

## The Farmer's Advocate AND HOME MAGAZINE.

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL IN THE  
DOMINION.

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### The Annual School Meeting.

Sufficient interest now centres in the rural school to warrant country folk taking the annual school meeting seriously. Education is one of the leading topics of the day. All sorts of courses are being recommended; all kinds of curricula are being advised. Some consider certain subjects as non-essential, and would replace them forthwith, while others view those very subjects as the fundamentals of a broad, useful education. In the minds of some the consolidated school is the only solution of the rural school problem; others oppose the idea. It would please a certain element in our population to see agriculture the paramount subject, and in defense of this they argue that it would equip country children for their life-work and keep them on the farm.

While agriculture and nature study should be taught in every school, they ought never to be given such prominence as will place rural pupils at a disadvantage when they come into competition with urban children; neither should they be allowed to handicap the country boy and girl if they decide that some life other than on the farm has a call for them.

Teachers' salaries must be given consideration, if the standards of education are not to be lowered. Experience must be recognized in the remuneration which teachers receive, for only by retaining the most competent instructors in the service can we expect to do the right thing by our children.

All this suggests that the very best men in the school section be appointed to the board of trustees, and the right of women to a seat on the board ought not to be denied. As a rule, country women have not much time for community service, but the school affects them and their children so vitally that they would not fail to render very material aid in the management of the local educational institution.

Women's institutes and other organizations for farm women have been and still are doing a great deal to make school life more pleasant and profitable for the children, and the good work they are doing could be increased by giving the women more say in the management of affairs. At any rate, the times demand a keen appreciation of the significance of the rural school, and the annual meeting this year should reflect an awakened interest in school matters.

Trustees, inspectors, and all those interested in educational matters, may be called upon to advise as to how the school system may be improved. Should

such a contingency arise, the value of a live trustee board will become obvious at once. The one opportunity of the year to present your ideas will be afforded at the annual school meeting. Do not fail to be present and take advantage of the rate-payer's privilege.

### Looking for the Reason.

BY ALLAN MCDIARMID.

Some almost unbelievable things have taken place in our Province in the course of the past few weeks. A year ago it would have taken a pretty hardy prophet to have faced the ridicule he would have brought on himself by predicting a "Farmer's" Government in Ontario. It has all come so suddenly and unexpectedly, at least to the majority of us, that we are still wondering how it was done.

As in the case of other noteworthy accomplishments there has been, we know, forces quietly at work behind the scenes that are responsible, but the final act has been staged in a way that would do credit to the most experienced of professionals.

To the most of us the outstanding fact that the farmers have accomplished what so many have declared impossible, that is, to stick together at election time, is the one thing of importance. How we came to do it is a secondary matter. At the same time it is of interest to the man of the inquiring turn of mind to go a little further and ascertain what forces have been at work, or what principles have been brought to bear to bring about the present, apparently satisfactory, political situation.

If the U. F. O. had any one guiding principle, what was it?

We are inclined to think that it must have been the same as that of Danton, the French revolutionist. When addressing the people he said: "In order to defeat the enemies of this country we need audacity, and still more audacity, and always audacity!"

The "Farmers" must have taken their "cue" from that. No doubt the two old political parties think so, anyway. Probably they will call it "cheek." And it must be admitted that the whole accomplishment has called for the exercise of considerable nerve on the part of somebody. From the time of the first proposal to run independent candidates in practically every county in the Province until the final formation of the Government was announced, no one could, very justly, accuse "Farmers" of any great lack of "audacity." And I, for one, wouldn't want to say a word against this quality in a man, or a party, as a help to the attainment of success. "Nothing venture, nothing win," and there are a good many other time-tried proverbs along the same line that justify us in using a certain amount of "push" upon occasion, even if it should be characterized as almost rudeness by those who feel the full effect of it. The meek may "inherit the earth," but it's very doubtful if they will ever get control of the Government. It's remarkable how often success is a case of self-assertion. If we wanted an example we could find it in the case of the late ex-President Roosevelt. And if we take a look at the down-trodden peasant class of Russia we will get something of an idea of the result of lack of self-assertion.

It would have been a long time before the farmers of Ontario would have been invited into Toronto's legislative halls in sufficient numbers to give them a controlling voice in the Assembly. And the day is past when a man's trade or profession will keep him out of positions of trust and responsibility, such as the members of our Parliament hold. A fair share of intellect is one thing required of him. This is of even more importance, probably, than audacity. But the two shouldn't interfere with one another in any way when combined in the one individual—or the one government.

Now it may be that there are some among us who think they know of particular and individual cases that are an exception to at least one of the rules we have laid down. Some men cannot be said to be very self-assertive, and still they seem to have been able to get pretty nearly to the top of the ladder of success. It has been said that not one of our Provincial Cabinet Ministers made any move towards securing for himself a seat in the Government. They all had to be asked and some of them asked repeatedly. Not much self-assertion here. One of the ministers, speaking to some of his friends shortly after his appointment, said: "I have to pinch myself once in a while to make sure that I'm not dreaming. Six weeks ago I was in overalls, doing the work around the farm, and now it appears I'm a Cabinet Minister." Apparently this man hadn't had the "audacity" to think of such a thing as an all-the-year-round Government job for himself. There must be some other qualifications for success.

