

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE

AND HOME MAGAZINE

* AGRICULTURE, STOCK, DAIRY, POULTRY, HORTICULTURE, VETERINARY, HOME CIRCLE. *

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An Agricultural School for Manitoba.

It is now very generally acknowledged that this agricultural province should provide some facilities for the higher education of the sons (and daughters) of the farmer. Education along practical common-sense lines that will not tend away from the farm, but will be of assistance in making more successful farmers and more intelligent citizens. Many of our leading educationists, as well as many of our most progressive farmers, have, in these columns, expressed themselves in favor of such an institution, and both of our political parties are in favor of an agricultural school, the only obstacle in the way seemingly being a lack of funds. This difficulty could no doubt be overcome if the legislators were made to feel that the farming community are in real earnest in their demands for higher education. A large amount of the Provincial revenue now goes towards the maintenance of schools of higher education for almost every other profession, and rightly enough that it should, yet why should there be the distinction?

There is, we feel satisfied, a strong, earnest desire among the most intelligent farmers for a school of agriculture, although it is not as loudly expressed as some other demands of the public, and is therefore apt to pass unrecognized. In Canada, the only example we have to guide us is the Agricultural College at Guelph, and in this case the cost has been so enormous that it is little wonder that the legislators of a small and comparatively young province like Manitoba are staggered at the very thought of such a thing. But it may be fairly asked if a school of agriculture well suited to our present needs could not be established at a very small expense. We believe it could. It is not necessary, nor perhaps even desirable, that an extensive experimental farm be operated in connection with our agricultural school, as is the case at Guelph. This in itself would make a vast difference in the appropriation necessary. Neither would it be necessary to establish as extensive and complete a course as that of the Ontario College. Those who had the privilege of hearing Prof. Henry's address at the Live Stock Breeders' Conventions, last February, regarding the wonderful success of the Wisconsin Short Course, will readily concede that such a course would serve the purposes of Manitoba for a beginning, at least. What is wanted is an opportunity for farmers' sons and young men desirous of acquiring a fuller practical knowledge of the care and management of the soil, of the care and management of live stock, and something of farm horticulture. As we already have a Dairy School, this would be affiliated with the Agricultural School, and that course taken by those who so desired, the course to occupy three or four months during the winter, when time could well be spared from home duties.

Such a course might be started with, say, three instructors: one to take up agriculture, including the study of the soil, cultivation, plant life, crops, etc.; another to deal with live stock, care and management, including feeds and feeding, breeds and breeding, including judging; and a third, dairying. Wisconsin does not teach English in its Short Course, but it does seem as if a course of English, including something of what might be called a farmers' business course, would be popular and very helpful, for there are many farmers' sons about the age to take advantage of a winter short course whose early education was neglected owing to want of schools and pressure of work on the new farms during the pioneer years from 15 to 20 years ago, and for many years to come there will be an annual crop of just such young men from the newer settlements.

The farm itself might not be more than 100 acres, with good substantial buildings for the housing of such stock as would be required to demonstrate the lecture courses, and comparatively few would answer this purpose.

The school buildings would not at first require

to be very extensive, nor the equipment very elaborate, but could be added to as required. The farm itself could be used to demonstrate the practical features of the lecture courses, and at the same time be to a certain extent a model quarter or half section farm.

The location of the school is a matter of no particular interest to us, so long as a convenient central point on the main line of travel be selected, as certainly such an establishment would be a great attraction to visitors and intending settlers, and it should be equally available to all parts of this Province.

Important Railway Concessions to Shippers of Pure-bred Stock.

In response to representations made by the Pure-bred Cattle Breeders' Associations and the Sheep and Swine Breeders' Association, the following concessions have been granted by the Canadian Pacific and the Manitoba North-western Railway Companies in the transportation of pure-bred stock in less than car lots between Western shipping points. The weight classification on bulls one year and over has been reduced 50%, and where two or more are shipped together, the same weight will be charged for as in the case of ordinary horned cattle. In addition to this, the regular 50% reduction off published tariff rates will remain in force on pure-bred stock. The Company also offer to refund half the passenger fare of men in search of pure-bred stock for their own use, upon the production of receipt for ticket purchased, together with the shipping bill showing that one or more animals were purchased and shipped. These concessions will, we think, meet with general appreciation, and should do much to facilitate the trade in pure-bred stock between local breeders, more especially the carrying of aged bulls, and such concessions in the carrying of pure-bred stock will, we feel confident, do more towards the upbuilding of the live-stock interests of the West by assisting the local breeders than any free distribution of sires by the railway companies.

