



The Old and the New—Hay is now loaded by machinery, and yet life on the farm is said to be less attractive, Why?

teaching both in public and high schools. The regulations already include the idea of the school-garden and we may confidently expect the widening of the area of agricultural teaching in the high schools. We may also expect the question of technical education to be definitely taken up when the data necessary are procured and analysed. But the critics are impatient and think that re-organisation or re-adjustment should come in a day.

J. M. DENYES.

Newspaper Comment.

The articles in the CANADIAN COURIER have also created considerable attention among the newspapers. The *Kingston Standard* of Nov. 8th., deals with the subject editorially and inclines to take a position somewhat similar to that of Mr. Denyes. It is not convinced that the educational system is wholly to blame. It says:—

"The Courier's article, in part, explains the desertion of the towns and villages of Ontario by the young people and the building up of the larger cities, but only in part. Only a small percentage of the boys and girls of the villages and towns of Ontario attend the high school—most of them never go higher than the public schools. Why do these latter also seek the cities? Is it not because they think they see greater opportunities in the larger places? And as a fact are there not greater opportunities in those places than in the small towns? Perhaps there is a tendency to exaggerate the evil of leaving the small places. As a fact many towns that were small twenty years ago have increased quite rapidly in population. Take for example Berlin, Brantford and Peterborough. These places have grown and grown fast in twenty years. But, if they have, they have had certain natural advantages which have been the attractive force to draw population. Enterprising citizens have, of course, their influence; but unless their influence is supplemented by these natural advantages, the smaller towns will not grow.

"The high schools have indeed been spending too much of their time and energy on culture subjects, and the Courier is right in insisting upon a change to a more practical type of school, or rather on schools that will fit boys and girls for work other than the so-called professions. This, as we understand it, is the aim of the Commission on Technical Education which will likely bear fruit in a report favouring just what the Courier advocates."—*Kingston Standard*.

The *Pickering News* is more inclined to agree with the COURIER and is strongly in favour of agricultural education of a new type. The News says:—

"There was a time when farming was synonymous with hard, slavish labour. But now, with the numerous labour saving devices the life of the farmer is shorn of most of that which was repulsive to many. With the introduction of the telephone and rural delivery the social life of the agriculturalist is as attractive as that of the town resident. And with the new innovations that are continually appearing, the attractiveness of country life will gradually increase. It cannot be said that the reason the young man leaves the farm is because it does not pay. Never was the farmer better rewarded for his labour than he is now and as he has been for the past number of years. There is no other class of men in the country who are in a better financial position to-day than the farmer. Why then does the young man pack his grip and march off to the city? It is due no doubt in a great measure to our educational system. Nowhere in our public or high schools is the science of agriculture taught in earnest. The high schools prepare the pupils only for the professions and for commercial life. When a boy enters high school he generally loses all interest in the farm, because the teaching of agriculture is neglected. It is stated that in one of the high schools in Ontario, only three pupils in a period of twenty-nine years returned to the farm from which they came. Evi-

dently what is required is a system of education that will foster a love for agricultural pursuits. We find that the graduates of the Guelph Agricultural College become enthusiastic and successful farmers. We believe that an efficient teaching of agriculture in our public and high schools would be followed by similar results."—*Pickering News*.

The Woodstock *Sentinel-Review* agrees that there has been a tendency to draw from the factory and the farm to the professions. It would not abolish high schools, but it would change the view point. In part, the editor writes:—

"What is needed, perhaps, more than anything else is a change of viewpoint as to the meaning and use of education. The young man whose higher education unfits him for work on the farm is not too highly educated but improperly educated.

"It was expected that the introduction of manual training would have the effect of counteracting some of the undesirable tendencies of the so-called higher education, by emphasizing the dignity of honest and intelligent labour and assisting towards the establishment of a new viewpoint with regard to the meaning of education. Probably it is too soon yet to enquire what the actual effect has been. The demand for technical training is a further recognition of the complaint that the educational tendencies are not just all they ought to be. Is the situation improving, or growing worse? That is the great question."

