

Some Objections to Agriculture in the Public Schools.

Editor Progressive Farmer, Raleigh, N. C.

Dear Sir:—I enclose a clipping from the Normal Instructor, of an article I furnished it some months ago, and which I thought you might care to publish.

While my views are slightly different from those usually entertained on this subject, I am a firm believer in not only the desirability, but also the necessity of agricultural education.

If you should care to criticize this paper in any respect, you may feel perfectly free to do so. If you do not care to use it, you will kindly return the clipping?

Yours very truly,

E. E. MILLER.

Morristown, Tenn.

Much is being said at present about the desirability of teaching the fundamental principles of agriculture in the rural public schools. It is asked, with much reason, why the school should not assist in preparing the pupils for their life work, as well by teaching them the processes of plant growth as by teaching them history or literature. Nature study of all kinds is being made much of, and it is argued that the practical side of it should not be neglected.

To all this I most cheerfully subscribe; but I wish to call attention to a few things which have not been emphasized in the current discussions, many of which are theoretical rather than practical.

The first point I wish to make is that our public schools must not be made mere schools of primary agriculture. In the ideal system, agriculture would be taught in the college, after the pupil had acquired a sound basis of general culture, just as law or engineering is taught today. Unfortunately, however, very few of the boys and girls of a country school ever reach college, or even the high school. It is desirable that all should know something of the forces of nature with which they must deal all their lives; and hence the demand that this information be given in the public schools.

But you cannot teach agriculture to a boy who knows nothing else; it is too intricate and complex a science for that. So, unless it can be introduced without lessening the time which the average country student devotes to reading and writing, to grammar and arithmetic, it had better not be introduced at all. These things, the recognized foundations of an education, must be taught first. In the public schools you can hope anyway to teach only the most elementary principles of soil formation, of plant growth, of animal nutrition; and it is, to my mind, a sheer waste of time to cram the pupil with these things until he has learned to read, to investigate, and to think for himself. The value of the instruction which may be given is that it will help the student to a start in the study of his calling and to be of service, principles rather than facts must be emphasized.

In other words, the pupils in the public schools will not be taught agriculture, strictly speaking; he will merely be instructed in the fundamentals of soil physics and botany, of meteorology and animal physiology. As he must know grammar before he can study literature, or how to write before he can learn book-keeping, so must he know these things before he can enter the study of agriculture proper. For these reasons the rural schools must be expected, not to make farmers, but only to give possible farmers some idea of the natural laws which govern their operations.

Again, if it were possible for the public schools in the country to become schools of agriculture, it would not be desirable that they should. Every boy who lives in the country will not grow up a farmer; and there is no reason for cramming the boy who is bent on becoming a lawyer or a mechanic with something which will be of no value to him in his life's work. Especially is this true when such a course would mean the neglect of things which he does need to learn. It is well, however, that he should know that everyone who desires to be well informed, whether preacher, banker, trust-promoter, society-leader, or what not, should know something of the formation and composition of the soil beneath his feet, of the growth and development of the plants and animals which clothe and feed him, and of the relations all these sustain to each other. No one who is ignorant of all this should dare to consider himself well informed. Yet those who have anything more than a vague idea of these things are a small part of even the supposedly educated people. These things should be taught to every boy and girl who is able to understand them, whether country-bred or city-bred.

To sum up the foregoing paragraphs: There is great need of instruction in the great, fundamental laws of nature by which we are all governed. This instruction should be given in the school-room; and in the country it may be made to have a practical bearing on farm life and work. It should not be given, however, before the pupil is able to understand it; and a proper understanding of it means that the pupil must be able to investigate and think for himself. It must not be so enlarged upon in rural schools as to interfere with those primary studies which are necessary to any education at all.

Of more immediate importance than any of these, is the fact that, in the South at least, few rural schools are prepared to teach these things at all. Three things prevent.

*1. Few of the pupils stay in school long enough, or are so trained as to be able to profit by them.

2. In few schools is there either the time or the equipment available which would be necessary for successful work.

3. Very few teachers know enough about these things to teach them intelligently.

Not Recommended for Everything

But if You Have Liver, Kidney or Bladder Trouble, You will Find the Great Remedy Swamp-Root, Just what You Need.

It used to be considered that only urinary and bladder troubles were to be traced to the kidneys, but now modern science proves that nearly all diseases have their beginning in the disorder of these most important organs.

