

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE & HOME MAGAZINE

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Manitoba Crop Report.

The crop report of the Manitoba Government for the season, up to June 1st, shows a slight increase in the area sown to wheat, 1,010,186 this year, against 1,008,640 in 1893. Oats showed an increase of 25,000 acres, there being 413,686 acres in this cereal this year, while 119,528 acres of barley are sown—also a slight increase. Other grains and roots showed some increase. Every section of the Province reports a shortage of rain during the latter part of May, which has been intensified by the terrible heat and drought of the first eight days of June.

The Horn Fly.

The horn fly pest is already very bad in some localities. When the flies are at their worst, it has been found necessary to spray cattle with the ordinary kerosene emulsion every two days. Prof. Fletcher, of the Experimental Farm, Ottawa, has found that Tanner's oil, containing some carbolic acid, or oil of tar, is more lasting in its effects, but takes longer to apply and requires much greater labor. Train oil or fish oil alone, or train oil or lard, with a little sulphur, oil of tar or carbolic acid added, will keep the flies away for five or six days.

Our Common Schools and Farmers.

Continued from page 223.

Let us look at this matter from the standpoint of evolution. Nature, when raising the anthropoid from the animal,—in other words, in creating man—made changes at three points: she enlarged the frontal brain, modified the mouth and throat to make articulate speech possible, and transformed the forefeet into hands. At these three points education should be applied. That is, our schools should aim not simply at brain culture, but at speech culture and hand culture. With such a reckoning, we are brought to the need of music, and the use of tools as well as books. I would give one-half of each day to the books; the other half to music, and play, and work. But do not let this manual culture be confined to mechanical tools alone, but also to farm tools. I hope to live to see every schoolhouse in the country set in a plot of land for comparative horticulture. The Germans and English are beginning to feel the need of this change, and are considering the project of establishing school gradens or incipient farms. Mr. Sewell read recently, before the British Association, at Newcastle-on-Tyne, a paper in which he outlined a school botanical garden. This is, of course, not a new thing on some parts of the Continent. I see no reason why the garden and garden tools may not constitute a part of the furnishing for manual culture. Gardening and horticulture train the hand, and these industries need the trained hand. If you expect your children to love such work, let them learn to do it in connection with and as a part of study and play. No child should ever have a breach made between play and work. It seems very probable that, when manual training is conjoined with a study of the sciences, there will be no further need of compulsory educational laws.

While I would not have everything done for the brain, I would not have anything done with the simple end of utility, as applied to the back and stomach. Yet the highest art and the highest utility coincide. Drawing, or the free use of the pencil, is in reality not an ornamental part of education, but a most practical part. It enters into half of our commonest industries. The young person more often has need of the pencil than of the pen, in winning his way. Old things pass away. I do not object to teaching penmanship, but I aver that four-fifths of the culture in this direction is superfluous, while drawing, which is set aside as an accomplishment, is in most demand for material as well as intellectual progress. We must reverse matters, and teach drawing, at all events; penmanship afterwards. So I would teach geology at all hazards, and geography afterwards. It is more important that a boy know the land he lives on, and what he can do with it, than that he should know the chief cities of Burmah and Japan. That is, I would apply educative force to the brain, but not to the brain only; I would teach the hands to draw and to work, and the voice the sweet art of music and the fine art of conversation.

It is equally important that our readjustment of the common school shall enable us to make farming profitable. The study of horticulture and biology will also aid materially in this direction. But there is quite as much advantage in chemistry and in farm economics. Farming will pay when it is done understandingly, intelligently, lovingly, with a knowledge of the forces we deal with and the things we handle. At present the bugs understand us better than we do them. They have little to learn, but that they have learned well. I keep an ant colony on one of my lawns to show occasionally to my boys and to visitors. How much more intelligently, economically, neatly, and with how much more attention to sanitation, these creatures farm it than men do! They have no mortgages. They keep cows, but their stables are models of neatness. But my hired men are almost sure to be machines, and are far from models of thrift and economy and neatness. They do not love the farm; they do not, with a few exceptions, work intelligently; they abhor experimental farming.

Wilson Flagg says in his book about trees: "When I am journeying through the country, and behold the rocky hills, sometimes for miles in extent, entirely bare of trees, affording too little sustenance to support even whortleberries, I am informed by the older inhabitants that, in their childhood, these hills were covered with forests. The woods were cut down, and there was nothing left to prevent the soil from being washed down into the valleys. Now nothing remains to support a new growth of trees." I care not in which direction you turn, American farming has to account for its depression by its methods. You have never seen a case of failure, where there were no heavy doctor's bills, but you could put your finger on a removable cause. Our hop speculators are a sample. When they make money on hops, it is at the expense of every other crop in the way of manure and labor. When there is a large margin in their favor, they buy fast horses and pianos, smoke cigars and cultivate other wasteful habits. When the market drops from one dollar a pound to five cents, the auctioneer sells the pianos and horses for one-tenth value, and the farmer who sought only money, and had no love for, or knowledge of, the land, and the things of the land, joins the westward caravan, or hangs himself. I said to a friend, of good judgment: "Take your pencil, and make an estimate of the loss in one way and another of

