

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE

AND HOME MAGAZINE

* AGRICULTURE, STOCK, DAIRY, POULTRY, HORTICULTURE, VETERINARY, HOME CIRCLE.*

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VOL. XXXIX.

WINNIPEG, MAN., AND LONDON, ONT., JUNE 22, 1904.

No. 613

Editorial.

The Mounted Cadet.

One of the attractions of the Brandon Fair in year past has been the musical rides and other evolutions of the N.-W. M. P., and this year the Oak Lake Mounted Cadets are also to be at the Wheat City's annual farmers' carnival. We are especially glad to note that the young volunteer will be in evidence, and also to know that such a body of young men has been started in the West. We are no advocates of militarism, but believe that the strongest bulwark to any nation lies in her citizen soldiers—the volunteers. Western Canada is especially the place for mounted volunteers, and we think that as many young farmers as possible should join a mounted volunteer corps and go out to camp annually, at no expense to the farmer's son, as the Government pays him for his horse while at camp. The drill will help each man to be better set-up, the discipline will have a good effect, and, as a result of the training to be had, he should be a better horseman.

In the agricultural State-aided colleges south of the international boundary, every student is obliged to wear a military uniform the first half (two years) of his course, and take the drill prescribed, under the tuition of a regular army officer. Each student can continue in the college corps his full four years if he wishes. At these colleges the army plan is followed, and the corps is officered with coms. and non-coms.

Far too few farmers and their sons are good equestrians, and if the mounted cadet idea is extended throughout the West, it will not be long before the quality of the saddle horses used is improved. A fair or exhibition that can interest the young people is pretty close to the ideal, and the movement started by Brandon can be followed with profit by others. We might suggest fuller attention being given to athletic competitions, running and jumping, etc., at the fairs.

Better Roads Advocated.

Roadmaking at the present time is a very important question in the West, and especially in the Territories. There are many places where colonization roads should be made by the Government and by the C. P. R., or jointly. Good roads add greatly to land values, and the land is quite capable of standing the cost.

The land carries taxes for other purposes, and there is no doubt but that the additional advantages directly traceable to good roads would fully warrant the cost of their making and maintenance, the same to be shouldered upon the benefited area of land in the form of taxes.

Next to railroads, serviceable public highways develop a country. Many districts are unsettled to-day for no other reason than lack of roads. Produce must be marketed at a profit to the producer before any country can be built up, and one of the surest ways of increasing the profit in new districts is by facilitating transportation. We hear a great deal about poor railway transportation, yet there are other methods less complete which are causing the land-workers of this country great loss and trouble. Good land is practically valueless if not connected with reasonably fair roads.

It is more profitable to own a quarter section

near a good road if a tenth of it is slough, than a full 160 acres of choice land without a good road. Frequently, very inferior land is settled near good roads in preference to much better land not so favored. The need of improvement along this line is exceedingly great, and no one can say that the prosperity of this country does not warrant immediate, far-reaching measures on the part of leading land owners. Large land companies irrigate so as to make their land more salable, and there is not the slightest doubt but if extensive property owners adopted wise road-making measures their sale returns would simply prove the wisdom of the policy.

The Practical at the Agricultural College.

One of the things that has impressed the value of an agricultural college education upon the up-to-date farmer is the tendency of those colleges to be more practical in their teachings than heretofore, the latest field of work engaged in by the colleges being the study of farm mechanics.

Farm mechanics as studied in the different agricultural colleges, such as Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, and others of the West, has to do with the mechanical principles as applied to agricultural pursuits. The different studies might be classified as follows:

1. Field Mechanics—A study of all the agricultural machines used in field work.
2. Power Machines—A study of windmills, feed grinders, gasoline engines, traction engines, etc.
3. Farm Drainage—A study of leveling, drainage systems and their proper construction.
4. Farm Buildings and Fences—A study of the farm home and outbuildings, designing the buildings needed in the different pursuits of the farmer, and estimating the material needed in their construction.

Mental gymnastics are all right, and are doubtless needed by the recruits in the arts and divinity courses, but the young man from the farm, with the foundation of a good general education, has no time to waste in order to show that he has been to college. Life is real with him, and his ideas of culture differ probably from many of those who spend their lives immured by college walls, and who would monopolize the right to teach all sorts and conditions of men. To the advocates of courses in chemistry to be given to agricultural college students by the University, we commend the following, by an authority: "The chemical analysis of soils usually aims at determining the total amount of the various matters present in a soil, or else the quantities soluble in strong hydrochloric acid; it does not, therefore, succeed in furnishing a measure of the soil's fertility." University people are afraid, however, that such utilitarian ideas are wrong, and that culture should be the great thing in which to train students. Culture, according to some people, is obtained by a study of the classics. The world has produced many men of "culture" who could not earn their daily bread, and a college or university that turns out men unable to spell words of five letters correctly or men ignorant of the first principles of business or ordinary letter-writing has got very pressing missionary work to do at home, without seeking for work in the field of agricultural education, which is a work for specialists, not theorists, amateurs or teachers along general lines.

Pointer for the Dominion Department of Agriculture.

A pressing need of the western portion of the Northwest Territories, and the upper mainland of British Columbia, is the want of experimental farms or stations. In the Territories, as people living there know, the experimental farm at Indian Head is located at the eastern portion of the N.-W. T., hundreds of miles from the vast arable area in Alberta, where different climatic conditions are experienced, and although the work is in capable hands at Indian Head, we do not think the superintendent there would claim that the results of his experiments are capable of being made use of as fully as is desirable in the Alberta section of the Territories. The "Farmer's Advocate," recognizing the need for another experimental farm in the Territories, has time and again referred to this matter. What applies in the case of Alberta, applies equally in the case of the upper country of B. C., although, in the latter case, a less extensive establishment would do. Any person who has travelled the Coast Province, and who has gathered information on its agriculture, will know that the varieties of fruit suited to the Okanagan are different to those on the lower mainland. In the former district, the climate is dry and irrigation is depended upon largely; in the latter, the precipitation is quite heavy, and as the Coast Province is destined, we believe, to be the locality in which, in the immediate future, the fruit required by Western Canada will be largely grown, it is no more than justice that the Dominion Department of Agriculture should establish an experimental station for the upper country of B. C. at an early date. Some years ago, the cry arose that there was need for another experimental farm in Manitoba. The Agricultural College farm will meet that need. In Minnesota, sub-stations have been started, and in a country of such large extent as the Canadian West, three experimental farms are only half enough. The others that should be established might be termed sub-stations. The name would not necessarily affect the quality of the work done. The rapidly increasing population in the districts mentioned, a population that is investing its all, in time, money and work, warrants the establishment by the Government of two or three branch experimental farms without delay. The Minister of Agriculture would do well to give this important and urgent matter his prompt and careful attention, for even if the people's elected representatives overlook this great need, it is no excuse for the Department, which is supposed to get its information as to the needs of the country from outside, and more reliable sources than the politicians.

Develop the Egg Business.

When the fact is considered that Great Britain, in addition to the home supply, imports annually over \$26,000,000 worth of eggs, towards which Canada contributes only something over \$1,500,000 worth, it may at once be seen what a future there is for the industrious Canadian hen, if she will get down to business in earnest, and if those concerned with the development of the trade will but push it intelligently. It seems to us that the egg trade is capable of very great improvement. We commend the subject to the careful consideration of farmers and all others interested in the advancement of this branch of agriculture.