Mr. M. A. James has been discussing this subject for some time in his excellent weekly, the *Bowmanville Statesman*. Mr. James finds considerable fault with the educational system. In a recent article Mr. James outlines his platform from which we quote. In passing it may be mentioned that Mr. James' remarks were made before the COURIER's article appeared. This is an indication that the feeling in favour of agricultural high schools is fairly widespread. Indeed, it is difficult to understand just why there has been so little criticism of the present high school system. If Eastern Canada is to preserve its agricultural communities in their former greatness something must be done and done quickly. Abandoned farms mean less land under cultivation, and higher local prices for agricultural products. Further, abandoned farms mean the growth of large landed estates which is the beginning of the land evil which has created so much agitation in the United Kingdom during the past few years. It is already very easy to find farmers in Ontario who own a thousand acres of land, of which a hundred may be cultivated and the remainder kept for pasture and wood. It will not be long before millionaires will be purchasing these estates and enlarging them to provide themselves with country homes and with fish and game preserves.

Mr. James has this to say:—

"The prescribed courses of study for public schools in Ontario are not suited to present requirements of rural schools. There are too many subjects in the junior forms and too many fads in all five forms.

"Ontario contains about 145 collegiate institutes and high schools, and various other educational institutions, the chief aim and character of the curriculum or courses of study in all of which is in the direction of fitting for and sending students into the learned professions and the offices of commercial and industrial concerns. Ontario is pre-eminently an agricultural province and yet Ontario Agricultural College and Macdonald Institute at Guelph are the only exclusively high-class agricultural schools training boys and girls for the occupation of farming and for farm life. Collegiate institutes and high schools, instead of educating students for the professions and cramming the few bright ones to win glory for the teachers and these schools in departmental and university matriculation examinations, should have practical courses of

study that will educate students for all departments of farm life and thereby give them a liking for rural life and activity rather than sending a large percentage of the country boys to the cities. Am I right in my contention?"

(Continued Next Week).

Tolstoi and Canada

What may we Learn from the Art of Tolstoi?

TOLSTOI is dead. The world of newspapers has been as much agitated over this fact as though it had been the death of King Edward or of Gladstone or Abraham Lincoln. Now and then a writer pushes out with the thin line where all men are free and equal, and where the quality of man's work is not determined by his official rank. The genius of Tolstoi was essentially that of a philosophic statesman. Had he been a writer such as Shakespeare to whom kings, nobles and society were all a huge show; such as Goethe to whom poetical philosophy was more than statecraft; as Kipling, to whom facts and Imperial forces are of more interest than social conditions; he would have missed being the profoundest interpreter of modern civilisation in Europe.

With Tolstoi the idea was supreme. As a mere master of literary craft he is surpassed by many. Turgeneff, of his own country, excels him as a writer of the short story; Kipling betters him in realism; though Tolstoi has the Hugo faculty of making realism a phase of philosophy which Kipling has not. In the dominance of radical and constructive ideas, based upon a profound regard for the welfare of mankind, Tolstoi may be considered the greatest literary interpreter of the twentieth century. Russia has produced no art figure quite so great. Tschaiakowsky, who died a few years ago, contributed as much to the art forms of Russia and the world as Tolstoi; at times he interpreted life and expressed the Slavic genius quite as well. But he had less grip on the essentials and, like his contemporary co-patriot Dvorak, was more inclined to consider the footlights. These three great Russians are a big contribution to the art of the world.

Next to the art of England that of Russia is of most interest to Canada. If there is half as much in the influence of environment upon the people and art as M. Taine depicts in his "History of Literature," the climatic and geographical conditions of Canada ought to have a similar effect to that which obtains in Russia. The two countries possess, and as far as possible inhabit nine-tenths of the northernmost territory of the world. Norway, Sweden and Iceland have most of the rest. What influence will the North have upon our literature? What has it done for the art of Russia? That remains to be seen. The peculiar genius of a people counts for much. Temperament; forms of government; conditions of development—are all potent factors. Is Canada too cheerful a country to produce profound works of art? Are we too commercially optimistic; too prosperous? Have we enough in Canada to protest against to produce great art? Or is the highest form of art a protest at all—rather than a depiction of conditions as they exist?

The life and the literature of Tolstoi should do something to enlighten Canadian art producers on these points. We may be centuries older before we produce a Tolstoi or an Ibsen; and older still before we get a Dvorak or a Tschaiakowsky. But the effort is worth while.