

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE.

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DOMINION.

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THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE
is published every Thursday.

It is impartial and independent of all cliques or parties, handsomely
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possible loss of leaves and permitted to sweat a
day or two in the coil, as contrasted with the
dry, chippy, stalky stuff made by curing only in
the swath, allowing the top of the swath to be-
come scorched and the leaves ready to drop off
at handling, while waiting for the bottom to dry.
Of course, it must be admitted that the tedder is
of immense service in swath-curing, and helps us
to make fairly good hay without the labor and
tedium of the old way. It remains for every
farmer to size up his own requirements, but we
feel like throwing out this caution for the benefit
of those who may be tempted by labor scarcity to
sacrifice quality to haste.

This much we will say: In seeking to save
labor, look first of all to those implements which
expedite operations without injuriously affecting
quality. When buying a mower, choose a wide-
cut. Six feet is the smallest that should be used
under any ordinary circumstances, and our prefer-
ence is for the seven-foot. It is not a case of
which size will do the cutting, but which will en-
able its owner to earn the best wages (difference
in cost considered) while doing the work. Then,
every man who makes any quantity of hay should
have a tedder. It saves time in curing, and im-
proves the quality of hay made. In the barn
have the quickest possible means of unloading. It
savors of bad judgment to see a man loading
clover with a hay loader and pitching it off by
hand. It is reversing the logical order. One
may be driven to use the loader, especially for
timothy, but of all the labor-saving implements on
the farm, one of the last to purchase is the hay
loader. That is not denying one would be forced
to use it under certain circumstances, but we are
strong in the faith that the best hay is made by
allowing the curing process to finish in the coil.
Not only does it improve the hay made, but it
greatly lessens the danger of heating in the mow.
Commence cutting early, cut not too much at a
time, ted promptly and two or three times; wilt
with the air instead of scorching with the sun,
and observe every possible precaution to prevent
loss of leaves, which are by far the most valuable
part.

OUR MARITIME LETTER.

If the price paid for every product of the farm
were any indication of prosperity, then Maritime
agriculture is in a most flourishing condition in-
deed. There is a cry all over the Dominion, in
the Federation to the south of us, and even be-
yond in old Europe, where the cost of living (ex-
cept to tourists from America) was always given at
such low figures as to jaundice us at once with envy;
that, by some strange process, everything had so
increased in price as to fairly frighten the old-
timers and keep would-be political economists up
nights working out the problems which stared
everyone in the face. Whilst there was much talk
of the dearthness of farm products, as a general
thing, not till this year did this phase of the
question strike our farmers as fully justifiable.
True, there was a good price for one thing or an-
other, but there was a poor price, too, for quite
a list of farm offerings, and this cut things down
to a mean enough average on the whole. This
season has taken all per contra argument, then,
out of our mouth, and compelled us to admit that
figures are so high that some overscrupulous farm-
ers are loath to take the current price for their
goods.

The other day a local daily expressed surprise
that the Province of Prince Edward Island, for
example, was buying so much high-priced seed.
"It is a sign of agricultural prosperity," it grave-
ly asserted. It struck us quite otherwise, and
we were inclined to animadvert on the unthink-
ingness of newspapers, anyway. A moment's con-
sideration should have convinced the writer that
there was nothing else to do but buy seed grain,
and buy it largely, if the fields were to be seeded
at all; and who would let the little reverses of a
year affect his faith in agriculture here? As a
matter of fact, the cereal crop of the Province,
and its root crop, too, so far as the staple root
—potatoes—were concerned, for that matter, were
lamentably small. In some sections the whole
wheat return was completely wiped out by the
joint-worm; and even where it was thought to be
the one generally good grain crop, at threshing it
was discovered to be disappointingly light. Only
exceptionally skillful or exceptionally lucky farm-
ers (you take your choice) were able to grow
good enough grain for seed. This explains the
large buying at the steep prices catalogued. There
is not much evidence of prosperity in that.

