

The Farmer's Advocate

and Home Magazine

"Persevere and Succeed"

Established 1866

Vol. XLIII.

LONDON, ONTARIO, NOVEMBER 12, 1908.

No. 842.

EDITORIAL.

SCHOOLS AND TARIFFS.

The Roosevelt Commission on Country Life, desiring to secure opinions, observations and suggestions from farmers, as well as professional and business men, has issued a sheet of questions, to which replies are invited. Among them, we note these: "Are the schools of your neighborhood training boys and girls satisfactorily for life on the farm?" and, "What, in your judgment, is the most important single thing to be done for the betterment of rural life?"

The former of these two questions implies its own negation. One has only to examine the matter carefully to be convinced that the Public and High Schools of the United States and Canada are not adapted as they should be to exalt, to ennoble, to prepare for or predispose toward farm life and occupation. Their preponderating influence has been in the direction of urban, and more particularly of sedentary occupation; and not all the forces of agricultural education, nor all the preaching of philosophers has availed or will avail wholly to overcome the bias from the farm to which the children of the farm are subjected in the plastic stage of youth. The most important thing, therefore, to be done for the betterment of country life is a complete reformation and balancing up of our educational systems.

Next to this, perhaps, the most urgent need of the American farmer is economic justice, including a sweeping reduction, if not a complete removal, of that gigantic fulcrum of extortion known as the protective tariff, which is maintained ostensibly in the interests of American labor, but really for the enrichment of the American manufacturer, especially the monopolist. It is strange that the American people should not long ago have realized that any advantage conferred by a high protective tariff on the American laborer had to be made up by the American consumer, and in that way must cost at least as much as it contributed; but our Southern neighbors, astute though they are in ordinary matters of business, are so enmeshed in the illusions of protection that the great majority fail utterly to comprehend the first principles of economics, as applied to state and international affairs, and it would seem that a great school of Henry Georges will be needed to emancipate them from the thralldom of their own delusions. Meantime, the city industries, favored as they are by the concentrated force of steam and other modern facilities, are bolstered by tariffs, at the expense of the great producing interests, among which agriculture ranks first, while the artificially-augmented profits of the fostered industries accrue not to the laborer, as is supposed, but to the bloated capitalist, who fattens and waxes rich several times as fast as he ought. Discussion of the subject of fiscal policy is complicated by the fact that, in some few instances, as in the case of the wool duties, the farmer is apparently advantaged to a slight extent by the policy of protection; but in the main, the effect of the American protective tariff hinders the farmer far more than it helps. Given a rational schooling, and a fair field economically, the agriculturist will work out his own salvation.

There are still farming sections in Canada where too great an area of valuable land is devoted to snake-rail fences and the production of rail-fence crops. By enlarging the fields and straightening the fences, more and cleaner crops can be grown, with a greatly-lessened labor bill.

HOW EDUCATION PAYS.

It is agreed that in every walk of life education pays. Naturally, the greater the extent to which business duties enter into the operations, the more thorough should be the education. But, for those occupations which may seem to demand a minimum of learning, as well as for what are spoken of as the learned professions, it is admitted by all who follow the various industries that education pays. The educated man has more highly-developed reasoning powers, he puts more thought into his every work, he has realized the value of time, he has learned to consider every operation from a business standpoint, and he has, withal, at least in most cases, learned to deal honestly and squarely with his neighbors. Little or no labor is wasted, there is a purpose behind every move, soils are studied in their relationship to crops desired, and cultivation is regulated by the nature of the season. It is due consideration for these points that brings the most out of farming. Only by the use of brains, as well as muscle, can any occupation be made what it should be.

It may be difficult to give a close estimate on the saving that results from an exercise of thoughtfulness on the farm. But the labors of the farmer are of such nature that they demand more study than is required of many other workmen. Take the fireman on a railway engine. At first thought, one would say that all he is called upon to do is to shovel coal. The managements of railways, however, realize that some firemen use more coal than others. They have realized that, even in firing an engine, education pays. A comparatively insignificant railway company in the United States was so convinced of this fact that a minimum standard, corresponding to about third-class in our public schools, was set for the educational training of the firemen employed. In one year the saving of coal amounted to \$10,000. Where illiterate firemen had by carelessness and thoughtlessness wasted coal, the man with education knew enough to follow instructions, never putting in too much, and not letting it run too low.

