

## American Association of Farmers' Institute Workers.

The ninth annual convention of the American Association of Farmers' Institute workers met in St. Louis on Oct. 18th, 19th, 20th. The weather was delightful, and a large attendance during the whole convention marked an increased interest in the work of the association. Not even the attractions of the "Greatest World's Fair ever held" could diminish the attendance at the meetings. There were present from Ontario, President Creelman, O. A. C.; Prof. Zavitz, O. A. C.; Supt. Putnam, Toronto; Miss Blanche Maddock, Guelph, and last, but not least, Mr. Hoar, Secretary of East Durham Institute.

Owing to the illness of the President, Mr. B. W. Kilgore, the Vice-president, Mr. E. E. Kaufman, N. Dakota, presided. The address of welcome was delivered by F. W. Taylor, Chief of the Dept. of Agriculture, World's Fair. Mr. Taylor had been an old Institute worker and Farmers' Institute Superintendent, so that he was in touch with the convention, and extended a very hearty welcome to the members of the convention to the City of St. Louis, to the great World's Fair, and more particularly to the Agricultural Building, in which the meetings were held.

Major Lee, of Louisiana, replied to the address of welcome in a carefully-prepared address. He also brought an earnest invitation from the people of his State to the convention to hold their tenth annual meeting "Away down South." This invitation was finally accepted, much to the satisfaction of the Southerners, who had come in force to vote for Louisiana.

The first session on the morning of the 19th was given over to five-minute reports from the different States and Provinces. These reports showed an increased interest and attendance in nearly every State; but Canadian readers will be pleased to learn that our Ontario system of Institutes cannot be excelled by any State in the Union. The report from Ontario, as presented by Mr. Putnam, who, by the way, held his own with any of the Supts. of America, showed the largest number of meetings held, and the largest attendance at meetings of any State or Province of America.

Mr. John Hamilton, Washington, read a paper on "Illustrative material for Institute work." Mr. Hamilton believed very strongly in educating through the eye as well as through the ear. He would use pictured charts, or samples of the actual object, such as clover, corn or grasses, for inspection by the audience; or if live stock were the theme, the most striking illustration would be a sample of the animal under discussion, brought into the lecture room.

The subject of county organization for Institute work was introduced by Prof. W. C. Latta, Indiana, and very minutely and enthusiastically discussed by Supt. Putnam, of Ontario.

Wednesday evening the convention assembled in the Illinois State building, where Prof. C. C. James, Ont., delivered a wonderfully instructive and entertaining address, on the "Progression of Agriculture," after which the evening was given over to an informal reception, which was heartily enjoyed by every member of the convention.

Thursday morning was acknowledged by all to be the most interesting session of the convention. "Women's Institutes" was the theme. The different methods of organizing and conducting meetings were presented by delegates from Illinois, Ontario, and Indiana, after which the meeting was thrown open for discussion. Not a moment was lost in useless comment or idle phrases. Women workers all over the hall gave impromptu addresses on the need and importance of Women's Institutes throughout the States, as well as in Ontario. These opinions were heartily endorsed by Supts. and delegates from the different States. A marked change is apparent in the attitude of the members of the F. I. A. to women's department of the work. Three years ago the women's work was scarcely mentioned; last year in Toronto a few of the State reports referred to it, but this year a large majority of the State reports particularly emphasized the need of lady delegates, and the good accomplished among the women of their separate States.

The moment there was a lull in the discussion, President Creelman suggested that an American Association of Women's Institute workers be formed. This suggestion was carried out by appointing a committee of five women, two from Illinois, one from Minnesota, one from Indiana, and one from Ontario, to confer with the executive of the F. I. A., for the purpose of arranging topics for different sessions. As the time of the convention is necessarily limited, it is thought more ground can be covered by holding sessions dealing particularly with the work of the W. I. or the F. I. separately, while those of general interest will, as usual, be held together.

Another important discussion, "How to train Institute workers," was introduced by President Creelman. The moment Mr. Creelman was called on, instant attention was given. The comment, "Now we will hear something worth while," was appreciated by the Ontario delegates. Judging by the applause at the close of his address, we felt that Ontario had again scored.

