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THE O.A.C. REVIEW.

The Dignity of a Calling is its Utility.

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Agricultural.

The Future of Sheep Husbandry in Canada.

A PAPER READ BY HON. JOHN DRYDEN, MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AT THE EXPERIMENTAL UNION.

Sheep combine in their products two essential requirements for the comfort and well-being of society, meat, which sustains the human body, and wool, which, when manufactured, affords warmth and protection. Changes will take place the world over : fashions may come and go ; kingdoms rise and fall, but always men must eat, and, therefore, meat will always be in demand ; the human body will continue to need protection and therefore wool will be required ; so that, so long as man exists on this earth, sheep

husbandry will have a place. Just how much of these products will be consumed depends somewhat upon whether the producers will undertake to supply the particular quality of either demanded by the consumer. For many years in the United States only one of these products was thought worth considering, and thousands of sheep were kept only for the wool annually produced, the carcasses when old being left to the birds and beasts of the forest. Changes in the market in time caused a less demand for the particular quality of wool being then produced, resulting in these later years in eliminating entirely the profits in this particular line of sheep husbandry ; so that to-day but few men contemplate the raising of sheep as a business without considering the possibilities of combining these two elements in the production of sheep, namely : meat and wool.

That two profits may be thus obtained is perfectly clear. The same carcass which produces a suitable quality of wool may, by judicious breeding and management, be brought to afford the finest quality of flesh as well. The difference thus obtained will in most cases be sufficient to convert an absolute loss in the industry in the one case to a decided profit in the other. The sheep which combine these two products to the greatest extent will undoubtedly be the sheep found in Canada in the future.

The time is approaching when it will be impossible to sell at a remunerative price an animal having merely the name of sheep regardless altogether of the quality either of meat or wool, and the sooner the time comes in this country, the better for all concerned. A discriminating market is the best of all markets to improve production. So long as persons will purchase inferior animals at the same rate as those of a superior quality, so long will carelessness and indifference be manifested by those engaged in their production. The moment the consumer obtains sufficient knowledge of what ought to be furnished for his consumption to refuse absolutely to purchase that which is entirely