

Meeting of the N. Norwich Farmers' Club—The Agricultural College.

Thanks to the Secretary of the N. N.F.C., for his courtesy in sending us a report from this Club of its last meeting. As the speeches reported are in contradiction to our opinions given in previous numbers of the ADVOCATE, and we have reason to believe, of that class for whose benefit the Agricultural College is professedly established; and as we are lovers of British fair play that deals out even-handed justice even to opponents, we give insertion to the report received as little abridged as our limited space allows. Speaking of British fair play leads to the suggestion that it might be better if the arguments of the opponents as well as of the supporters of the Government project had been reported by the Secretary.

I send you the President's and Secretary's speeches at the last meeting of N. Norwich Farmers' Club, in the discussion on the Agricultural College and Model Farm, with a few notes from those who were opposed to the College.

Mr. E. Palmer, President, said:—My views with regard to the Agricultural College and Model Farm are that it will be the only place where a proper education can be obtained for farmers. In bygone days it did not make so much difference whether the farmers were educated or not. After the timber was off, the soil was rich and yielded abundantly with very little care; but the soil is less productive now, and requires better treatment. Farmers are worse educated than any other class of people, and what little education they have is not very useful as far as farming goes. It is argued that too much education spoils the boy for the farm. What is the reason? I think it is quite plain that the education they have received has not been such as they would require in practice on the farm. They have spent four or five years at college, where their associates have been studying for some profession, and the tendency has been to draw their minds away from the farm, instead of attracting them to it. At the end of the course at college, the boy comes home with fine ideas of himself especially. Finally, he comes to the conclusion that it is all very fine that the farmer is the most independent of all men. If such is the case, he thinks he would rather be somebody else, and not quite so independent. But, unfortunately, his education has not fitted him for any profession, and consequently is of little use. Now, if he had such an education given him as he would be able to obtain at an Agricultural College and Model Farm, I believe he would have come out a first rate farmer, with good muscles and a good will, which goes a good way to make a good farmer.

The Secretary (B. J. Palmer) said the establishment of an Agricultural College and Model Farm, and its advisability is a momentous question. Such an institution would have for its object the teaching of the theory and practice of farming. The question therefore narrows down to the one point, viz.: Should the farmer be educated so as to take a stand in the world among the learned and skilled of other professions; should he understand the principles upon which his business is based; should he be able to withstand the gross frauds perpetrated upon him by dealers; should he understand the laws of breeding; in short, should he understand any of the laws which govern nature; or, on the other hand, had he better be still the bottom of the pile; is it better for him to be cheated and imposed on by patent righters and linen coated sappers, alias agents; and had he better be totally ignorant of nature's laws? Every man can answer for himself. For my part give me education. It is argued that a man by constant practice and close observation can become a good farmer. So he can, but it takes him the best part of his life to learn what is already known, whereas a few months at the college and farm would place him on a level, at least, with the ordinary old farmers of the country. Thus education, when to the point, lengthens a man's usefulness in life. It also elevates a man into a better circle of society, while it at the same time makes him more genial in lower society. He can talk with the most learned in the land on almost any subject, and who will deny the fact that the better informed a man's company is the better the ideas he will glean from the company. It is stated that a Model Farm under the Government will check private enterprise.—What is meant by this assertion? Why, it

will curtail the opportunities many enjoy of getting up new varieties of seeds, &c., and getting big prices for nothing. Take, for instance, the potato. How much money has been gulled out of the farmers who invested in new varieties as fast as they were advertised? Out of all the varieties lately introduced, only one has stood the test and met with the general approval of the public, and that is the Early Rose. Where is the money farmers invested in such varieties as the Gleason, Harrison, Gooderich, Peerless, Prolific, Climax, &c., &c.? Patent washing fluids, patent insect exterminators, patent potato bug poison, and the greatest gull of all, the patent process of preserving fruit and meat with sulphur.

It is argued that the Agricultural College will be used as a mere political engine. I would ask if the University of Toronto is a political engine? It is established by the Government, and, notwithstanding all the efforts put forth by denominational colleges to pull it down, it still stands and is the standard of education on this continent.

It is argued that the present Government is not justifiable in changing the site of the Model Farm. Changing the site is good proof of the usefulness of education to the farmer, because the change was made on the strength of scientific evidence, and who can say and prove the change to be a bad one.