farm produce. We figured the absolute loss, first and last, of bad culture, bad handling, and general lack of intelligent method and economy, at one-half. I truly believe one-half the production of American lands is lost through ill-directed education. Our apple crop is more than half lost, and this is pretty surely true of all other fruits, except, perhaps, small fruit, which cannot be grown at all except with special attention. The plum trees, over large areas of the Northern States, have been cut down, or ought to be, to get rid of black-knot. The cherry trees were also assailed fifty years ago, and gradually eliminated by the same disease. The curculio spoils yearly tens of thousands of bushels of both these fruits. Remedy, more knowledge of entomology and of tree life itself. Give that, and the snap and backbone will be found. The farmer is rarely a lazy man; his trouble is, he does not know his enemies, or how to fight them. He does not know his friends from his foes in the insect world, and is as likely to destroy the former as the latter. I hired a peripatetic Yankee for two months. He had a common school education, but he did not know granite from conglomerate, and undertook to spray tent caterpillars for codlin moths. Unfortunately, he, like many more farmers, despised any knowledge that did not come along as heredity. One-third of the apple trees of Central New York were ruined within the last five years by the tent caterpillar—not only the fruit, but the trees. The invasion was enormous; but the fight was an open one. The worms came out ahead; the fittest always survive. Last winter I negotiated for five tons of hay of a dairyman. It was so full of wild carrot and Canada thistles that I accepted but the first load. We cannot afford to pay for hoeing the weeds out that will be seeded in by such manure. Such hay decreases the owner's milk product one-half, and by and by the weeds will whip him off his land.

I have an acre of flowers for our own pleasure; although, as a rule, these might add largely to the income of small fruit-growers. But we may as well grow our luxuries, if we have cultivated tastes, as to buy them. There is more real pleasure in hollyhocks than in fast horses, if you are educated to understand them. A young lady full of common and high school wisdom visited my grounds and found immense pleasure for a couple of hours. Then, looking over the superb valley, through the rich and rare trees, she said: "But it must be terribly lonely here." "Ah," I said, "that is so, if you have no friends here, or acquaintances. You do not know these elms, and lindens, and magnolias—they are strangers; but to me they are companions. No, we are not lonely here." But, with all my gardens of berries and lawns of flowers, I let my neighbors' bees carry off my honey until last summer—which was poor policy. A man should know how to gather all his crops, from the honey in his raspberry flower to the berries themselves. Then, he should know how to grow each crop to the best advantage. Then, he should know how to handle them all economically. Then he should have so large a variety of crops that he will not seriously be embarrassed by the loss of one, or two, or even three each year. Farming in the West is mostly speculative; so is much in the East. It is a venture of all a man's prosperity on one or two crops. If the market go down, or the crops fail, the farmer is as badly off as a sheared lamb in Wall street. He has nothing to do but to growl at capitalists, who are doing precisely what he tried to do and failed. So when we come to estimate the farm trouble, we cannot leave out the lack of knowledge about insects and about manures.

There really is no reason why the tide that for a century has set toward cities should not be reversed. To some extent it is now being reversed. The literary and mercantile classes began some time since a hegira into suburban homes; and the mechanics are now following them. This, of course, is not to make farmers of them, but it is to give them a taste for land and land culture. Mr. Hubert, in a capital volume on "Liberty and a Living," pictures the possibilities before a city journalist. If a taste for the country can be cultivated, and with rural life can be joined a fair share of refining influences and the comforts of art and music, as well as pure air and exercise, we are on the road to a reconstructed agricultural sentiment. Mr. Hubert shows us admirably that we can get all the good there is in a city, and have our work tell at the hub while we live at the end of the spokes. He says: "People talk of the inspiration of the crowd—the electrical effect of numbers. I can see but little of this in our American cities." The suburban life of our larger cities has, for the past five years, enormously widened out. To hasten the further reaction, so that agriculture in the twentieth century shall be once more the leading division of American industry, is a matter of political and social importance. When this is accomplished we shall have filled the hopes of our founders, and made the Republic what Jefferson believed to be possible.

But how, you say, can this revolution be wrought? By what possible means can we secure for our common schools teachers equipped to teach geology, chemistry, biology, and physics? When the demand comes, we shall surely have the supply? But let us not make the mistake of supposing these to be more abstruse or difficult studies than geography, arithmetic, and grammar. Rightly taught, these latter are far the most difficult and advanced. They belong only with older pupils. The former sciences are simpler and more fundamental. They