The Dominion Express Company have also made a concession in favor of pure-bred stock shipped between all points where the distance is over 200 miles, the reduction being 20% off their merchandise rate. This reduction has also been obtained by the breeders' associations, and should be of very material assistance, particularly to the swine breeders of the West.

For Good Roads.

As the country settles up, as the old cross country trails are plowed or fenced off, the necessity for some broad, general plan for government assistance or supervision of road-building becomes more and more apparent. Road-building by municipalities can at best be but a patchwork job suited to the needs of the municipality alone. Owing to the location or constitution of some municipalities, the main roads are more used by the residents of adjoining municipalities, that do not contribute a cent to the maintenance, than by its own ratepayers. Some settled municipalities have to undertake heavy expenditure for drainage and bridge building, which might largely be avoided by the construction of probably much less expensive drainage in an outlying or unsettled district.

What seems to be wanted is some system of government supervision, including surveys, the benefit of which would be available to any municipality, and the adoption of some plan of government assistance in building main thoroughfares that pass through one or more municipalities. Of course, there are municipalities that are so situated and so governed that they need no provincial assistance. There are, however, others so unfortunately located or so badly governed that they will become bankrupt in their efforts to build roads, and still never have good roads until this work is placed

under the supervision of some central guiding power. Is there not room in Manitoba for a Good Roads Commissioner?

Stop the Drifting.

The long-continued dry weather and heavy winds of this spring have in some cases resulted in considerable damage to growing crops by drifting the soil; even heavy clay soils have been drifted badly where summer-fallowed or where the root fiber has all been worked out of the soil. The fact that soil drifts is conclusive evidence that it is lacking in root fiber or humus. This element in the soil also greatly assists in retaining moisture in light soils, because it has the property of taking up a large quantity of moisture, and does not give it off as readily as the other constituents of light soils. In heavy clays, humus serves to keep the soil particles from running together when wet and baking like bricks when dry, and also assists in making the soil warmer and more friable and more easily worked. Now, while the prairie soils of the West are mostly still rich in fertility, there are many thousands of acres of the heavy clay lands, and also of the lighter soils, that, from constant cultivation, cropping, and summer-fallowing, have had all the virgin root fiber worn out of them. These are the soils that blow away, that dry out quickest in a dry time, and (if heavy) remain cold and sour in a wet time (of course, there is soil, old bog bottoms, etc., with an excess of humus, but these are not troubling the western farmer). The remedy, as we have many times stated, is to manure or seed down to grass, but certain it is the humus supply must be restored if we are to continue farming profitably in this country.

Agricultural Statistics of Manitoba.

The Provincial estimates contain the following items in the Agricultural Department that are of general interest. There is little difference between these estimates and those of the year previous. It will be noticed, however, that the items for agricultural societies and Farmers' Institutes are combined. This is in accordance with the (proposed) amendment to the Agricultural Societies Act, whereby the Farmers' Institutes are to be carried on as a branch of the work of the agricultural societies, for which they will receive a special grant on the conditions that they hold a certain number of meetings for the discussion of agricultural subjects irrespective of the annual show. As it is a fact that nearly all the Farmers' Institutes and agricultural societies are under the management of practically the same set of men, this change will save the duplicating of machinery, and should also assist in sustaining the interest in the agricultural societies throughout the year. A clause in the amended Act provides for the organization of Farmers' Institutes apart from the agricultural societies, and on this account there is no separate item in the estimates for Farmers' Institutes. Two hundred dollars is placed to the credit of the Horse Breeders' Association, placing this Association on the same footing as the other breeders' associations. There is also an item providing for an investigation of "swamp fever." This is certainly a worthy object, as this terribly malignant disease affects a large portion of the Province, causing every year the deaths of hundreds of horses, and there seems absolutely no remedy as yet discovered. The estimate for this purpose is small, as it would be worth thousands of dollars to the Province if some remedy could be discovered.

E. D. A. Societies and Farmers' Institutes	\$16,671 25
Diseases of animals	4,657 40
Agricultural statistics	1,530 20
Noxious weed inspection	2,000 00
Dairy School and dairy instruction	6,652 04
Dairy associations	200 00
Pure-bred Cattle Breeders' Association	200 00
Sheep and Swine Breeders' Association	200 00
Manitoba Horse Breeders' Association	200 00
Manitoba Poultry Association	350 00
Manitoba E. D. A. Society	300 00
Winnipeg Industrial Exhibition Association	4,000 00
Western Agriculture and Arts Association	2,000 00
Western agriculture special building fund	2,000 00
Horticultural Society	250 00
Investigation of Swamp Fever	200 00
Prairie fire sufferers (Dauphin)	1,000 00