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## CHARACTER SKETCH.

THOMAS SHAW.

PROFESSOR OF AGRICULTURE IN ONTARIO AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

"Fillage and pasturage are the two breasts of the State." Sully.

It may be that in the earlier centuries of the world's history the same exact attention was not given to the cultivation of the soil that is the case in the present day. The history of every science and agriculture may properly take its place as one of the sciences of growth. Adam Smith is usually credited with having founded the science of political economy and yet, if we go back to the days of Aristotle, Plato and the early philosophers, we find that some of the leading principles of the author of the Wealth of Nations were grasped by these writers, and if somewhat crudely shaped, the essential principles were there. And we look beyond Adam Smith's day, and students of this science will grant, we think, that in the writings of Mills, Bastiat, Macleod, Walker, Ely, Perry and others, a clearer and more complete conception of what constitutes wealth, and the principles that govern its operation, is to be obtained. Evolution plays its part with science as it does with most of the conditions of life.

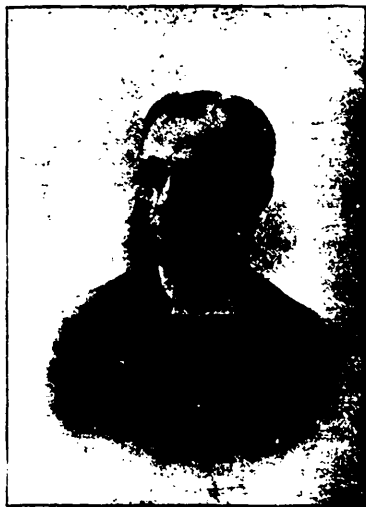
The importance that is attached to the pursuit of agriculture is forcibly expressed in the words of Sully, quoted at the head of this sketch, a French economic writer of the fifteenth century. Colbert, who won fame as Minister of Finance under Louis XIV., because of his prudent husbanding of the finances of France, shown in other ways by a marked reduction of the taxes, held it as a maxim that the nation "ought to encourage agriculture by directly lessening its burdens, by permitting the freest possible circulation of its produce within its realm." Bois-Guillebert, a provincial magistrate at Rouen wrote "When the cultivator of the soil, the basis of society, grows poorer his poverty involves the ruin of the rest." Adam Smith placed agriculture, in his judgment, over other forms of production. Perhaps no economic writer, of the past or present day, would jeopardize his reputation by other than placing the cultivation of the soil at the basis of all profitable sources of production. Even Carey, the foremost apostle, in the present day, of protection to manufactures, concedes to agriculture a first place.

A sketch of Thomas Shaw, Professor of Agriculture in the Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph, Ont., may fittingly find space in these pages, primarily, because of the close relationship that exists, an intimacy that grows closer each year, between the man who sows and harvests the grain and the miller who grinds it into flour for individual consumption, and further because of the interest that Prof. Shaw, and the institution of which he is one of the leaders, has ever shown in the work of the Dominion Millers' Association, being ready at all times to consult with the millers, and to influence the farmer to grow a grain that would be rightly adapted to the requirements of the miller.

Thomas Shaw was born in Niagara-on-the-Lake in 1843. His parents came from Ayrshire, Scotland, many years previous. It is worth much to be well born. The parents of Mr. Shaw were of the most exemplary character, and their helpful influence upon the son is shown in the character and life of Prof. Shaw to-day.

Soon after 1843 the family removed to Woodburn, a pretty little village in South Wentworth. The future teacher and professor had no direct educational advantages other than those afforded by the common school. He worked on the farm in summer and attended school in winter. How many men, known for their scholarly attainments, and occupying prominent positions in educational walks of life, owe a large part of this education to the old village library. Mr. Shaw in his boyhood days

had access to an old association library, and his winter schooling was largely supplemented by a careful and studious reading of the books secured in its shelves. These stimulated an awakening ambition, and no doubt helped to form the future character of the man. He selected his reading, on the principle, we suppose, that guides him in his agricultural pursuits to-day, that whatsoever a man sows that shall he also reap. He eschewed fiction in these early reading days, and devoured history and biography. We have the result in the well-stored mind of Prof. Shaw to-day. At the age of sixteen he had obtained a teacher's certificate, but failed to secure a school until seventeen, owing, he has facetiously remarked, to the lack of a beard. His first school brought him the munificent salary of \$220 per year, out of which he paid board and washing. What surplus he had aside for a rainy day we have never heard. For ten years he continued as a teacher of a rural school, and while doing so bought 100 acres of land, and later a second hundred, and supervised the working of it all the while. He kept adding to his first purchases until the farm consisted of 300 acres. He still retains this property, the farm being managed by a brother, John C.