And there is. It isn't necessary to go back on the worth of self-assertion to admit that. A good many factors go to the making up of anything, whether it be a good sermon or a successful man. And the one thing above all others that is required in the latter case is preparation. It isn't necessary to go into an argument on that point. We will all admit it when it is brought to our attention. The thing is that a great many men are forgetting this fact or are overlooking it. They seem to be depending on luck to get them some easy berth, sooner or later. They don't take kindly to the idea of fitting themselves for the job they would like to hold.

Even without a personal acquaintance with the members of our new Government we're not afraid to make the assertion that every one of them, from Premier down, has been preparing, practically all his life, for

the position and work that has now been given him. They may not have been conscious of it, but they were getting ready just the same. Every one of them. That was why Opportunity stopped off long enough to knock at their doors as She passed through. She isn't very apt to disturb the man who has been asleep on the job. Some say that all men are born equal, but if one man makes a habit of getting up at five o'clock in the morning and the other never gets up until nine, the equilibrium is soon upset. As little as that may make all the difference between success and failure. One man is making the preparation for a future opportunity, the other is just waiting for it.

And so, in summing the matter up, we can only say that if we find that our audacity, or self-assertiveness hasn't done all it should have done for us, or if our natural intellect was not the key to unlock the door to Opportunity, then let us get down to work and give our job, whatever it is, our undivided attention until, in the natural course of events, it is proved we are ready for something better.

This may not be much of a prospect for some of us third raters, but it's the only way out of the woods. We'll get lost on the short-cuts.

### Nature's Diary.

A. B. KLUGH, M. A.

An epoch-marking event in Canadian ornithology is the publication of "Birds of Eastern Canada" by P. A. Taverner, which has just been issued by the Biological Division of the Geological Survey, Ottawa.

For many years there has been great need for such a work as there has been no book on the birds of eastern Canada to which we could refer those in quest of ornithological knowledge.

No one is better qualified to write such a book than Mr. Taverner. For twenty-five years he has studied Canadian birds, and for the past twelve years he has devoted his whole time to this subject. He is not only one of our foremost field ornithologists, but is also a good all-round biologist and a clear, forceful and facile writer.

This book is excellent, both in plan and execution. The purpose, as stated by the author, is to stimulate an interest, both aesthetic and practical, in the study of Canadian birds, and to suggest the sentimental, scientific, and economic value of that study, to assist in the identification of species, and to furnish the reader with a ready means of determining the economic status of the various species. This work covers all the birds that the observer is likely to meet with between the Atlantic coast and the prairies, taking in all the species of that region with the exception of casual visitors and stragglers.

The first portion of the book is general in character, treating of classification, geographical distribution, migration, protection, means of attracting birds and ornithological literature. This is followed by a fully illustrated "key" by means of which any bird can be placed in its order or family.

The body of the book, embracing pages 41 to 218, consists of descriptive ornithology. Every order and family is concisely characterized, and every species is treated under the headings—distinctions, field marks, nesting, distribution, general notes and economic status. The data given under all the headings is important, but that given under "field marks" will be particularly valuable to the beginner in the study of bird life, as here the points by which an expert observer is able to recognize the different species in the field are clearly presented. This section on "field marks" is rendered all the more useful by the fact that the other species for which the species under consideration is likely to be mistaken are mentioned. The data presented under "economic status" is of the greatest interest and value to the farmer, as here, for the first time, is brought together all the more important data on the food habits of all our eastern birds, and it is now possible for the agriculturalist to readily ascertain whether a certain species is beneficial, harmful or neutral.

In the section on general notes Mr. Taverner has very happily picked out the salient points concerning each species and presents many interesting facts which are not mentioned in most ornithological works. One cannot help wishing, however, that these sections had been made fuller, particularly when one considers the wonderful fund of ornithological information that the author possesses. It is probable, however, that these sections had to be curtailed in order to keep the book from assuming too voluminous proportions.

A very attractive feature, and of very great practical usefulness, is the inclusion of the fifty colored plates on which over a hundred species of birds are portrayed in their natural colors. In many of these pictures both male and female are figured when the sexes differ materially in appearance.

Such work as this would in the ordinary market retail for three dollars or more, but it is issued by the Dominion Government for the nominal sum of fifty cents. It is certainly the best fifty cents worth that those interested in Canadian wild life have ever been offered or are likely to be offered.

The preparation of such a comprehensive book entails an enormous amount of hard and pains-taking work, and all who take an interest in the bird life of Canada owe a debt of gratitude to Mr. Taverner.

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