Therefore, when your kidneys are weak or out of order, you can understand how quickly your entire body is affected, and how every organ seems to fail to do its duty.

If you are sick or "feel badly," begin taking the famous new discovery, Dr. Kilmer's Swamp-Root, because as soon as your kidneys are well they will help all the other organs to health. A trial will convince anyone.

Doctors Prescribe Swamp-Root.

Gentlemen:—I have prescribed that wonderful remedy for kidney and bladder complaints, Dr. Kilmer's Swamp-Root, with most beneficial effect, and know of many cures by its use. These patients had kidney trouble, as diagnosed by other physicians, and treated without benefit. Dr. Kilmer's Swamp-Root effected a cure. I am a liberal man, and accept a specific wherever I find it, in an accepted school or out of it. For desperate cases of kidney complaint under treatment with unsatisfactory results I turn to Dr. Kilmer's Swamp-Root with most flattering results. I shall continue to prescribe it, and from personal observation state that Swamp-Root has great curative properties.

L. Dantow Irish M.D.

276 9th St., Borough of Brooklyn, N. Y.

Weak and unhealthy kidneys are responsible for more sickness and suffering than any other diseases, and if permitted to continue much suffering with fatal results are sure to follow. Kidney trouble irritates the nerves, makes you dizzy, restless, sleepless and irritable; makes you pass water often during the day and obliges you to get up many times during the night. Unhealthy kidneys cause rheumatism, gravel, catarrh of the bladder, pain or dull ache in the back, joints and muscles; makes your head ache and back ache, causes indigestion, stomach and liver trouble, you get a sallow, yellow complexion, makes you feel as though you had heart trouble; you may have plenty of ambition, but no strength; get weak and waste away.

The cure for these troubles is Dr. Kilmer's Swamp-Root, the world-famous kidney remedy. In taking Swamp-Root you afford natural help to Nature, for Swamp-Root is the most perfect healer and gentle aid to the kidneys that is known to medical science.

If there is any doubt in your mind as to your condition, take from your urine on rising about four ounces, place it in a glass or bottle and let it stand twenty-four hours. If on examination it is milky or cloudy, if there is a brick-dust settling, or if small particles float about in it, your kidneys are in need of immediate attention.

No matter how many doctors you may have tried—no matter how much money you may have spent on other medicines, you really owe it to yourself to at least give Swamp-Root a trial. Its staunchest friends today are those who had almost given up hope of ever becoming well again.

If you are already convinced that Swamp-Root is what you need, you can purchase the regular fifty-cent and one dollar size bottles at the drug stores everywhere. Don't make any mistake, but remember the name, Swamp-Root, Dr. Kilmer's Swamp-Root, and the address Binghamton, N. Y., on every bottle.

SAMPLE BOTTLE OF SWAMP-ROOT SENT FREE BY MAIL.

SPECIAL NOTE—If you have the slightest symptoms of kidney or bladder troubles, or if there is a trace of it in your family history, send at once to Dr. Kilmer & Co., Binghamton, N. Y., who will gladly send you by mail, immediately, without cost to you, a sample bottle of Swamp-Root, and a book containing many of the thousands upon thousands of testimonial letters received from men and women cured. In writing, be sure to say that you read this generous offer in the Raleigh Progressive Farmer.



(Swamp-Root is pleasant to take.)

These are sad facts; but facts, nevertheless. I think no one who is familiar with our conditions will dispute them. I trust that in other parts of the country the schools are ready to begin this work at once; but with us two things must be done first: We must make more adequate provisions for our schools, insure longer terms, with better equipments and broader courses of study; and we must train our teachers.

That these things may soon be done I earnestly hope. Some progress is being made; but there is yet much to do. With the Southern people the teaching of the elements of agricultural science in the public schools is, and can be at present, only a dream of the future. Yet, in view of the present interest in educational affairs, I expect to live to see it become a reality.

CALDWELL SCHOOL.

The Third Annual Session of Caldwell School begins September 1, 1903. It is a quiet, inexpensive school, in a healthy locality.

Board and tuition \$8.00 a month. Music \$2.50 a month.

For other information, address, MATTIE J. CALDWELL, Lemon Springs, Moore County, N. C.

We promptly obtain U. S. and Foreign

PATENTS

Send model, sketch or photo of invention for free report on patentability. For free book, How to Secure TRADE-MARKS to Patents and

CASNOW & CO.

OPPOSITE U. S. PATENT OFFICE WASHINGTON, D. C.