If such saving is possible on an engine, where the range of work is so limited, how much more should be the saving from the numerous duties connected with the management of an ordinary farm! An educational standard of third-class taught firemen to use brains along with muscle. What are the possibilities of increasing the returns from Canadian farms, by having a minimum standard of fourth-class in public school for those who do the work?

While it admittedly is impossible to have such standard for farm help, every farmer can do his share in hastening the day when it will be approached. Boys who unavoidably have been kept from school during the rush of the summer months, should not be detained during the winter. They need all the schooling they can get. If it has been found impossible to send those who already have a fair education for a regular course in an agricultural college, perhaps they can be spared for a couple of weeks at a shorter session. There are now many means whereby the farmer and his son can derive an education that will be of value to him. For those who have reached the days when school and college may be considered out of the question, ample sources of instruction are still at hand. Conventions and exhibitions in the interests of horticulture, live stock, dairying and grain-growing continue throughout the winter. Then, there are Institute meetings and farmers' clubs, and the easily-accessible agricultural papers and bulletins, and reports of colleges and experiment stations. Something can be learned from each.

Yes, education pays. It may mean the sacrifice of a little cash on the part of the parent, or of a little pleasure on the part of the son, but, after a few years, there will be no regrets to discuss. Education of the fireman kept down expenses on the railway, and education of those who till the soil and feed the stock will keep down expenses and also increase the returns on the farm.

RURAL POLICE FORCES.

A call for more stringent measures in keeping down crime, have demanded changes in rural constabulary forces in different parts of America. As was pointed out in a recent issue of "The Farmer's Advocate," the Ontario constabulary system is obsolete, the reward to officers on the fee principle, the lack of organization, and the absence of expert skill or knowledge in handling criminals being largely responsible for the increase of crime in the rural districts of the Province during the past few years. Little or no restraint on those criminally inclined follows, for they consider they have fair chances of escape.

In the State of Pennsylvania, a workable and efficient force of State police was established in May, 1905. The superintendent is appointed by the Governor of the State, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to serve for four years. He is asked to give bond in the sum of \$20,000 for faithful performance of duties. Offices and office staff are provided in the State capitol, Harrisburg. He is authorized to appoint the State police force, consisting of four companies, each comprising a captain, a lieutenant, five sergeants, and fifty men. No applicant is accepted until he has passed a physical and mental examination, based on standards of city police forces, and proves to be of sound constitution, of good moral character, able to ride, between the ages of 21 and 40, and a citizen of the United States.

Suitable uniforms, arms, equipments and horses (where necessary) are supplied. Local headquarters at various central points are established, so that the force can be distributed to best advantage. Members have authority to make arrests without warrant, and to serve and execute warrants issued by local authorities. In addition, they are empowered to act as forest, fire, fish and game wardens, and, in general, to have the power and prerogatives conferred by law on members of city police or rural constable forces.

The report of the superintendent, Capt. John C. Groome, for 1907, shows the extent of the work done. It says: "During the year the force has been constantly on duty patrolling the State, mounted and dismounted, and has travelled 332,094 miles, visiting 886 towns or boroughs in 51 counties, and has made 4,388 arrests for 54 different crimes or misdemeanors. Sub-sections, with two to ten men, were established during the year in 40 localities, the men remaining at a station from a week to three months, according to conditions and amount of work required."

A recapitulation of the duties performed outlines briefly the nature of the work. Law and order were maintained; illegal hunting and fishing were suppressed; forest fires were fought; sanitary laws and quarantines were enforced; riots due to strikes were quelled; disorderly houses were raided; "Black Hand" Society members were captured; every form of crime or lawlessness was followed closely.

This form of State police has proved efficient. It—or, at least, some modification, to suit existing conditions—would be a vast improvement on that now in vogue throughout Ontario.