

RECOGNIZING that Ontario for a long time to come had to depend largely on her agricultural products as the chief source of wealth, I have, for years past, followed, as closely as I could the course of her agricultural college. Through the troubles of years ago, those following its first inception, as well as those of subsequent years, through good and evil report, my wish has been to know definitely just how much that was claimed of it by its supporters and just how much that was claimed by its opponent was really true. Partly to learn this by personal observation and partly to take advantage of the teachers' course as an agreeable and profitable means of passing my mid-summer holidays, caused me to find myself one evening last July at the G. T. R. station, Guelph, on a month's leave of absence. Whether the traffic to the college was so great that every stranger was supposed to go there or whether because there was about me the unmistakable air of the school room, I do not know, but I was soon assailed with the cry, "Drive you to the College, Sir?" As it was late in the evening and as of the whereabouts of the college I was ignorant, the offer was accepted and in a short time I found myself, with a fellow-teacher from Dufferin, driving into the grounds pondering as to my reception, as to whether I was too late to be received that night and last but not least as to what the prospects were for supper, for a belated train had delayed me beyond that hour. These questions were speedily set at rest by one of the students from a group at the entrance politely ushering us into the reception room and by the arrival of the matron, and, here let me remark that the same kindly reception accorded us by the students on the first night was carried out throughout the whole term. Instead of a coarse, rough, uncouth crowd, miniature cow boys, as report led me to expect, I was most agreeably surprised to find them, apart from our technical education, not unequal to ourselves. Their rooms and persons were neat and tidy; their language purer than what is generally heard; and go where we wished, whether over the farm or in the farm buildings, or whether we came in contact with them in the residence or on the campus, they invariably treated us with marked gentlemanliness. Owing to the investigation then pending and the non-arrival of some of the teachers, the first day or two were spent in wandering around the grounds, admiring the beautiful situation, and I, at least, feeling proud to think my native province possessed such an institution. I would that I could picture the beauty of the scene as we looked around. One seems to be indelibly photographed on my mind. As I stood at my window and looked, day after day, across the gravelled drive sweeping up to the front college, across the flower beds, each showing its own pattern, past the old Crimea cannon, beyond the level football ground skirted by the groups of shrubs, each group devoted to a family, away over the tops of the trees at the road, which, partly hidden by the dip in the ground, was invisible, over the fields of hay until at least the eye rested on a wood crowned knoll in the distance all seemed to me, from a flat country, to form a picture of almost ideal beauty.

Soon we settled down to work. Lectures in the morning; lectures in the afternoon; excursions around on botanical and geological expeditions and then the comparison of the result with the plots and the specimens in the museum, together with a day spent at Elora and another in visiting the pot-holes and caves at Rockwood made the time pass all too quickly by. On Sunday, morning and evening were spent at church, the afternoon in singing in the Y. M. C. A. room. The lectures, perhaps because containing so much that was new to us,

or perhaps because presented from an unusual standpoint, or perhaps because the earnestness of the professors, influenced us (for I never met any body of teachers who seemed more anxious to have their pupils advance) certainly were very interesting. Whether it were in the botanical laboratory before Prof. Panton listening to a talk on the structure of the earth and the different strata, with special reference to Ontario, or to a lecture on weeds and all the diseases that grain not flesh, was heir too, or in examining the germs of these and also of the microscopic part of plants under the instrument it rarely tired us. Under Prof. Shuttleworth we watched the living plant in its growth and experimented on its foods and their source. Part of the time was spent ranging the fields, visiting the experimental plots, in charge of Prof. Shaw and Mr. Zavitz, listening to the explanation of the trials of the different grains and fodders. Down at the dairy under Prof. Dean and Mr. Rogers, we extracted the cream from the milk and carried on the operation until the butter was wrapped up and ready for the market. In the stock class-room we had much guessing at the weight of the animals and wonderful was the speculation on their good points and qualities. All seemed to enter into all the subjects as if we were school children again. Nor was it in the obtaining of information that our pleasure solely consisted. The meeting at teachers' associations and the exchange of ideas must inspire and encourage every true teacher. Then imagine four weeks of such an association and such a meeting too. Nearly all the counties of the province were represented and in not many cases by more than one. My room-mate was from Pelee Island, I, myself, from West Elgin, to my right in the dining room was a lady from East Elgin, to her right one from Lincoln, while across the table York was represented. To the north of our table "Mac" represented Middlesex and had for company one from Simcoe and two ladies from Wellington, to the west Simcoe and Lanark found their place, while at my back two young gentlemen from Halton and one from Frontenac paid the agreeable to a bevy of ladies whose homes were scattered all the way from within reach of Ottawa to Dundas. Memory fails to recall all, suffice it to say it was an agreeable company and that scarcely a discordant note was heard throughout the whole term. But time passed. The end came. The last gathering met in the gymnasium. The valedictory was delivered. The last round of the rooms was made. The last good-byes were said and singly, in couples, and in groupes we parted, no doubt never to meet again, but carrying away with us pleasant memories of each other, of the college, of its people, from Dr. Mills to the workmen on the farm, and not forgetting the big white-faced Hereford that used to greet us with such a look of astonishment in its big brown eyes.

W. L. MacKENZIE.

Strabane, April 14th, 1894.

On the majority of farms, enough old iron lies about, which if sold, would buy all the nails needed, and in many cases, all the hardware.

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