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## EDITORIAL.

### TECHNICAL EDUCATION IN NOVA SCOTIA.

The laying of the corner stone for a Technical College, at Halifax, on August 20th, marks a most important step in the adaptation of public education in Nova Scotia to the vital needs of the people, as well as to the obvious economic and social interests of the State. It evinces a very decided trend in favor of the position so strenuously maintained through these columns, that educational work should be made as effectively useful as possible, and that the finest culture is likely to be developed in the mastery and useful application of the untamed forces of nature, in conjunction with the cultivation of the language and literature which is the heir of the virtues of all those of preceding ages.

Thanks largely to her academical and classical ideals of education, Nova Scotia has been "long" on scholars, professors and university presidents, of whom she has trained quite a surplus for export, but "short" on expert farmers, skilled craftsmen, civil engineers, and practical chieftains of industrial enterprise. An agricultural college is contributing much to agriculture, directly and indirectly. The introduction of manual training into the public schools should promote handicraft, and the new Technical College should ultimately provide a class of men equipped to grapple with the industrial problems of the Province, and transform potentialities into actualities, thereby laying a broad base of intelligent, prosperous population, from and amid which literature, culture, science, art, and all the estimable fruitages of advanced civilization may flourish. They never flourish adequately among a community which neglects its material development, for the intellectual and social life of such a community is continually sapped by disheartening emigration, and such genius as it produces forsakes its shores for more alluring fields abroad.

The Province of Nova Scotia, with a population of barely half a million, is over-well supplied with colleges laying claim to university distinction, but they are not co-ordinated nor adequately equipped to serve and assist the material development of the Province. A generation ago an attempt was made to co-ordinate the universities—six in number—into a Provincial university, of the general character of that of London, to be called the University of Halifax, but the scheme fell through, owing to unwillingness of certain colleges to surrender their degree-conferring power to the federated university. Since then, rivalry, denominational interests, and inability of the Province to aid each institution sufficiently, have stood in the way of an attempt to introduce technical education on a scale commensurate with its importance. Nevertheless, annual grants to public education have risen to \$300,000, and to this the Province is now adding this Technical College, with the prospect of harnessing all the universities together in due co-ordination with each other, and in affiliation with the public educational system of the Province. Speaking on the occasion referred to at the outset of this article, A. H. McKay, Superintendent of Education for Nova Scotia, stated that, "The institution whose corner stone has just been laid, will not only be the natural cap-stone of a large section of our elementary and secondary educational structure, but it is being organized to cap the first two years of a growing portion of the work of our universities, thus annexing a very considerable section of them to the enlarged educational system of the Province."

"In this new institution," he said, "our

young men will be given power to smite the rocks, out of which will pour gold for the benevolent worker and the artistic dreamer; coal for the warming of our winter, gas for the machines which run to and fro, and the universal ether will be trained to light his way and to carry his messages and his merchandise. Every magician graduated from this temple of the white arts will create hundreds of livings for others in our own country; will build up many positions of leisure for the thinkers, the prophets, priests and patrons; and possibly discover some wealth for the delectation and spiritual uplift of society in general. That this work can be undertaken without reducing the grants to the other branches of education, is a matter for national thanksgiving. May the people of Nova Scotia ever continue to harmoniously co-operate in further developing an educational system which will train our people to be useful, and lay a foundation for the fuller growth of the personal and patriotic virtues, and for the enjoyment of their rewards."

### ALASKA WHEAT.

A few weeks since, we were startled to read, in one of the leading American weeklies about a wonderful new wheat raised in Idaho from a single head, said to have been imported a few years ago from Alaska. Pictures were printed showing a sample with berries two or three times the size of ordinary wheat grains. The milling qualities were declared to be equal to the Bluestem variety, according to alleged tests at the Idaho Experiment Station. Either spring or autumn sowing was successful, while the yield was marvellous beyond all belief, two hundred bushels to the acre being declared possible under average conditions.