The great expense of the College is brought up against it. I acknowledge its vast expense. Professional men cannot work for nothing, and yet how few men who spend their lives in the interests of science die wealthy! Perhaps, however, the College will save to us as much of our money by defending us against frauds, &c., as it will spend, and then we shall have the education to boot. In conclusion, I would ask what institution of learning is not expensive to its supporters? Why do we not raise a cry against common schools? They are expensive and parents never see their money back. Yet he who would say down with them would be looked upon as one who wished for the old times, when the wild Indian was on the war path and justice was administered with the rifle and bowie knife.

Mr. Gilbert Moore took sides against the College, and said it was time enough for fifty or a hundred years to establish an Agricultural College. He thought that the will and ability for manual labor was all that was necessary for successful farming. However, when it came to voting on the resolution passed at the close of the meeting, Mr. Moore would not vote against it. Mr. Butterfield thought the difficulty with farmers was not from want of knowledge but because of the high price of labor and low price of products, together with poor crops. Mr. Loeie also spoke against the College, but produced no argument, and finally voted for the resolution. The following is a copy of the resolution passed by the club:—Moved by W. S. Moore, seconded by Elias Mott and resolved, That this club decidedly approves of the establishment of an Agricultural College and Model Farm, and believe it will prove highly beneficial to the rising generation.—B. J. D.

THE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE AND MODEL FARM.

We are pleased to find that the supporters of the Government Agricultural College and Model Farm have revived the discussion on this subject, as it gives an opportunity to bring again before the country the wrongs done to the farmers by the Government, who under the pretence of fostering agriculture, are imposing on the heavily burdened contributors to the national revenue, an additional tax to be bestowed upon political parasites. We must give credit to the Messrs. Palmer for their courage in standing by the Government in their indefensible measures, and for their ability in the management of a bad cause. As they have again come forward and opened the pleadings de novo we must in courtesy reply. We propose to do so very briefly.

The question at issue is not covered by the resolution carried at the meeting of the North Norwich club. Their approval of the establishment of an Agricultural College cannot be construed into the approval of the Government Agricultural College to which we objected; and they who support our views, may, with the greatest consistency, not vote against that resolution. Our objection to the project was, that its purpose was not to promote the interests of Agriculture, but to provide for hungry political followers. That it was unnecessary, uncalled for, imposing heavy taxes on the country, for which no

adequate remuneration would ever be received; and that very class, for whose interest its promoters pretended to be designed, were not favorable to it.

Let us take in order the arguments in favor of the measure. The College will be the only place where a proper education can be obtained for farmers. Farmers are poorer educated than any other class of people, and what little education they have is not very useful to them as far as farming goes.—E. B. Now, if this be true, how does E. B. or the Government propose to remedy it? To support and encourage a superior class of school accessible to the families of the farmers? To raise the status and improve the condition of farmers so that their sons, not being compelled to give so much time to work on the farm, might give more time to study? No, nothing of the kind. The remedy is to found an Agricultural College at some one place in the Province (say on a farm purchased at an exorbitant price from an orthodox politician)—to expend thousands upon thousands on professors, that a few—a dozen or a score or a hundred—may study chemistry, botany, mineralogy, geology, meteorology, &c., &c. And then—the great desideratum will have been obtained. None can say then that "farmers are more poorly educated." Is there not at Guelph an Agricultural College; are there not learned professors instructing half a score of the embryo farmers in all the ologies! Some "of the old times" may then be bold enough to say with E. B., "The education they have received has not been such as they would require on a farm." Our estimation of the number of agricultural students for the A. C. is not merely from supposition or guess. We judge from what has been and is now in such Colleges in the United States. We have had a report from an A. College in a Western State, and of about one hundred students seven were studying agriculture.

"Such an institution would have for its object the teaching of the theory and practice of farming."—B. J. P. The theory and practice are needed to constitute a really good farmer, but in such an institution as that proposed, the instruction is apt to be more theoretical than practical; and we must bear in mind that a practical farmer may be very successful, though not well versed in the theory, while a mere theoretical farmer can have very little prospects of success. P. J. P. confesses that scientific men seldom die rich. "The teaching of the theory and practice of farming." Now, one important branch we suppose would be improvement of the soil, if necessary. Every farm in Ontario is not a model farm. Where, we ask, are the opportunities on this Guelph farm for such an institution. It has been selected, they say, for a directly opposite reason. It needed no improvement. It was a carefully nurtured farm in a very high state of cultivation.—How unlike many of the farms the students will have to enter on when they cease being fancy agriculturists.