But the farmers are able to buy. They can
sell everything about the place at a big price,
and most of them have something to sell. If
potatoes, they are 50 cents—twice the ordinary
price; if oats, they are up to the same figure—
a specially high one for here; if wheat, the dollar
mark is far exceeded; if barley or buckwheat, or
any of the minor grains, the limit is out of sight,
too; and so with everything the soil produces.
In animals, the same soaring propensity is notice-
able. Why, they want the price of two horses of
a few years ago for any old plug to-day, and
cattle, sheep and pigs are proportionately high.
Eggs are away up, too; the farm that is well
kept and managed is really paved with gold. The
amount of hay so many were anxious to unload
at a nominal figure (\$8.00 pressed) last fall and
all winter, on account of the very retarded growth
of the meadows and pastures, is now being doled
out to the very sellers for double that figure in
many cases by the merchants. But the provident
are not in this ridiculous position. Yesterday,
as we passed along the road, we chatted a moment
with a farmer who is a farmer at his plow, one who
has proved the surety of his vocation, and whose
life and realizations have done more to convince
us that this is a good land to live in than any-
thing else, and he was telling us that, interspers-
ing the arduous days of cropping, he had sold off
his farm three thousand dollars' worth of field
products, and had still enough to carry his great
stock through and help out the needy and im-
provident considerably. As everyone knows, we
have no big farms here; this is one of the aver-
age ones, but its owner is no average farmer,
however (we wish that he was), he is a real,
hustling farmer—a man after our own heart—who
has made every dollar himself, in two score of
years, unaided.

The prices are exceptionally high for farm
products in the sea divisions; the expected naviga-
tion withheld the regular supplies of roots and

rough grains from such centers of activity as
Sydney, etc. It behooves everybody to get in as
good a crop as possible; there is every prospect
of his getting repaid. The season is late, but he
who gives the increase is able to repair this defect
handsomely, and will. A. E. BURKE.

WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE COMMON SCHOOLS?

"Common Sense in Common Schools," is the
heading of a pointed article in the Saturday
Evening Post, by Edwin G. Cooley, Superintend-
ent Chicago Public Schools. While written from
the city point of view, it expresses a principle
that is even more applicable to rural than to city
schools. It is, in substance, that the American
common schools are not common enough. He
would have them brought closer to the common
people, adapting them more practically to the
needs of the great body of pupils, and into truer
range with the life-work of the average boy and
girl educated in them. More especially does he
apply this criticism to the High Schools, which
are declared to be closer to the colleges than to
the people. "What," he pertinently asks, "is a
common-school education for, unless it be to fit
the mass of pupils for the practical duties of life?
And if the High School leaves its pupils with only
a preparation for colleges, instead of a preparation
for life, when most of its pupils cannot go on
into college, does it not score a lamentable failure
in efficiency?" The point is illustrated with a
typical case. A bright boy, whose mother had
put him through High School by taking in wash-
ing, was leaving to enter a factory. What sort
of preparation had his school course given him
for the life upon which he was entering? Four
years of Latin, two years of Greek, two years of
German, one year of French, two years of mathe-
matics, a minimum of English and history, and
no civics or political economy! It was not the
boy's fault. The curriculum, the whole educa-
tional system of the grade and High School was
responsible for his educational misfit. He had a
good start for college and a professional career,
but he could not afford to go onward; his equip-
ment for making his way in a factory was about
as deficient as the imagination could suggest. And
the city pupils who go the way of the store, the
shop and the streets are thousands to the tens
who persevere to the university class-room.

There is too much of a tendency, so far as the
common schools are concerned, to educate the mass
of our boys out of touch with their social and
vocational needs, to make prigs of them, and to
give them a dislike for any calling which will not
allow them to wear nice clothes and keep their
hands unsoiled.

Arising out of the tendency of the framers of
curricula to aim so exclusively toward the uni-
versity, is the idea prevalent among pupils, par-
ents and teachers that there is little use going on
in the High School unless expecting to graduate
from it. Hence, after the age of truancy is past,
the boy is tempted to use school as a blind to
escape work, and spend his time ranging the
streets and acquiring a comprehensive education
in degeneracy and vice.

Summing up, Mr. Cooley says:

"If I were to indulge in a word of prophecy,
I would say that the High School of the future
will be closer to the people than to the college;
that its curriculum will do more for the children
of the plain people; that it will make a broader
and stronger appeal to, and a better provision for,
the boy who has small interest in college, but
feels he must 'quit and go to work'; that its
course will smack less of those studies which tradi-
tion holds to be divinely-appointed agencies for
'mental discipline'; that it will have less of
the cast-iron programme, and will less and less
attempt to mold all pupils to the same pattern;
that it will give culture to those who seek cul-
ture, and help all to strike straight for the goal
dictated by their own natural impulses, whether
that be a business or a profession.

More than that, it will increasingly put up
to the pupil himself the selection of his course
and the responsibility of its faithful pursuit. And
there is nothing better for the development of
character than driving at a fixed purpose with a
clear sense of responsibility.

Our public schools will not be common in the