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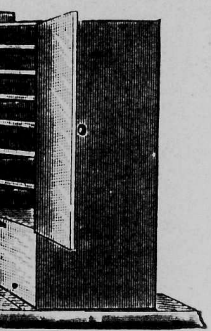
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MAGAZINE

\* AGRICULTURE, STOCK, DAIRY, POULTRY,

HORTICULTURE, VETERINARY, HOME CIRCLE.\*

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### Popularize the Farmers' Institute!

"DEMONSTRATE RATHER THAN DESCRIBE"

The above quotation is the keynote of modern educational effort, as is shown by the rapid increase in number of technical schools. Probably in no profession is the above so essential as in the profession of agriculture. Attempts at agricultural education in Manitoba have been made in two directions: in the schools and the Farmers' Institutes; in the former, however, with little success. It is, however, with the Farmers' Institutes we are dealing in this article, with a view to discussion as to whether or no the Institute system at present in vogue could not be improved and more benefit arise therefrom. The keynote of success for the future of the Western Farmers' Institutes lies, we believe, in the four words used as our text.

Many complaints are heard, and with reason, that the attendance, especially of the young people, at the Institutes is not what it should be, a state of things which can be cured if the right remedy is applied. As suggestions along this line, we might mention the sending out of a travelling dairy and the creation of live-stock judging institutes as a means to the much-to-be-desired end—larger and more enthusiastic audiences at those institutes.

The fact that concentration is the admitted trend of things in dairy lines, which will mean the establishment of large central creameries at convenient railway centers—the railways furnishing refrigerator cars for conveying the cream in good condition—a plan which reduces the cost of manufacture, favors the employment of the most skillful labor and the most complete and modern equipment. This concentration so emphatically endorsed by the Dominion Government Dairy Expert, Prof. Ruddick, practically means that three or four creameries would manufacture the butter product of Manitoba to better advantage to the producer by reducing the first cost of manufacture and improving the uniformity and quality of the product, thus increasing its market value. With a reduction in the demand for butter-makers, there will be no further object in maintaining the Government dairy school, and until an agricultural college with a strong dairy department capable of making investigations in dairy bacteriology and dairy chemistry, in addition to doing the mere mechanical work, is created, the Province would be better and more cheaply served by a travelling dairy, and the \$800 a year which it costs could be devoted to institute and travelling dairy work. The latter could, in districts where creameries are patronized, give object lessons in the handling of separators, care of cream, the Babcock test, etc., and where farm dairying was in vogue, lessons could, in addition, be given in the ripening of cream, Farrington test, churning, working, packing, etc. Thus, as the farmers' wives and daughters cannot and do not come to the school, the school should be taken to them.

Stock judging at institutes would also be popular, instructive and far-reaching in its effects on the live-stock industry and the country at large. Enthusiasm for live stock would be increased, judges of live stock would become more plentiful, and as a result the quality of stock of the country would be bound to improve. The scrub would go, not because of its lack of pedigree, but because of a recognition of its utter uselessness.

Lecturers on soil cultivation, who could illustrate their remarks by means of a blackboard and a few experiments; others on horticulture, who

would, in addition to talks on the subject, also show how to prune small fruits, make cuttings, etc., would be very useful in making the work popular. Farm architecture could be taken up by means of a stereopticon, and very instructive and interesting lessons given. Under such a heading would come the building and laying out of barns and houses at the least expense and to the best advantage; ventilation methods and principles could be dilated upon with benefit to the hearers. Illustrated lectures on fungous diseases, insects and useful birds would draw and instruct many people. A woman lecturer on breadmaking and poultry-raising could give interesting talks on these subjects and awaken discussions.

The summer period of institute work might be devoted mainly to plowing matches and excursions to the Experimental Farms in place of lectures. A more general use of home talent, men who thoroughly understand Western needs and conditions, would improve the personnel of the institute staff. While it may not be possible off-hand to secure speakers as fluent as those from the East, yet, given some practice in expressing themselves, there are plenty of good practical men in the Province if only pains were taken to bring them out.

