

Translation of pastoral letter of His Grace, Archbishop  
Bruchesi, re Agricultural Institute at Oka.

The vacations being finished, parents ought to be thinking without delay of choosing a place where their sons should go in order to commence or follow their studies. Amongst all our institutions of learning there is one especially which I desire to signalize in a very special manner, and bring before the attention of Christian families, and especially the families of farmers.

It is the Agricultural Institute at Oka, a school which has existed for a number of years, but which has just been completely reorganized, thanks to an understanding between the Provincial Government, the Very Reverend Trappist Fathers, and Laval University.

I have myself, as far as my means would allow, contributed largely to this amelioration, for it seems to me that the work of agricultural instruction in our Province of Quebec should merit the right of being encouraged and favoured. The Vice-Rector, from his standpoint, is endeavouring to do all that he can to make the institute progressive.

We have to congratulate ourselves upon the results obtained during the last school year. Success is undoubtedly assured. The vast and prosperous agricultural experiments of the reverend fathers offer to the pupils a variety of experience, application, and practical work. For the production of vegetables, the rearing of animals, and all connected industries, there is nothing comparable to it in the province, and there is nothing, in any case, more superior and complete. The ability of the professorial staff is equally indisputable; the professors of the theoretical courses and the directors of the practical work have a most enviable reputation throughout the whole country.

The methods employed in the numerous experiments of the farm at Oka have the exceptional advantage of not having a great deal of capital expended on them, and consequently these methods are applicable for all those who wish to employ them in ordinary farm practice. This is of capital importance, since it is perfectly clear that it is not the farmer who should make his land live on him, but rather that his farm should support him. Under these conditions I do not hesitate to strongly recommend to parents to send their sons to the agricultural institute at Oka. They would then procure for their children a very advantageous future, much preferable to the hard life of workmen and labourers who reside in the city. At the same time they would procure for the nation the best artisans for her prosperity and happiness.

All that is asked of pupils is that they should possess sufficient elementary instruction, and be intelligent and of sound judgment, with a love of work and a firm desire of following one or other of the different careers which make up the agricultural profession. Young men better grounded, after having taken the complete course of studies at the institute and obtained a university degree will have the opportunity of filling the best positions in the demonstration service.

Bursaries given through the generosity of the Provincial Minister of Agriculture are distributed to the pupils