Realizing the preposterous nature of the claims made, and suspecting that someone was working a publicity game to make sale for a quantity of seed wheat at fancy prices, we at once wrote to the Experiment Station at Moscow, Idaho, and in due time received the following reply, substantially confirming our suspicions:

"Replying to your letter of inquiry concerning a variety of wheat raised by Mr. A. Adams, of Juliaetta, Idaho, reports current in the newspapers regarding enormous yields said to be possible from 'Alaska Wheat,' are absurd. It is true, I believe, that this wheat is capable of yielding much higher than other well-known varieties of wheat, if given a proper chance. But, apparently, figures upon which these reports are based were given by Mr. Adams from results obtained on very small areas. The Experiment Station does not vouch for their correctness, and has not had anything to do with the production of this wheat. Its quality is much in doubt, although, during the summer of 1907, a chemical analysis of what was said to be the same variety of wheat was made in the chemical laboratory of the Experiment Station, and, from figures so obtained, as well as from the physical characteristics of the samples, the wheat was pronounced good, the composition of the sample analyzed being quite similar to that of our best milling wheats. The owner was advised, however, not to rely exclusively upon such tests, but to bring in a quantity sufficient for milling, and then perfectly reliable information could be given him. This milling test, thus far, he has failed to have had made, and, therefore, the quality of the wheat in question should be considered as doubtful, until the chemical analysis is supplemented by milling and baking tests.

"J. S. JONES, Station Chemist."

Enclosed with the letter was a copy of a circular issued by the Director, H. T. French, explaining that the Experiment Station is being

overwhelmed with communications regarding the so-called Alaska Wheat, claimed to have been originated by Mr. Adams, of Juliaetta, and advertised under the firm name of Adams-Hobe Seed Grain Co., Juliaetta, Idaho. With reference to a couple of widely-quoted paragraphs stating that the yield and quality had been backed up by the Idaho Station, Mr. French very pointedly says that this is not true, except to the extent that the Station Chemist, Mr. J. S. Jones, analyzed a sample of wheat brought to this station by Mr. Adams in 1907, and said to be of this variety, and which proved to be a very good wheat in so far as indicated by a chemical analysis. The Chemist stated that, "Judging from the chemical and physical condition of this sample, it would rank with the best grade of Bluestem for flour-making purposes." This statement might be misleading, unless taken in connection with explanations of the analysis made Mr. Adams at that time which were to the effect that the milling qualities of any wheat could be definitely settled only from results of a milling test. The yields, as stated by Mr. Adams, are made up from small areas, which must be considered in computing results.

Since writing the above, we learn that this wheat has since been pronounced by Prof. Olin, Agronomist, Colorado Experiment Station, as identical with old Egyptian Seven-headed or Mummy wheat, a soft spring wheat, against which farmers are warned. It is alleged to have been renamed for exploitation at \$5 a pound, or \$20 a bushel. It is not the first time an old variety has been given a new name and a fancy price.

### SELECT SEED CORN ON THE STALK.

Opportunity of large profit and great satisfaction lies ready to hand in the improvement of the corn plant, especially as regards yield and hardiness. Of all farm crops, corn can be most readily and easily improved by selection, for the reason that each individual plant bears so many kernels, and each sound, well-formed, well-matured kernel has in it the embryo of a plant which will be valuable or not, according to its inherited tendencies. Thus, a few speedily-selected plants will furnish sufficient seed to plant an acre, whereas, to obtain sufficient seed wheat or oats to sow an acre, a far larger number of parent plants would have to be chosen. Every corn-growing farmer, in a region where corn occasionally matures, should grow every year, on the best part of his farm, and entirely removed from the main corn crop, a seed-corn patch. As a beginning, select this year, from the best part of the cornfield, a number of the best stalks bearing large but regular, well-formed and typical ears of the variety giving promise of maturing in good time. Mark these, and let them stand until as fully ripe as it is safe to leave them, then harvest separately, husk, and reselect a few of the best ears to put away for the seed-corn patch next year. Of course, we are assuming that the field has all been planted with a single variety, that there has been no chance for it to be crossed by another variety in an adjacent field; that the crop is a good one, and the variety a desirable one for the district. No matter how good, it may be improved by judicious selection.

Even supposing that the corn thus set aside should be occasionally spoiled by frost, one is no worse off than if he had not made the attempt, except for the loss of a few hours of interesting labor. To guard against such interruption to the work of improvement, however, it is well to carry over each summer enough spare corn to plant a seed-corn patch the following spring.