many doctor's draughts would put the patient out of business. We submit that it is neither truthful nor necessary to brand either as "Poison" in the ordinary acceptation of that term.

Apart from these considerations, the point has been raised that the proposed law, being one affecting trade and commerce, is a Dominion matter, and outside of Provincial control. We are therefore not surprised to find that Mr. J. G. H. Bergeron, M. P., of Beauharnois, P. Q., has introduced in Parliament, at Ottawa, a bill under the title, "An Act to Amend the Adulteration Act," forbidding, under heavy penalties, the manufacture, importation or sale of any proprietary or patent medicine which does not display on the package "a formula setting forth the component parts of the medicine," also the name and address of the manufacturer. This is much less drastic than the Pratt Bill before the Ontario Legislature. The fine for the first offence is to be \$50, and for subsequent violations \$100.

Dr. W. H. Ellis, Provincial Analyst of Ontario, remarked that, while there are patent medicines absolutely useless, others are excellent prescriptions; but none are universally useful. It seems to us that people generally consume more medicines, both patent and doctor's prescriptions, than there is any real need for. If the laws of health and preventive measures were more generally understood and observed, there would be vastly less resorting to drugs which, as Dr. Ellis observes, are only useful at times in counteracting a greater evil.

In our enquiries regarding the above subjects, we found that a great many proprietary medicines and preparations are prescribed by regular physicians, and also, on the admission of one of the latter, very many doctors are seriously lacking in practical knowledge of pharmacy or the preparation of drugs. On the other hand, druggists are, in many cases, lamentably deficient in their knowledge of pathology. Instead of a lot of ill-considered drastic legislation, what would seem to be needed is: First, some sort of tribunal that would officially certify to such patent medicines as are useful and safe, and prevent those which are not from being placed upon the market; second, the better training of doctors in the composition and preparation of drugs; third, more attention to pathology by druggists; and, fourth, closer study and observance by the public of the laws of health.

### The Truth About the Embargo.

The following words by a recent visitor to our office, voice a misapprehension concerning our position on the British cattle-embargo question: "You advocate the interests of the farmers, but their interests are sometimes divergent. You uphold the embargo on Canadian cattle; this is all right from the standpoint of the export feeder, but bad for the general farmer." Conversation elicited his conviction that we were endeavoring to curry favor with the feeders.

"The Farmer's Advocate" does not uphold the embargo, and policy, from a subscription point of view, was the very consideration we discarded in our utterances, because, for every feeder on our lists, we must have at least nine readers who do not belong to this class. We realized that our observations on this subject might not strike a very popular chord, but we spoke our convictions, confident that we were on the right track, and that the future would vindicate our course.

Once and for all, let us make it clear that we regard the embargo as an unjust though comparatively harmless imputation on the health of Canadian herds. This, however, is a sentimental consideration not worth the hot air spent over