

HON. SIDNEY FISHER: I spent twenty-five years of my life on a farm; but it does not seem very long since I was a student myself; but a student under very different conditions and circumstances from those in which you are placed. From my earliest recollections, it was my desire to be a farmer; what put it into my head I cannot tell, except [for the fondness for animals. I went to England to college, and there I passed three or four of the happiest years of my life, in one sense, and yet in another they were useless years. I went to college determined to be a farmer. I learned a great deal which I am glad to know; yet at the same time I was very deficient in that education which I would have received in these College halls, and received an education which necessarily almost led me into one of the learned professions, instead of leading me to the farm. You have far better opportunities than I had. Young men who wish to become farmers have great advantages in this beautiful Province of Ontario, in which is situated this magnificent institution, which makes Canadians throughout the entire Dominion envy this Province. Here you have practical training and receive a scientific education, such as will be useful to you in after life.

Reference has been made to-night to the Minister of Agriculture for your Province being a practical man. I am glad to know this. We need more of such men in this country. I am pleased with the wonderful progress that this institution has made. When the ex-students return to it, they get ideas which enables them to keep abreast of the times. There has been a great deal of prejudice against men of scientific education. Science is simply knowledge, and can be applied to the practical business of life. Some people think that time spent in the study of scientific agriculture is a waste of time; but the successful men of to-day are those who can bring a scientific education to bear on the practical conditions and circumstances of every-day life. Practical application is absolutely necessary.

It has been said to-night that the conditions of agriculture are changing. In years gone by almost any man could farm. All he had to do was to plow the ground and sow the grain; then wait for the crop. But the soil is not so fertile to-day and the soil requires more careful treatment, and more knowledge in its treatment is absolutely necessary. To-day this College and similar colleges are the sources from which this knowledge must come. Years ago people with educational attainments were very scarce—even people who could keep books and write well were scarce. In later years people have rushed into this employment; and we find that this class of people in our large cities have hard work to make a bare living.

I cannot speak too highly of these Agricultural Colleges, and only wish that we had more of them in other parts of this country. Here you have agriculture taught practically in this beautifully equipped College. It is a new development in comparison with our high schools and universities, but it is only a response to the demands of the people of the country. I hope that the effect of this College will be felt all over the country, and that you will continue to send men out who are well equipped to carry on their life work. For some years I have found that our greatest difficulty in connection with our dairy and agricultural associations is the lack of men to go out and teach our own people. Agriculture is being neglected in our public schools, and our teachers are not capable of teaching it. We cannot have agriculture taught in our public schools until we furnish our teachers with a scientific education, and such institutions as these are the centres where such an education can be given.

HON. JOHN DRYDEN: One of the speakers in his remarks said he came into the room to-night with feelings of gladness and also feelings of jealousy. That remark of his leads me to say that I came into the room to-night with feelings of pride and feelings of jealousy. I do not know that I ever had more pride in my life than when I walked into this room to night. Dr. Mills has, no doubt, also felt the same feeling. Never before have I evidenced more of the feeling of pride in connection with this institution than I have done to-night.

When I look into the faces of these students and ex-students, the thought comes to me that I am looking into the faces of some of the future statesmen of this country, and this helps me to say what I am going to say.

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