

sheep, of a pig, or of a cow, properly treated—with the introduction of the elements of chemistry, physiology, and so on as they come in—would give all the elementary science which is needed for the comprehension of the processes of agriculture, in a form easily assimilated by the youthful mind, which loathes anything in the shape of long words and abstract notions, and small blame to it.”

I have already mentioned one misconception that has retarded the introduction of agriculture as a permanent part of our school system, viz., the idea that it was intended to give some instruction in the practice of agriculture, whereas nothing should be attempted but the first principles of the various sciences that are connected with or underlie agriculture, taking up the application of these sciences to agriculture.

Another fault is the attempt on the part of some persons *to try to do too much*. We must not crowd too much on the young mind, or mental dyspepsia will result, followed by a loathing of all forms of mental food. The work, when first begun in the Public Schools, should be very simple, very restricted, and should call into activity the open eyes and open ears of the pupils.

Every rain that falls, every tiny stream by the roadside, the shooting of the green blade in the spring, the nodding buttercups, the goldenrod, the tall bull thistle, the early dropping apple with its worm-hole, the ball of black knot upon the cherry, the jumping grasshopper and the hundred of nature's children, should attract the attention of our children out of doors, and arouse in them a love that is not born of ignorance but of true knowledge. Nature in the country, in the village, in the town, and, to a limited sense, even in the city, lies before our children as a great unnoticed, unmeaning book. Our children by their natural sympathy with nature, and by their God-given faculties, appeal through us to the great Creator of nature. “Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.”

Another objection that comes up in the minds of some, and that even finds expression, is that agriculture is not on a high enough plane, that there is more dirt than diamonds in it, that there is lacking the æsthetic element. Those who think and speak thus have evidently not given an honest consideration to the subject or are not aware of the marvellous progress of agricultural science in the past fifty years. I have, I think, answered this by saying that the science of agriculture is nothing else than a comprehensive grouping and intermingling of the other sciences that are now studied in our schools and colleges.

I could, had I time, discuss the possibilities of increasing our agricultural wealth by a general dissemination of agricultural information among the rural classes. Our annual agricultural product is now about \$250,000,000 in the Province of Ontario alone. I could prove even to those of you who are not farmers that this can easily be increased by twenty-five per cent., and a sum added to our annual product that would cause the tales of the Yukon to sink into insignificance.

In 1892 I addressed the Provincial Teachers' Association upon this subject, and my opinions of that year are stronger and more decided in 1898. I shall close this paper with the concluding paragraph of that address :

“Instruction in agriculture in our schools may be very limited, but if nothing more be done than to start our rural pupils thinking, to give them an impetus or a turn in the right direction, to develop in them a taste for agricultural study and investigation, to arouse in them a desire to know more and to read more about agricultural affairs, and especially to increase in them a respect for their work and a pride in their calling, then the most important end of their education will have been attained.”