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EDITORIAL.

Plant Trees.

The late Governor Morton, of Nebraska, had a motto, "Plant Trees," which he had engraved on his stationery, and which was his constant hobby. Invariably it was his last injunction when bidding his friends farewell. The interest in tree-planting on the prairie which this motto aroused resulted in one of the most pleasing and redeeming features of that western State, namely, its groves, wind-breaks and rows of trees.

The inestimable value of trees, from an aesthetic standpoint, is not as generally appreciated by farmers as appears desirable. Many grown-up people become accustomed to bare, bleak landscape, and come to regard such a condition as most valuable, because it is evidence, in many cases, of a wide stretch of unbroken fertile land. But upon the children and young people who do not esteem land mainly for its practical value, but whose minds are susceptible to and influenced by the beauty of a varying landscape, the absence of the company of the trees and the birds which they invite is depressing and dwarfing. Children, and older people too, in order to attain their best development, must live as much as possible in constant touch with nature's best conditions. The home, in order that it may retain the attachment of those who call it such, must be not merely a well-arranged pile of brick, or stone, or wood, but must be surrounded by natural adornments, such as orchard, flowers, and trees, which please the eye and furnish a degree of seclusion and comfort not possible without trees.

Probably the particular class of plantation most neglected is wind-breaks and groves. There has been evidenced in some districts a considerable appreciation of the worth of trees by the planting of scattered individuals along roadside fences, for the purpose of shade for stock and of beautifying the farm, but for its value as a protection of the homestead from the prevailing winds, and afterwards its market value, the advantages of planting a grove are far in excess of what its infrequent appearance might lead one to suspect. Its mere monetary value, through the comfort afforded farm stock, and by protecting the dwelling from the penetrating winds, is of no inconsiderable moment. It also furnishes a habitat for birds, which prey upon the injurious insects of the garden and orchard. Its inception and maintenance is a mere trifle in this country, where land is comparatively plentiful, and the more general planting of such groves and wind-breaks would be an indication of the stability which our agricultural status has attained. Everyone who has ever traversed a typical Canadian forest, either in winter or summer, need not be reminded of the peculiar exhilarating influence it imparts; then why not surround the home with a plantation of maple, beech, elm, pine, spruce, cedar, and all the other trees indigenous to any particular district, a procedure which will well repay its cost in added comfort and pleasure, to say nothing of its tendency to increase the selling value of a farm, if for any reason its sale is determined upon? It is not too late to plant trees of many varieties, and we counsel all who can to do what they can along this line of improvement.

"Subscriber" writes: No matter how busy a man is, fifteen minutes spent reading the "Advocate" after dinner is time gained, not lost.

Consolidated Rural Schools, and the New Education.

The educational movements going on in Nova Scotia deservedly command attention, and will make their impress on its future citizens. The manual-training sentiment is growing. In the common school grades alone, the number of pupils taking mechanic science increased last year from 952 to 1,391, domestic science from 678 to 1,048, needlework from 2,803 to 3,048, and so on. The school gardens increased from 24 to 52. At Middleton, in the County of Annapolis, the consolidation of rural schools is being tested through the public spirit of Sir William C. Macdonald and the genius of Prof. Jas. W. Robertson, who is the administrator of this benefaction. Seven school sections around the town of Middleton have federated for three years, on condition of contributing to the consolidated school board annually a sum raised by local assessment, equal to the average for the three years beginning August 1st, 1899, the balance beyond the regular public school grants being provided by Sir William C. Macdonald, to demonstrate the value of consolidation, involving the conveyance of pupils from the usual walking limit of two miles. Each of the seven sections had a single teacher, and Middleton had three. Federation went into effect last August, and eleven two-horse vans were provided for collecting the pupils. Pending the completion of the new building, temporary accommodation was used. The new school is of brick, stone faced, with a roomy basement, asphalted to make a play room in wet weather. The attic contains a general assembly room, where meetings can be held and entertainments given (the pupils raising money to purchase a piano). On the first and second floors there are four teaching rooms each, two of them intended for two branches of manual training. The warming and ventilation arrangements are practically perfect, and there are laboratories, library, class and cloak rooms. Outside there are walks, shrubbery and flowers, and the school gardens. With an efficient staff and a comfortable rig to ride to and from school, any one can see that all this means a complete transformation in rural school life, from a condition in many cases disheartening, alike to teachers and scholars. The Superintendent of Education, Dr. A. H. Mackay, reports the attendance as greatly improved, being over 90 per cent. during most of the past season. Despite unprecedented snow, and even blizzards, the van service was good, and referring to one very stormy Tuesday, the Superintendent says it was surprising that so many came on time, and none very late. Every van was practically full, there being few absentees from a distance of three, four and five miles. The absentees were principally for the central Middleton section, where the pupils attend on foot.