### Shall We Have an Agricultural College?

Manitoba has always been noted for her progressiveness, and the appointment of a commission to look into the matter of establishing an agricultural college is conclusive evidence that the Minister of Agriculture is seized with the needs of the Province and the opportunity presented. Beseet as all ministers of governments are with schemes and petitions involving an expenditure of public money, it certainly speaks well for the Premier of the Province that he has seen fit, even when harassed with the multifarious duties of his office, to push along the ball of agricultural progress by appointing a commission to investigate agricultural educational methods, looking to the establishment of a farmers' school. The commission, whose names were given some time ago in the "Advocate" columns, are men of standing in the community, and, we believe, men who will not be influenced by the specious arguments of some people who believe in the fatal doctrine, "Never do to-day what can be put off until to-morrow." The half-hearted supporter (often termed a wet blanket) who "damns with faint praise" the project suggests that the Province procrastinate, that we wait awhile, and gives sundry other admonitions, all of which, while indicating a lack of virility, will also have an effect on the lukewarm, causing them to reason that as the Guelph College was 25 years working up an attendance worthy of the money expended, Manitoba would suffer the same fate. With all due respect to the Guelph Agricultural College, we submit that a college modelled on the same plan would be entirely unsuitable and inadequate in this Province. Conditions are vastly different here to what they are in Ontario, progress is more rapid, the country is newer, and wheat-farming is an alluring occupation, especially in years of 25-bushel crops at 55 cents or better per bushel.

Resolutions have been passed by many organizations made up solely of farmers and stockmen, such as the leading Live Stock Associations, Farmers' Institutes and Agricultural Societies, and the municipal officers at their last annual convention declared emphatically in favor of a college, not to mention the strong support that has been voiced by the local press.

The half-made and partially-veiled sneer at the

live-stock associations in their appeal for the development of scientific agriculture displays an ill regard toward them. Those associations we are told do not express or voice the opinions of the farming community generally, and their importance to the country is, in consequence, belittled. Fortunately for our Canadian agriculture, such sentiments are rank heresy, for, as the Provincial Treasurer tersely puts it, the breeders' associations and farmers' institutes are at the present practically the only organizations existing qualified to speak for the farmers.

The statement that a college is not needed because our 40,000 farmers have not each expressed as yet their determination to give their sons an agricultural-college education, is on a par with the idea that the railway was not needed until every quarter-section in Manitoba was under cultivation. Success in life depends on the ability to foresee or forestall a need, rather than to wait until a need is speakingly evident. What would be thought of a merchant who did not lay in his supply of winter underwear until January? Again, it is said that institute meetings are not attended by the young men. True, but the fault is mainly with the institute in lacking the drawing power. Do we say a religion or sect is useless because a church of that sect is poorly attended? Nowadays the fault is generally laid on the preacher. It is only begging the question to ask, "What's the use of establishing a college if there are no students to attend it?" Such a question reveals a lack of knowledge and of sympathy with the aims and aspirations of our Western farmers. Why do young men go from Manitoba to Ontario for an agricultural-college training? Not because of the especial fitness of that course for a Western student, but because they are determined to have some agricultural-college training at all costs. Ontario, it is said, had great difficulty in securing students sufficient to fill the college until a year or so ago, which, by the way, was not the case. But even if it were, it would simply go to show that the teaching must have been inadequate to the needs of the farmer. If Manitoba has to follow in Ontario's footsteps, even to the failures, she had better let the project severely alone. The "Advocate" is satisfied that our Government will not fall into such error, however, and it is not borrowing trouble as to the lack of attendance at an agricultural college when one is established. Provide the right sort of a course and the students will come, as is evidenced by the growing popularity of the best American colleges. For instance, ten years ago the students attending the short course at the Wisconsin Agricultural College could be counted on two hands; the session of 1900-1901 saw 300 in attendance. Ontario, Iowa, Minnesota, Kansas and other States all show similar increases.

In that great country to the south of us, moneyed men are taking an interest in furthering the profession of agriculture by investing in high-class stock, employing the best procurable men to care for that stock, and giving their money freely to help along the agricultural colleges. In this connection, it is worthy of note that where the greatest interest is being taken and most money spent on agricultural education, there the greatest advances are being made with live stock. Is it not, therefore, a logical inference to draw that the agricultural colleges have had a share in the progress made?

The fact that we are Anglo-Saxons, and therefore direct descendants of the greatest stock-breeding nation of the world, will not avail us a particle in the race for the premier position unless we ourselves hustle.