

as soon as they begin to be educated, leave the farm is a misfortune to the parties themselves, a loss to agriculture and to the country. A boy's leaving the farm because he has, or is acquiring, a good education is an assumption or admission by all consenting parties that a farmer does not need such an education; and as long as this error is admitted, by farmers not being educated, agriculture will be looked down upon, instead of being looked up to, as a pursuit for educated men.

"Politicians are accustomed to call farmers, by way of compliment, the bone and sinew of the land; and bone and sinew they will remain, and never be anything else, without education. It is a supreme law, illustrated by all history, that head rules muscle; and all farmers who educate only their muscles, and not their heads, must occupy the inferior relation of muscle. It is true that such farmers, as well as mechanics, may be and feel themselves quite as good as other people; but if they are not as intelligent—that is, as well educated and informed—their goodness will be associated with ignorance, and their social position will necessarily be one of inferiority. But let the boy be educated to make him a better farmer, as well as a better citizen; let it be assumed, and become a recognized fact, that a farmer must be educated to be a good farmer, as a lawyer, doctor, or clergyman must be educated to be master of his work, and agriculture will hold a rank equal to, if not above, law or medicine. Educated farmers, educated merchants, and educated manufacturers and mechanics will not only develop and advance the material interests of the country, but its civil and social interests, by enabling the people to select chiefly intelligent and well-to-do men from these classes as their representatives—men not needing an office for support, or making politics a trade—

affording the best chance of practical wisdom and honesty in legislation and government, and the hope of producing the great public desideratum—a generation of honest politicians and patriotic statesmen."

One might reasonably assume that this is an extract from an address before one of our Ontario farmers' institutes, or has been taken from a lately issued report of the Ontario Department of Agriculture, and that they are the words and opinions of some leading agriculturist. Not so, however. These are the words of Egerton Ryerson, taken from the introduction to his text-book on agriculture for use in Ontario Public Schools, and written in 1870.

Were these statements true and applicable in 1870? Then they are even more so in 1899.

I can well believe that twenty-five years from the present some student of the educational and economic history of this province will be hard at work studying out and trying to explain why so little progress was made in general agricultural instruction in this province during the years from 1870 to 1898. During the period four text-books at least were available, the one by Dr. Ryerson already referred to, one by Prof. Henry Youle Hind, and one by Dr., now Sir, Wm. Dawson, that first appeared in 1864, and the "First Principles of Agriculture," by Dr. Mills and Prof. Shaw, that appeared in 1890.

An interesting discussion might be made on the subject of why the trustees of rural Public Schools at least have not insisted upon having instruction given on this subject, based upon the book prepared by Messrs. Mills and Shaw.

It is not my purpose in this short address to take up this subject—instead of looking backward we should examine the present situation and lay plans for the future.