A very generous sentiment towards the project is being manifested. The people find that they are getting something better, as far as school accommodations are concerned, than they had imagined possible. At the opening exercises in February the hall was thronged with over 600 people, and the names of Sir William and Prof. Robertson when mentioned by the speakers were cheered to the echo. Superintendent Mackay says these experiments constitute the grandest thing that has ever been done for education by any man in the history of the Province. "Dr. Robertson," he adds, "is one of the few able men who see the importance of nature-study in the development of an understanding of the conditions by which we are surrounded. The most perfect mechanical drill

in spelling, writing and arithmetic may leave a person merely a useful tool in an office; but to make thinking, understanding and useful individuals, children should be taught how to get at the facts and meaning of their surroundings; and the habit of self-control and the power of will-direction should be incidentally developed in the method. This element of education is considered most likely to produce a love for the industrial occupations, and to supply the individual with the power of mastering the scientific principles underlying them, as in agriculture, so as to make them most productive with the least expenditure."

At Kingston, N.B., a consolidated school movement is under way, and about a week ago Prof. Robertson was at Guelph, Ont., where four school sections are uniting, and a consolidated school to demonstrate the advantages of the system will be erected on the fine site which he purchased for the purpose just between the new Macdonald Institute and the Brock road, which the Ontario Agricultural College overlooks.

Milk and Meat.

Of all the varied products of the farm, those named at the head of this article are the most important, and, on the whole, the most profitable, since they are not only always in demand and always salable, but because by the processes of their production the fertility of the land is maintained and its ability to produce paying crops increased. Milk is declared by scientists to be the most complete food available, being at once palatable, wholesome and nutritious, and promoting health, strength and vigor. Physicians prescribe it for the upbuilding of run-down patients—experience proves its pre-eminent virtues in this regard, and city people are buying it more largely than ever before.

Butter is an indispensable accompaniment of our daily bread, and if withheld would be missed more than any other article of food, barring the bread itself, while our cheese ranks as the greatest export revenue producer the Dominion can boast, totalling over \$20,000,000 annually.

Next to milk and its products, our beef, bacon, mutton and poultry are our greatest sources of revenue, and the milk of cows plays a prominent part in the profitable production of at least the two of these first mentioned, providing, besides its golden gift of cream, a wholesome and nourishing food for calves and pigs, which serves to grow them into good money value, our export bacon trade having increased in the last ten years from one million to twelve millions of dollars. And meat will always be wanted to satisfy the craving appetites of hungry human beings, who, in proportion to their financial ability, will buy the best they can afford. The rapidly-increasing population of our own country by immigration will greatly enlarge the home demand for live stock and its products, as the new settlers will for years be mainly engaged in grain-growing, and will gradually become buyers of breeding stock from the farmers of the older Provinces, while the growing cities and towns will provide ever enlarging markets for milk, and meat and the products of poultry.

While these are commodities produced in greater or less quantity, and of varying quality, on almost every farm, it is certain that on many the quality is not such as will bring the best price, nor the quantity such as to render their production as profitable as would be the case were better stock kept and more intelligent and up-to-date methods employed. It has never been the policy