PROF. THOMAS SHAW.

Shaw. Some years ago he built on it a barn, and many of the important features of the Guelph Experimental station are modelled therefrom.

In 1832, without any previous experience of newspaper work, Mr. Shaw entered the turbulent sea of journalism. Along with a brother he established the Canadian Live Stock and Farm Journal, in Hamilton. He took entire charge of the editorial work, did the travelling, and at the same time supervised the farm, fifteen miles distant. No better illustration of Mr. Shaw's capacity for work need be given than this. The Stock Journal was a success from the start, both financially and otherwise, and later, when Mr. Shaw took charge of the Government Experimental farm, its management was transferred to a company.

In 1883 Mr. Shaw competed in the provincial competition for the essay prize offered annually by the Agricultural and Arts Association of Ontario, on some farm topic. He won the prize that year and the five years following and then gave up competing for it.

In 1887 he assisted Mr. V. E. Fuller in calling the meeting of farmers in Toronto which resulted in the organization of the Central Farmers' Institute, and was

its first secretary, and held the office until appointed to his present position in 1888. This position calls for the management of the farm and the experiments conducted upon it, except in dairying. He has charge also of the mechanical department, and lectures on practical and theoretical agriculture both in the field and live stock departments. The growth of work on the Experimental Farm since 1888, when Prof. Shaw became connected with it, has been very marked. Then there were only 100 acres under experiment, now there are over 100. In 1888 but a few varieties of grain and grasses were grown; now nearly 1,000 varieties of grain, grasses, corn and field roots are grown. Some years ago, along with Mr. J. Mills, LL.D., president of the Ontario Agricultural College, Prof. Shaw wrote "First Principles of Agriculture," a text-book in use in the public schools of Ontario.

Personality, few men will be found who stand more popular with their associates in professional or private life. Kindness and consideration for others are unmistakable marks of the calm and clear-cut features that are to be observed from our portrait of Mr. Shaw. In many respects he is the beau ideal of a teacher, and it is not surprising that among the students of the Ontario Agricultural College he is a universal favorite. His high and broad forehead indicates, as the phrenologist would say, the intellectual and moral faculties largely developed. His whole history, from a boy attending the village school up to the present time, reaching one eminence and then another in the educational and literary world, and this amid difficulties that would have discouraged a less determined boy and man, bear all the testimony that is needed to the strength of his intellectual abilities. Though for many years in delicate health, yet through careful physical training and more or less out-door work, he has acquired great powers of endurance of work, mental and physical.

In religion he is a Presbyterian, and commenced teaching in the Sabbath school when sixteen years old. He has ever since taught in Sabbath school or Bible class, or been engaged on Sabbath in mission work.

A native to Canadian soil and an efficient workman of perhaps Canada's most important source of wealth and power, his friends look forward to still greater achievements as a result of his industrious labors in the field of farming, for which, to use his own words, "I have always had a passion."

## REGULATIONS FOR EXPORTERS.

CUSTOM laws of Great Britain require that all flour must be branded with the name of the village, township, city or province where the flour is made. Why this particularity of detail? some of our millers may be disposed to ask. We candidly say we do not know. We know it to be the law and exporters will save themselves and their customers more or less annoyance by acting accordingly. In Rome we must do as the Romans do. A removal of many of the detail regulations of the custom laws of all countries would save no little aggravation to business men of all classes. Custom regulations seem overloaded at every turn with stipulations that are a hindrance to the easy working of the wheels of trade. But such, we suppose, is the way custom laws are built. We must lay the annoyance at the door of the custom's architect or builder. After all, not a few of these regulations appear indigenous to the country and necessary to protect some important business interest.

## THEIR NEW HOME.

THE Gutta Percha & Rubber Manufacturing Co., of Toronto, have recently removed into new premises at 59 and 61 Front Street, W. The commercial concerns of the Queen City can make claim to many handsome and perfectly equipped warehouses; few there are that will excel in any particular the new home of this well known rubber house.