The last subject, "New problems and methods in Institute work," was discussed at some length by representatives from Eastern, Western and Southern States. In this connection the suggestion is made that the Farmers' Institute of the future should devote more attention to demonstration work, such as instruction in judging, rather than addresses and papers. At the close of this discussion, the convention adjourned, to meet in Louisiana next November. The officers for

the coming year are as follows: President, J. C. Hardy, President Agr. College, Mississippi; Vice-president, E. C. Burritt, Lincoln, Neb.; Sec.-Treas., G. C. Creelman, President Agr. College, Guelph, Canada.

## P. E. Island Notes.

The crop is now all gathered in with the exception of roots. The season of 1904 will pass into history as one of the driest ever experienced here. Grain crops, with the exception of wheat, are far below the average. Straw was very short. The same was true of the hay crop, and the pastures yielded very much less feed than usual.

Coarse fodder will be scarce, and very high in price, and very many cattle will have to be sacrificed in consequence. The root crop is not up to the average, as so much of it was destroyed with the grub in July. The potato crop was good in general, but in some localities the frost killed the vines early in September; where not killed by frost they grew till October. There is absolutely no rot in the crop. In dry seasons we always have sound potatoes.

The dairy stations have done a smaller business than usual all through the season, and many of them closed early in September. This, taken with the prevailing low price for cheese, will make our receipts from butter and cheese pretty small. Dairy farmers could not afford to draw on winter supplies of feed to keep up the milk flow. These dry seasons are teaching many of our farmers the necessity of having a supply of green feed all through the season, as the only sure way to make dairying pay. We will have more and more to adopt the soiling system to help out pastures, especially in dry seasons, so that we can keep more cows to the acre and get more profit per cow. Hay is worth \$15 per ton now, and may go higher. Straw is worth \$7 to \$8, and very little of it for sale. Our Local Government are importing hay from Quebec to sell to the farmers at cost, and they are getting it down to "Point Du Chene," on the I. C. R., freight free. This will help some to get their stock through the winter.

Our excellent fruit crop is being marketed now at fair prices. Some went to England on the direct steamer that sailed from Charlottetown in the latter part of October. Quite a large shipment of Gravensteins went on this boat. The local market will take most of our apples.

Prices.—Pork, carcass, 5½c.; oats, 36c. to 38c.; potatoes, 20c.; beef, by carcass, 5c. to 6c. The Dominion Packing Company have not been buying live hogs for over a month. This makes the trade in pork dull.

Politics is all the rage here, and the main question with the electors is "To be or not to be," with respect to the G. T. P. W. S.

Oct. 26th.

## Coming Events.

### SHOWS, CONVENTIONS, ETC.

Nov. 15th to 19th—Ontario Fruit-growers' Association annual meeting, Toronto.

Nov. 15th to 19th—Flower, Fruit and Honey Show, and annual meeting of the Ontario Beekeepers' Association, Toronto.

Nov. 26th to Dec. 3rd—International Live-stock Show, Chicago.

Dec. 5th to 9th—Ontario Provincial Winter Fair and Poultry Show, at Guelph.

Dec. 7th and 8th—Nova Scotia Fruit-growers' Association convention, at Windsor, N. S.

Dec. 12th to 15th—Maritime Winter Fair, at Amherst, N. S.

Dec. 21st and 22nd—Prince Edward Island annual convention of Farmers and Fruit-growers, at Charlottetown.

March 6th to 10th, 1905—Eastern Ontario Live-stock and Poultry Show, at Ottawa.

## Fruit Shipments to Ireland.

An Irish fruit-grower writes that the Ontario fruit-growers do not receive the full benefit of the shipments to Ireland. The fruit is shipped to Ireland and then across the channel, and the Irish middleman gets all the profit. The suggestion is made that the fruit-growers should petition the Dominion Government, asking that subsidized mail steamers be compelled to call at an Irish port so as to give a direct service.

## Dairymen's Meetings.

Mr. G. H. Barr, Chief Dairy Instructor for Western Ontario, has arranged to hold meetings of cheese and butter makers at several central points this month, for the purpose of discussing subjects relevant to the dairy industry. Notices have been sent out to all concerned, and all who in any way are responsible for the manufacture of dairy products should endeavor to attend the meetings in their respective districts.

## The Macdonald Institute.

The work of the late Dr. Muldrew, Dean of the Macdonald Institute, O. A. C., Guelph, is being conducted by Prof. Lochhead and other members of the college staff, for the time being. A good many applications for the vacant position have been received.

