

Back to the Farm.

AGRICULTURE is the basis of the wealth of this province. It may be said that the wealth of an agricultural country depends upon the prosperity of its individual farmers ; therefore it is fitting that an effort be made through our educational system, not only to bring the subject of agriculture before the minds of those interested, but also to emphasize the importance, the necessity, and the best manner of securing success in agricultural work. There can be no better beginning than by requiring the subject to be taught in the public schools of the province. In this way the pupils may become interested and a love for the work be instilled into their minds.

Our methods of instruction for the rural pupils have hitherto been lacking in this respect. The boys consequently drift into town seeking employment and live under conditions far less favourable to health and contentment than those which they left. Too few of our young men follow in the footsteps of their fathers. We want to keep the boys on the farm. Our only hope lies in education—an education that will teach them to enjoy the beauty of their surroundings, to take pleasure in the trees and running streams, in birds and flowers—an education that will teach them that riches lie within the soil, but that a knowledge of the laws of nature is required to reach them. Our pupils should be taught that there is no such thing as chance, that everything in the vast universe, whether growth or decay, is governed by fixed laws. Agriculture is a science which, as in other sciences, a knowledge of the general principles is necessary for the attainment of success.

The first thing necessary in the teaching of agriculture is a good text book. (A good teacher is always presupposed). From it may be gained much valuable information—information, the acquisition of which

would require years of practical experience. The following are a few of the things that the boy may learn and that every farmer should know: How soil is made and how to improve it; the importance and the best system of cultivation; that there are ten elements required by all plants, and that poor land fails to supply those; that different plants require those elements in different proportions; that rotation of crops will increase production; that a machine can be made to do the work of ten men, and that the improvement of live stock will add profit and pleasure to farm life.

There are some farmers who by experience have acquired much of this knowledge, but the majority pay little attention to the laws governing the needs and growth of plants, and consequently suffer loss. They are continually trusting to Providence that next year will prove better. Good farming requires a man to use his mental powers as well as his physical strength. Not only proficiency in the three R's but also a knowledge of the why and wherefore of the things about him are what the country boy is in need of, and as soon as the school supplies him with these, "Back to the farm" will cease to be our slogan. Then and not till then will the majority remain on the farm.

Books are divisible into two classes—the books of the hour and the books of all time.

He does injury to the good who spares the bad.

Charity begins at home but shouldna end there.

Childhood shows the man as morning does the day.