

The Leaders of the Future on Our Farm.

For the O. A. C. Review.

The leaders of the future on the farm must come from the farm. There may be some exceptions to this rule, but they will not be very numerous. When the start is made on the farm, habits of industry grow up with the young man, so that these become a part of his very being. He requires not of necessity to cultivate them in later years by dint of a perseverance that is acquired at the expenditure of an energy that might otherwise do good service in another channel. The young man, then, who is to live by farming and who first gets his start upon the farm, so far as opportunity is concerned, stands head and shoulders over him who sets out from some of the other walks of life.

The leaders of the future on the farm, therefore, will in all probability, come from the farm. But it should be remembered that this fact alone will not fit them for leadership. It is very exceptional to find men who rise higher than their surroundings, if they have spent all their days amid these surroundings. To rise above these a young man must usually at some period of his life, and that period should not be a late one, step out of the little rut in which he has been journeying in common with all his neighbors, and come in contact with something that will stimulate to higher purpose and incite to higher effort.

The education that a young man receives at the college or the university consists not simply of so much knowledge acquired from books. It includes a widening and broadening of the whole man through contact with other minds. Thus it is that he is given enlarged views of life, which enable him to look far beyond the little horizon in which hitherto he was wont to move and breathe and have his being.

The knowledge thus acquired would not have effected the same purposes had it been acquired at home. While it would have broadened the mind in one sense it would probably have narrowed it in another, inasmuch as it would in all probably have begotten a conceit, as offensive as it is pitiable.

The leaders of the future on the farm, then, will be educated men—educated not simply in the sense of being the possessors of a certain amount of knowledge—but of knowledge acquired under conditions that will tend to broaden the whole man. This broadening process makes the young man more tolerant of the opinions of others, and more respectful of their methods, so long as the latter head in the direction of progress. It begets a willingness to look at man and things through the laws of common sense rather than through the old-time goggles of opinionativeness. It renders the young men not only willing to welcome what is useful and progressive, but anxious to do so, and because of the intensity of the mental wrestlings which he must needs undergo in the class-room, it impresses upon him the truth that others have brain power as well as he, and that if he is to outstrip them in the manifold race of the future it can only be through the exercise of a superior judgment and through the application of a severer industry.

The leaders of the future on the farm must, therefore, get their knowledge largely at some institution which will tend to mind expansion in the direction indicated. The ordinary college will not answer the purpose, for although its education tends to mind-expansion, agriculture is not taught there, and mind-expansion to the farmer of the future without a knowledge of agriculture is

not so very much ahead of a knowledge of agriculture without much mind-expansion, as many would have us believe. Nor will the commercial college alone equip the farmer of the future for the fight he is to wage. It will fit him for the counting house and will prove helpful to him in many walks of life, it will give him a knowledge of a more elaborate system of book-keeping than his business requires, but it will not teach him agriculture. The young man fitting himself for the counting house might with as much reason go to the Agricultural College for his furnishings as that the young man fitting himself for the farm should go to the Commercial College for his.

The Agricultural College is beyond all doubt the place where the farmer should get the cope-tone of his education—that information that will put him on a vantage ground that will at once lift him head and shoulders above other men. While some farmer fathers are looking through distorted spectacles for instances of failure in the efforts of graduates from this college, those who are wise will strain every nerve to give their sons an even chance with young men destined for other professions by giving them an opportunity of taking a full course at an agricultural college.

The leaders of the future on the farm will, therefore, in nearly every instance, be college-educated men. Were it otherwise the monstrous lie would be apparently true that muscle alone and uneducated mind will prove more than a match for muscle and educated mind.

But the leaders of the future on the farm will of course require something more than collegiate education. In successful farming unless on a very large scale, muscle is a factor of great importance. It will prove a great matter to a farmer if he is able to use his muscle better than any man can whom he employs, and ordinarily it will prove a great matter to him and to his farm if he does so use it.

The future leaders on the farm will be men who concentrate their energies on one particular line, and who make their general farming subservient to this one end. The whole field of farming is so wide that no one man can cultivate it to the best advantage. Those who attempt this will assuredly fail, for the powers of human intellect are unable to overtake a field so vast and wide. It is well to consider, then, even in the early stages of the course of collegiate education what particular line the student is likely to follow, and he should direct his best energies to the mastering of this branch so far as he is able.

I have said but little as to the individual qualities that must characterize the leaders of the future on the farm, nor can more be said within the assigned limits of this paper. The industry, the energy, the wise calculation, the prudence, the forethought, the willingness to adopt improved methods and the firmness to reject the adoption of those yet unproven, I leave to the contemplation of the thoughtful reader, and I would desire here to add that none other than thoughtful readers are likely to profit by what they read.

It seems a foregone conclusion, then, that a magnificent future is in store for agricultural colleges. The dark era of the past in this respect is surely drawing to a close. The days are at hand when the reproach will be removed which says that only one farmer in six thousand in the Dominion is willing that his son shall be well furnished for his future life work as a farmer. If the leaders of the future on the farm are to be educated men, and I claim that this is the fair deduction from the above statements, it follows that so soon as the post graduate course on the farm of the graduates of this college shall compel the average farmer to respect a higher agricultural education, then there will not be room for the students from our farm homes in the agricultural colleges.

CULTIVATOR.