But another argument in favor of the Government project is that "it will save the farmers from being cheated and imposed on by patent rights and linen-coated sappers, alias agents." From such arguments we judge of the weakness of the cause in whose support they are advanced. "It will curtail the opportunities many enjoy of getting up new varieties of seeds, &c., and getting big prices for nothing. The potatoe—how much money has been gulled out of many farmers who invested in new varieties as fast as they were advertised? Only one variety has stood the test—the Early Rose." We would ask in reply how many of these varieties have not succeeded? If the Agricultural College is to put a stop to the introduction of new varieties of seed, it will add another injury to the interests of the farmers and the country. Is B. J. P. desirous to return to the old varieties, Coppercoats, &c.?

"Changing the site of the Model Farm is good proof of the usefulness of education to the farmer."—B. J. P. On the contrary it has proved the uncertainty of chemistry when applied by mere theorists. The report of the Mimico Farm; while the report of Professor Buckland differed from that of the Michigan professor, and the farmers—practical not theoretical men—whose lands adjoin the Mimico farm, and some of whom farmed part of it, say the condemnation was unjust.

There is yet another argument. "It will elevate a man into a better circle of society, while it at the same time makes him more genial in lower society." And is this all? For this is the country to be taxed so heavily

that the few who can or will be educated in the College may move in higher society and may condescend to be genial with those who learned and practise farming on their fathers' farms; thus directing the attention from the farm of those for whose education in farming the country has paid; and that the daughters of farmers may be fit companions for those moving in this higher circle, it will be necessary that they too have their education at similar colleges, or those young agricultural collegiates will seek for congenial mates from the towns and cities.

But "a few months at the College and Farm would place him on a level at least with the old farmers of the country."—B. J. P. In a few months to be practically instructed in farming, for its professed object is the teaching of the practice as well as the art of farming. As practical and not unsuccessful farmers, we beg to say to B. J. P. that a few months will barely suffice to learn the outline of the theory; while in the practice he would be a perfect novice. How little the practice is understood by mere theorists—book-farmers—is shown by the opinion advanced that if a farm be impoverished by twenty years of exhaustive cropping, its fertility cannot be restored in a less period; whereas any practical farmer could in one-tenth or one-twentieth of the time make it fit to yield abundantly.—Ass't Ed.

State of the Crops.

Since writing our last notice we have had a continuation of the most favorable weather. The crop that appeared almost past reviving improved as if touched by the magic wand. The hay crop is generally a light crop, we think not much more than half a crop, although there have been some good pieces in some parts of the country.

The fall wheat, although patchy in places, and in some parts almost ruined, still there are so many really good pieces and the cool, damp and growing weather we have experienced through the middle of July, has given us a much plumper and brighter sample than usual. We think the fall wheat on the whole will be near an average crop; in some sections quite an average, in others not half an average.

The spring wheat in the east and northern parts of Ontario is good. In this and the western section the weevil has injured it so much that it will not be over half a crop.

The peas in all sections we have seen look exceedingly well, and will be over an average. Oats and barley have so much improved that about an average crop will be harvested.

The weather has been so unusually favorable for our grain filling this season that the quality will make up in a great measure for the quantity, one grain this season being as plump and nutritious as two would often be when the ripening process has been hastened by the great heat and drouth that we generally have at the season of the filling in of our grain.

The root crops will be good on the whole, although the dry seeding caused many to sow a second and a third time in some sections; in others the first sowing took, and a great crop must be the result. Mangolds and carrots will be very good; potatoes will be plentiful; they all look well except some few spots where people have abandoned them to the bugs. Most people have destroyed the bugs to a great extent; we hardly think they are as bad in this section as they were last year. The parasite that preys on them must be increasing, and doing its work in destroying them for our benefit.

The Agricultural Emporium.

The stock books are not to be issued until after harvest, or not until September. If you have not read the charter we would recommend you to do so, and inform us if you desire or would be willing to take one or more shares in it. The charter was published in the June No.; read it and let us hear from you regarding it.

Shall we as farmers be united or shall we be dissevered against our interests? Are the railroads and party politics to rule, tax, bleed us, and be our masters, or are they to be our servants? Let us have one independent plank to stand on; let that be agriculture.—Let us have one paper untrammelled by political parties; let that be as it has been, namely, the FARMER'S ADVOCATE.

Remember the site will be selected by the stockholders, and will be where one or two enterprising persons take an interest in it and are willing to participate in its profits, management and establishment.



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