

One of the distinguishing features of the agriculture of to-day is the rise of co-operative associations. In Ontario we have had agricultural societies ever since the Province was organized, and for nearly seventy years legislative grants have been made for their encouragement. But the societies for discussion of agricultural topics, for interchange of ideas, and for teaching or instruction by experts are of recent origin. We have associations of the owners and breeders of all the leading breeds of live stock. We have a Fruit Growers' Association, associations also of the poultry keepers and of the bee-keepers, an association of experimenters, two associations of the dairymen, and an Entomological Society. All these, through their many meetings, and the hundreds of meetings of Farmers Institutes, have quickened the minds of the workers. Supplementing these meetings, reports and bulletins have been distributed by the hundreds of thousands in the past ten years. But the point that I wish to make here is that the persons principally benefited by this work are the men and women of mature years. This is all very well in its way. These men appreciate thoroughly what is being done; they recognize the importance and the necessity of this instruction—but is it not beginning at the wrong end? Why should the farming class of this country have to wait until they become men before they learn that there is a science underlying their practice? If it is a good thing to educate a grown man or a grown woman in the principles of agricultural work, it is still more important, as far as practicable, to give the boy and the girl some training in these principles early in life, at the time when these principles are most easily acquired, and when they will be of most permanent benefit. I, therefore, have no hesitation in answering my first question by saying that agriculture in some form

should be taught to the pupils of our schools.

2. When and Where should it be Taught?

Most persons, I think, are of the opinion that some instruction in agriculture should be given to pupils in rural schools, since they assume that these pupils are to be the future farmers. They are not, in general, of the opinion that the teaching should be given in towns and city schools, because the pupils of such schools are likely to move out into professional pursuits, become school teachers, enter mercantile life, or follow some one of the many manufacturing lines of life. They are not quite sure that all pupils in rural schools even should be taught agriculture, as so many are yearly coming from the country to the town to reinforce the struggling city classes with new blood and new physique. Right here I would present a deplorable statement. If agriculture can be taught in our schools in a manner such as I will suggest in my next division, I am of the opinion that it should be on the course of study for town and city pupils as well as on the course for rural pupils. Perhaps in city and town schools it might be made optional, but in rural schools it should be obligatory. The present situation is that, with very few exceptions, all town and city pupils will remain in city and town pursuits, and the country schools are also being annually drained of the majority of the brightest and most promising. But this, I contend, is not a very promising feature of our country's growth. It may be due in some part to the very nature of our present system. That I shall not here discuss. If we can, by altering or rearranging our system, keep more of the best rural pupils in touch and work with agriculture, and if we can at the same time arouse in some of the towns and city pupils a sympathy for agri-