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Editorial.

IT IS remarked by many persons who visit the O. A. C. after an absence of a few years, that such advances have been made in improving the old departments and establishing new ones as to render unnecessary any further outlay for the extension of the work, and that the equipment is now all that is required. But what appears to be a culminating point in the growth of the institution is in all probability, only a resting stage, from which it will emerge into a larger life with greater possibilities of development before it. Like any other human enterprise, it must adapt itself to the trend of events around it, and, in our opinion, the time has come when the question of a new departure will be forced upon the consideration of the Government.

The fact that the students now have increased facilities for the prosecution of their studies implies that they will have a higher standard of attainment, and will graduate as educated men who will compare favorably with those from the universities. If the college fails to produce such, it is not due to any inefficiency of the professors or of the students, but because a double work is attempted on one and the same curriculum. The institution appeals to the farmers for their support on the ground that the primary object is to turn out practical farmers. No one can deny that in this it has succeeded and easily bears the palm from all other agricultural colleges in America. On the other hand, the requirements of those who take the B. S. A. degree call for advanced work in the sciences of Chemistry, Botany, Bacteriology, &c. These two aims cannot be accomplished with success to both; one or the other must suffer.

The course of study for an associate diploma as given in the College circular enumerates thirty-one different subjects, together with some half dozen practicals, on which examinations must be passed. The idea is that a graduate at the end of three years should be fitted either to return to the farm or to qualify for some position requiring a special knowledge of agricultural science. With this in view, the curriculum has had added to it a little here and a little there, until it is too lengthy for a thorough mastery of the subjects in the allotted time.

There are really two classes of students in attendance here, those who have had a previous training in a preparatory school and who

have the ability and application which go to make good students, others who can barely pass the entrance examination, and who are unable to master the more difficult subjects of the course. Yet in the first and second year they must all take the same lectures and try the same examinations. It is unfair to those of the former class to compel them to spend part of their time in work which they have already covered. Why not specialize the work beginning even in the first year, and thus separate the two classes of students so that all could work to the best advantage?

A change of this nature would bring the course more nearly into line with modern educational systems, which offer a wide range of options. At Cornell the course for a degree in Agriculture is almost entirely elective in the junior and senior years. Even in the Collegiate Institutes of Ontario, where they follow strictly the regulations of the Educational Department, a considerable portion of the work is optional. Instruction is becoming more and more specialized to meet the demands of the age for men who are trained specialists in some department of art or science.

With an improved curriculum, a better class of students would be attracted who could pass a matriculation examination approaching the University standard. One or two of the languages, together with the sciences bearing on agriculture, might be required by those intending to take the course for the degree. Then with another year added to the course, the B. S. A. would be equal in every respect to the B. A. degree.

A proposal has been made that the regulations of the Educational system should be altered so as to permit graduates of this College to teach in the Public or High Schools of the Province. Their three years training is sufficient to qualify them for such positions, and they would be specially fitted to give instruction on practical subjects which are of value to the farmer such as Elementary Chemistry, Physics, Entomology, &c. Such a change would be in the right direction, and would be meeting the demand which is now made for more practical instruction, but there are two obstacles in the way of its adoption. One is that the teaching profession is already crowded so that the members of the profession are complaining of the ruinous competition which has brought salaries down to the level of those of the day laborer. Another is that while it has no place on the examinations it will not pay a teacher to devote any of the school time to an outside subject.