

Much good and lasting work can be done in agricultural education by the farmers' institutes, winter meetings, &c., of which excellent illustrations may be found in Connecticut, Massachusetts, Michigan, and other states. But at their best the lectures and discussions reach only a small portion of the farming population, and that the most educated; indirectly the boys and girls are influenced, but there is comparatively little that their young minds can grasp. These gatherings are for grown people, and as such are to be greatly encouraged.

Too much stress cannot be laid upon the educational work that can be done for the young by the various state and county fairs, and other agricultural exhibitions.

There are strong advocates for a wider and better knowledge of agriculture through the medium of the common schools. Doubtless if we had the teachers which such a claim pre-supposes, much might be done. There is very little agriculture that can well replace any part of the school instruction of the average scholar in the common schools. The claims of reading, writing, spelling and arithmetic—the fundamentals of all education—come first. Give the masses the foundation principles of education, and upon them let each person build his or her technical education. The common schools, as the name implies, are for all, irrespective of future occupation, and should give the best possible education common to all. This leaves but very little room for agriculture, mechanics, or, in fact, any of the arts.

There are schools that are established especially to impart a knowledge of agriculture; they are doing a good work, and their influence is widely felt, but it does not seem that they are directly for the masses. Where one young man graduates from an agricultural college, a thousand others never see the inside of its walls. Many boys do not go to college because they cannot; others because they have not been raised to that state of mind to appreciate the stores of knowledge that are within their reach. Even the success of the institutions for the higher agricultural education of the people depends upon the more thorough knowledge of agriculture among the masses.

The agricultural press is doing much for the elevation of the farming class, enabling the farmer to become a wiser man, and therefore better able to till his soil intelligently. There is vastly more than can be done in this branch of the means and methods of agricultural advancement. It seems as if there is a field here that is yet but imperfectly tilled; rich ground that has been but little worked.

In the very blaze of the burning fact that the children are eager to learn, yes, even gasping after knowledge when that knowledge is placed before them in the

proper shape, let the writer ask this question: How many of the professors in our agricultural colleges write for the boys and girls? Is it because the boys and girls cannot be interested in the principles and facts taught in the school-room, and exemplified in the grain fields and the dairy? Cannot the Youths' Department of every agricultural paper be made a very potent portion of the journal, by filling it with plain and simple matters of farm life in such a way that every child who reads will be interested? With but slight experience in agricultural journalism, the fact seems clear to the writer that the children are eager to read on almost any subject, provided the thoughts are clothed in simple language. If the way is made easy the farmer's boy and girl will follow. Children respond very freely when any proper attention is paid to their inquisitive natures. He who can answer a child's question in a simple, childlike way, is always held in high esteem by the youth, and it may be said, will never lack for questions for them to answer. He can tell them of many interesting and wonderful things, and these are just the ones about which the children are anxious to know.

The child's paper, or "Children's Corner," comes next to such a friend when it treats of simple subjects in a clear and simple way, the writer remembering how blindly he or she saw things when a child, and endeavoring to make the same subjects appear clear to the young readers. The "Youths' Department" can do more than simply instruct. By a system of seed distribution, prizes for the best crops raised, and in many other ways, an interest, and enthusiasm even, can be raised that will go far towards removing any tendency that may exist for the boy to leave the quiet of farm life for the bustle and stir of the city.

If we are to have a truly educated farming class, that education must begin early in life; and there seems to be no more satisfactory way of reaching the children than through the "Youths' Department" of the farm and household journals. With these papers abounding in interesting and instructive matter, the thousands of farmers' boys and girls may at their firesides, oftentimes with their parents as readers, store their minds with knowledge that will make them love the farm and dignify the calling of the farmer.

Then, notwithstanding the great value of all agricultural meetings, with their lectures and discussions and private talks, the various fairs and exhibitions, and the colleges and common schools, we at last come back to the home on the farm, and there find the place for a great educational work by means of the Children's Department of the family papers, a department which deals with farm life, farm science, and farm art, in fact, farm

work, in a way that every child whom the parents are anxious to have come into possession of all that they have acquired in knowledge or estate, will gladly read, and add to the inheritance as much as within it lies.

I cannot close this brief paper without appealing to all writers on agriculture to look more to the young mind, that, in the receptive and plastic state, is so eager to be instructed, though sadly lacking the educational food and mental training which will help it all along the pathway of life. As you love your children, and teach them the simple truths of nature and of right living, think of the tens of thousands not so favorably circumstanced by parentage, and reach out the hand to help them through the *Juvenile Agricultural Journal*.

Do not farmers' boys and girls deserve more than they get in their newspaper reading? I hope, Mr. President, this topic is worthy of the consideration of the Society that is organized for the Promotion of Agricultural Science. I only wish I could suggest it in a more forcible and satisfactory manner.—*From the Journal of the American Agricultural Association.*

NORTH-WEST NOTES.

As I suppose the mind's eye of many readers of the *Agricultural Gazette*, personally interested in information relative to the North-West Territories of the Dominion of Canada, is now turned towards that hitherto "Great Lone Land" once ruled by the Hudson's Bay Company, a few notes relative to agricultural prospects in general throughout that vast domain, will very possibly prove interesting and perhaps instructive.

Emigrants from the older provinces are already pouring into it, especially from Ontario; in fact, it has almost become a standing joke to ask a person whether he has yet taken the "Winnipeg fever." Some will doubtless be successful; it is to be hoped many; but the press, where not swayed by political animus, hesitates not to assert that "all is not gold that glitters," even in the North-West, as read the following:—"A correspondent of the *St. John Globe* warns intending emigrants to bring tents with them, or abundance of money to pay the exorbitant charges levied on strangers." This advice was given a month or more since present date (March 41), when other advices state that thousands of immigrants are snow-blocked in Winnipeg, and shifting as best they can in tents and extemporised shanties, with the thermometer where Englishmen never (at home) see it, and the cost of living only comparable with that of a besieged city.

It is also more than ever necessary for immigrants to keep their eyes "skinned;"