

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE.

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DOMINION.

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THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE
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It is impartial and independent of all cliques or parties, handsomely illustrated with original engravings, and furnishes the most practical, reliable and profitable information for farmers, dairymen, gardeners, stockmen and home-makers, of any publication in Canada.

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the best. Remember you were a boy once yourself. Treat him as an equal and in such a way as to develop his mind and quicken his aspirations.

WHAT AN EX-STUDENT THINKS OF THE O. A. C. COURSE.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

As summer is rapidly passing, and, in a few short weeks, our schools and higher institutions of learning will again be reopening their doors to students, there are, doubtless, upon many Canadian farms, boys and younger men who, while toiling faithfully, are also doing some serious thinking. Some of these have already decided to make agriculture their life-work, but are not fully satisfied with their present condition from an educational point of view. They feel they are not as fully equipped for their chosen calling as they should be in order to become successful tillers of the soil and useful citizens of the community, or, in a broader sphere, of the land in which they live. There are others who are approaching that important time in life, when several inviting careers present themselves and a choice must be made. Since this choice may make or mar their future, those of us who, by experience, know the peculiar doubts, difficulties and perplexities which confront one at this point, should have great sympathy with and a strong desire to help those who are looking to the future with misgivings in regard to the wisdom of the choice they are about to make. Being a farmer's son myself, and having taken a two-years' course at the Ontario Agricultural College, since the completing of which five years ago—I have been engaged in farming, I might be permitted to address to farmers' sons

who are in the position to which I have just referred a few words of explanation and advice, based upon my own experience and observation.

In the first place, I would say to every farmer's son, get just as good a public-school education as you can, and, if possible, supplement it by a year or more at a good High School. No matter what one's calling in life may be, a good grounding in the elementary branches of schooling will always be a help, and even a necessity, if he is to make the most of life. It will give him a standing among his fellows and a foundation upon which to build along any line he may choose. In farming, as in all other professions—for farming has now come to be a profession requiring special training—the saying that "knowledge is power" is true, providing, of course, that it be wisely applied.

Then, having the foundation laid, what next? I would not advise every farmer's son to attend the College at Guelph, for unless a boy has a liking for farm work, and at least some intention of remaining at it, it would be an unwise employment of time and money to take such a course. Better that he go to some institution which can give him a practical education that will fit him for some congenial line of work. Neither would I advise the boy who is looking for a pleasant, easy time to go to college. One can and should get a great deal of pleasure and enjoyment out of a college course, but no man who is in earnest can make the most of his opportunities without a great deal of hard study and work. To the farmer's son who has some thought of farming, or of some line of work relating to agricultural education, and who is willing to work, I would say, go. Do not go with the idea, though, that this alone will make a successful man of you. It will develop you, but your efforts and attitude, after you have left college, will determine your success or failure. Do not go with the idea, either, of coming back home and copying everything you see done there. You cannot do it, and, moreover, you will not be advised by your professors to do so. Your conditions will not be the same, and what might be all right for the college farm might not apply in your case.

To my mind, what the college does for its students is this: It teaches them to think and reason for themselves. The scientific part of the course enables them to understand the principles and laws of nature, upon which the whole practice of modern agriculture is based, and upon which its future depends. Then, understanding these underlying laws and principles, each one can adapt his methods in conformity to them and according to his own peculiar conditions. In these days, with some insect or disease preying upon almost every form of animal and vegetable life, it is necessary for a man, in order to be a successful agriculturist, to bring to his aid all the education and energy of which he is and may be possessed. The scientific information imparted in the college class-rooms is supplemented, wherever possible, by practical work in the outside departments, where the results of applied science can be seen. This is in accord with the principle which Prof. Roberts, of Cornell University, once laid down, that "knowledge and the application of it should never be divorced, but joined so firmly by intelligent thought and action that the twain become one."

But aside from this practical part of a college course, the part which is intended to help a man to be more successful financially, there is a general education, which must not be overlooked. What we as farmers need to-day is a broad and liberal education which will make of us, not only better farmers, but also better citizens and better men. Prof. James W. Robertson, now President of MacDonald College, at Ste. Anne de Bellevue, once defined education thus: "The main aim of education, on the side of it which looks out towards and leads to material progress, are to develop intelligence, enlarge practical ability, and promote co-operation. It is the drawing out of ability into usefulness in life. Anything which falls short of this is not true education." Accepting this definition, the College course, with the opportunities and privileges which are offered to students, is an ideal one, for it develops all sides of a man's nature—the Athletic Association developing the physical, the Literary Society developing the mental, and the Y. M. C. A. developing the

spiritual, are all organizations controlled by the students themselves. The training which many a student gets through these agencies is often the means of discovering to himself ability and powers of which he never knew he was possessed, and often proves invaluable in fitting him for public positions in church or state to which his fellow-men may call him in after life. That there is a serious need of more active participation in public affairs by men in direct touch with the farm, is amply proven by the too-frequent disregard and sacrifice of agricultural interests and the alarming prevalence of graft and political corruption among "professional politicians."

There is one more benefit to be derived from a college course. It consists in the raising of the student's ideals in regard to both his occupation and his standards of life. It raises him out of the intolerance and narrowness of localism into the liberal-mindedness and breadth of thought which is born of association with those of other localities and other lands. No earnest young man can observe the lives of some of the men connected with the institution without being inspired to strive to accomplish something worthy in his own life.

As to the cost of a course at the Guelph College, it is, I believe, within the means of any young man who is willing to work, and perhaps deny himself a few of the expensive so-called pleasures in which young men without any worthy purpose in life frequently indulge. In comparison with the cost of a course at any of our other colleges and universities, it is extremely low, and for this reason should be taken advantage of by more of our farmers' sons.

In regard to the length of course advisable for farmers' sons to take, I would say, if at all possible, take two years. A large part of the work of the first year is preparatory to that of the second year, and in his second year the student is in a much better position to obtain full benefit for the time and money expended. Of the remaining two years' work for the degree of B. S. A., I cannot speak from experience. If a young man cannot spare two years, then take a shorter course, if it be no more than a two-weeks' course, in grain and stock judging, during the winter.

In conclusion, let me answer the oft-asked question, "Does college education pay the farmer?" That all depends on what you consider to be worth most. I believe it would and does pay in dollars and cents; but it also pays in the increased respect which one gains for his occupation; it pays in the pleasant associations one forms, the memories of which are cherished for life; it pays in the inspiration one receives, and the higher ideals and ambitions which are formed. This much it does: It teaches one how little he knows, and how much he might know, awakens a desire to know more, and places him in a position to continue his studies and observations all through life.

EX-STUDENT.

THE KNIFE FOR TWIG BLIGHT.

In a number of apple and pear orchards in Western Ontario we have noticed the reappearance of twig blight, which has been making serious headway during the past couple of seasons. It is a disease of bacterial origin, not well understood, but which begins to work within the tissue of the smaller limbs and twigs. The leaves droop and turn brown, as though scorched, and the twig becomes dark in color, dying, and working back into the branches. The only remedy advised thus far is prompt and vigorous pruning a few inches back of the dead portion, and burning the removed limbs. In order that the bacteria be not conveyed to healthy portions of the wood, it is advised that after each cut the pruning tool be dipped in a five-per-cent. solution of carbolic acid.

WRITING ON PAPERS.

"ENQUIRER."—The postal authorities tell us there is a penalty of \$10 for writing on the margin of newspapers sent through the mail at newspaper rates, or for enclosing written messages therein.

Every farmer in Canada needs "The Farmer's Advocate."