

Experimental Union.



THE eighteenth annual meeting of the Ontario Agricultural and Experimental Union was held at the College, December 10th and 11th, 1896. The attendance was large, the number of ex-students being greater than in any preceding year. The addresses were excellent, and the discussions lively. One thing noticeable was the number of persons with note books in hand who jotted down any new ideas contained in the papers.

Thursday morning was spent by the visitors in a tour of inspection through the different departments. The afternoon session was held in the large upper room of the Experimental building which was comfortably filled, the number present being nearly three hundred. In his opening address, President Lick referred to the fact that the Union was a pioneer in the particular department of experiment work which is carried on under its supervision, and that its operations were the most extensive of any. The object of the Union was not to oppose the seedsmen in their business but to co-operate with them. The question of securing an increased grant or limiting the number of experiments was laid before the meeting, as it was desirable that action should be taken upon the matter at once.

Prof. J. H. Panton presented the report of the committee on Economic Botany and Entomology. It consisted of a summary of the replies given to questions submitted to farmers throughout the Province on troublesome insects and weeds. The list of weeds remained much the same from year to year, but new ones which had appeared in some localities and were likely to be injurious were: Perennial Sow Thistle, Bind Weed (*Convolvulus arvensis*), Prickly Lettuce, Penny-cress, False Flax, and Worm-seed Mustard. The insects which had attracted notice by their ravages during the past season were the Army Worm, Tussock Moth, Hessian Fly, Canker Worm and the Aphis on the oat. The Horn Fly did not seem to be increasing, and in some parts was reported to be on the decrease.

Mr. T. F. Paterson noted the fact that the replies from ex-students were generally accurate and valuable.

Dr. Mills said that the farms along the railway from Guelph to Toronto were becoming badly infested with Mustard, and around the O. A. C. many of the fields were so overrun with the same pest that he was ashamed to take foreign visitors around the neighborhood. Farmers cannot afford to grow a double crop on their fields, one of which was of no value in itself and detracted much from the profit of the other.

Mr. Rawlings, of Forest, gave a remedy for Wild Mustard, which he had tried with success. English Mustard was sown in the infested fields with the result that the Wild Mustard was entirely smothered. Cows were pastured on it and the flow of milk was doubled. He also used the same mustard to sow in strips among the rape: this would obviate the danger of lambs bloating when turned on in the fall.

Prof. Day as chairman of the Live Stock Committee, presented their report. From 363 blanks sent to leading dairymen all over Ontario, to learn their experience and more especially their feeding

ration, 170 replies had been received. From these a chart had been prepared, and by the aid of it Mr. Day demonstrated that, while we might be able to improve our present feeding system, the individuality of the cow must be taken into consideration in every case. Of the 170 replies, 142 reported trouble from the horn fly. The Professor's remarks were tersely presented, and the audience very attentive.

Alex. Yuill, '92, Carleton Place, followed, and his Scotch humor made his remarks especially interesting. With regard to dehorning, Mr. Yuill gave some good advice. Personally he is against the practice, but says that if he followed it he would use the saw and not dehorn any animal until it was two years old. Dehorning when too young makes muleys that would learn to hunt.

Prof. Thorne stated that a darkened stable was the only sure check to the horn fly.

Mr. Rennie, who feeds the live stock on the O. A. C. Farm on the most economical principles, and, as he said, endeavors to make it a truly Model Farm in this respect, gave his experience in feeding. In the first place he never wanted a man who professed to be experienced and knew all about it. He wanted one who was willing to learn, who loved his animals and treated them kindly. He would always have a balanced ration of chaff, silage and roots which was prepared beforehand and steamed. In this pile—made on floor—the action of the ensilage and roots caused the steaming of the whole. No grain fed except the corn contained in the silage, in 14 tons of which 4 tons were ears. The animals were fed early—5 o'clock in the morning. The early rising man would succeed best. Given just what they would eat in an hour. Always aimed to feed for health of animal. Were fed again in evening. The steers got 45 lbs. of the mixture a day; the milk cows got about 6 lbs. mangolds and some bran in addition. On buying his steers in the fall he would always feed them rape at noon for a couple of months.

When not working, the horses were fed on the same ration as that for the steers. They usually work 8 months. To keep them for the year it costs him \$52 each. This ration was particularly useful when there was a scarcity of hay in winter.

The sheep were usually fed on clover, roots and bean meal, and he also aimed to give them pea-straw for one meal at least. Plenty of moisture with the food was essential. They always got rape in July. The pens were cleaned out often to get rid of the poisonous gas. Had formerly lost several sheep by their getting wool in stomach, but this was now avoided by giving plenty of succulent food. They were usually sheared by the end of April, and also dipped twice a year—usually in July and October.

The pigs were fed usually on roots and bran, which was boiled in winter but not in summer. When any grain was fed it was usually in the form of crushed screening or bran.

AN OPEN MEETING.

In the evening an open meeting of the Experimental Union was held in the Convocation Hall of the Agricultural College. The immense hall was crowded despite the inclement weather. President Mills presided and on the platform were seated Hon. John Dryden, Mrs. J. Hoodless, of Hamilton; Mr. C. E. Thorne, director Agri-