## A Chair of Landscape Gardening.

The University of Illinois is considering the question of an additional instructor in the University, to be known as the professor of landscape gardening. The necessity for this chair arises in part from the numerous requests reaching the University for suggestions regarding decoration of school grounds, public parks, and private homes.

## The Truth About Lime in the Soil.

Lime is absolutely indispensable to plant growth, yet it is required in comparatively small amounts. Our cereal crops, for instance, contain about two pounds of phosphoric acid and three pounds of potash for every pound of lime, while all soils except the clear sands contain much more lime than phosphoric acid, and at least as much lime as potash. The abundance of lime is shown in the fact that water which has been for any length of time in contact with the soil is always hard; but only one grain of lime to the gallon of water, a quantity that could not be detected under ordinary conditions, would supply twice the amount of lime needed by a clover crop, which is the only one of our ordinary farm crops that contains as much lime as potash.

Lime, however, serves other purposes than as simple plant food. One of the most important of these is the correction of acidity in the soil. When a soil becomes acid clover will not thrive upon it, and when this condition occurs an application of lime may be necessary, a point thoroughly demonstrated at the Ohio Experiment Station, where a luxuriant crop of clover has been grown on limed land, while the clover on unlimed land alongside was a complete failure.

Lime performs still another important function, in liberating plant food already in the soil. If a little lime be mixed with strong manure, such as hen manure, an odor of ammonia will become apparent. This means that the lime is liberating the ammonia from the manure, and that it is escaping into the air. If lime be mixed with the soil similar action will take place. If a crop be growing upon the soil, it may absorb a part of the escaping ammonia and a larger crop will result; but this larger crop is made at the expense of the soil stores of plant food, and if these stores are not maintained by manuring or fertilizing the soil will soon refuse to respond to lime, because all the material in it upon which lime can act has been drawn out, and the soil is poorer than if no lime had been used.

European farmers who have used lime for many years have become so convinced of its injurious effect when used in this way that they say "Lime enriches the father, but impoverishes the son," and it is customary in some places to prohibit the use of lime in leasing land.

When used as an adjunct to liberal manuring or fertilizing, lime may be made to perform a most important service, but its use as a substitute for manure or fertilizer means ruin to the soil. Where clover is failing to grow the use of lime is indicated. For this purpose the common quicklime is all that is required. —[Ex.]

## Herb o' Grace.

By Anna L. Jack.

"I sent for this plant to the Old Country, ma'am," said English Tom to me the other morning. It's good for so many diseases, I thought it would be useful for the chickens in spring."

I looked at the plant, expecting to find something rare. "Why, it's rue," I said, and a smile brightened and broadened his face. "Yes ma'am, it's rue, and it cures poultry troubles, and is good for the animals about the farm."

"Oh, Tom," I said, "It's one of Shakespeare's plants; he seemed to know the value of it, too, and he called it 'Herb o' Grace,' and they put it in the holy water to drive away evil spirits long ago. Burton wrote: 'It hath virtue to expel vain imaginations, devils, and to ease afflicted souls.' Let us cherish it, even as Methridates did, who ate every morning a compound of twenty leaves of rue, with twenty juniper berries and two figs, made into a paste. Surely his was not an 'afflicted soul.' Even the weasel, when about to encounter a serpent, armed herself with rue; and if the leaves were boiled in spirits, and applied when the moon was waning, it was a cure for warts and bruises."

"It's very likely, ma'am," said Tom, "but I did not know about those things, only it cures chickens' diseases if chopped up in their food."

I promised to look after the plant, and put it in the window, thinking of Shakespeare's lines:

"For you there's rosemary and rue, these keep  
Seeming and savor all the winter long."

But the rue, which had safely crossed the seas, was destined to suffer from an unexpected quarter, for going one morning to water the plant, it was discovered almost denude of leaves, that betrayed the enemy to have been a mouse. Surely it was in search of something to "expel vain imagination," or it would not have fancied this bitter tonic, and selected it for a salad. The old herbalists used this herb as a carminative, and it was found to promote appetite and give tone to the stomach when taken as an infusion the first thing in the morning for several days in succession. The Romans used it for flavoring food, and it is still used in some parts of Europe as a sandwich between bread and butter. But there is an acrid poison in the leaves if used too freely, and the taste is not agreeable to the cultivated palate. The juice of rue mixed with water promotes the growth of the hair, and altogether it deserves the title of "Herb o' Grace."