

behind me saying (though I was not under his command), "Lie down or they'll pot you—they see you now." And turning round, I saw the colossal figure of Steele, mounted on a horse 17 hands high. In fact, he was making such an excellent target that it was hard to understand how he was not being hit. I could not help showing my idea of the situation, and then the humor of asking a man to lie down, when he himself was so exposed, seemed to strike him, as he laughed, and cantered on in the line of fire.

Our march from Calgary to Edmonton was arduous but interesting, and the fine districts at the Red Deer and other points captured the hearts of the young farmers amongst us. From Edmonton we went by flat-boats down the Saskatchewan north branch to Fort Victoria, although our Edmonton friends said we were fools to go through an enemy's country in open boats. From Fort Victoria we marched overland to Frog Lake, the scene of the massacre, where we buried the charred remains of the victims. Frog Lake was a beautiful reserve, and as we looked upon it, "fair as a garden of the Lord," and thought of the recent scenes of bloodshed, the lines of the old missionary hymn came up—

"Where every prospect pleases,
And only man is vile."

Our skirmishes with the Indians, and their scattered and hasty flight, are matters of history, and in any case the space limits of this article are at hand. We pressed on after the various bands, and a hundred of us, leaving behind all transports except Indian pack-horses, went out to Cold Lake, where our scouts reached the last of the bands, who sent in the remaining prisoners and the campaign was over. On the return trip, the most notable event was the sad and sudden death of Col. Williams, of Port Hope, a man who had done the most brilliant service on the day Ratoche was captured from Riel. The funeral of Col. Williams, at Battleford, remains as one of the most impressive memories of my life, and his name is one of the most illustrious on the dead-roll of the heroic dead, whose number the recent war in South Africa has increased so terribly.

Nothing remains to mark the history of the rebellions save the scars they left on the country's life and the gaps they cut into many Canadian homes. The farmers and ranchers from sea to sea proved their willingness to serve to the death in any capacity, but for the welfare of the country we hope that the peaceful implements of agriculture will not again within our borders be laid aside for the direful weapons of war.

Why Are We Farmers?

BY WALTER SIMPSON, PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

If most of us who make our living by tilling the soil were asked this question, our answer would undoubtedly be, We were brought up on a farm, and never learned to do anything else. This answer would only be partly true, for many of us had as good a chance as others who have done so, to go into business or some of the professions, or even politics, if ambition had prompted in that direction and conscience kept quiet. But we have chosen none of these, and though we have all due respect for our brothers who have done so, yet we choose to be farmers. We sometimes hear a good deal about the learned professions, and we know that many that have false ideas about social position are desirous to get a college education so that they may—as they think—move in higher circles of society. Such false notions as these that obtained in the past have now given way before an advanced enlightenment that acknowledges that

"Honor and fame from no conditions rise,
Act well your part, there all the honor lies."

The learned professions, eh? We would like to know who could be a more learned man than the farmer that has graduated, and taken highest honors, in the school of scientific and successful agriculture. He may not be able to read the dead languages, or many of the live ones, yet to him—who in the love of nature holds communion with her visible forms, she speaks a various language. And how various is that language in which nature speaks to the tiller of the soil who is always learning lessons from her open book, and who must of necessity be at all times in communion with her various visible forms.

The farmer who by close study has succeeded in mastering the underlying principles of plant and animal growth and improvement, and who has applied the law of natural selection, and thereby succeeded in evolving a higher, more beautiful and more useful type of the domestic animals and plants he has to do with, is in the closest touch with nature, has graduated from the greatest university in the universe, and the one that gives the most practical education. Such a man will proudly answer the question, Why am I a farmer?

There was a time, almost within my recollection, when the prevailing idea with many farmers was that the brightest boy, the one that gave evidence of the sharpest intellect, was too smart to farm. He must be got into business or into one of the so-called learned professions, and the

duller boy, that seemed to lack ambition, was good enough for a farmer. Of course, in such times as these, when such false, ignorant notions prevailed, agriculture did not occupy the dignified position it was entitled to. But these days are now past, and among the farmers of this fair Dominion of ours we now find many of the brightest intellects—men who, by their devotion to the improvement of agriculture and stock-breeding, are giving Canada a proud position among the nations.

We are farmers partly from necessity—as some must till the soil or the whole commercial fabric of the country would tumble down—but we are also farmers from choice, because we love the independence that is associated with our calling. Who more independent than the prosperous farmer who owns the land he tills—as we are pleased to know most Canadian farmers do. We do not feel like apologizing for being farmers, but rather would assert the dignity of our calling as a business partnership with nature; nature finding the capital, which was stored in this grand old earth away back in the ages, when in the throes of a mighty evolution the rocks were ground down to powder, and the elements of plant food contained in them were left available for the different forms of life that in turn succeeded. Yes, in the laboratory of nature the Great Chemist of the Universe placed this capital to our credit. Our place is to bring all our intelligence to bear, working on business principles

to please the people in order that he may maintain a political position.

Farmers should not neglect their duties as citizens of the commonwealth, but should rather make themselves a felt power in the government of their country. Their interests are paramount to all other interests, and they should carefully watch that they are not prejudiced by wrong legislation. Governments in these days are more and more awaking to the fact that the intelligent practice of agriculture is the prime factor in the prosperity of the country. They recognize that the farmer's success means the country's prosperity, and that in order to his success he must have every assistance in their power to give to help him to a higher standard and more intelligent effort in his business, and also that he must have every assistance in the matter of placing his products on the markets in the best condition possible. One of the great movements in the industrial world during the last quarter of a century has been the establishing of agricultural experiment stations in all civilized countries, in answer to the demand of the agriculturist for more information, for more scientific knowledge along agricultural lines. Some of the most brilliant minds in the world have been given of late years to the exclusive study of science as it relates to agriculture, and many and important are the discoveries they have made and given to the farmers, which have enabled them to farm much more intelligently and profitably.

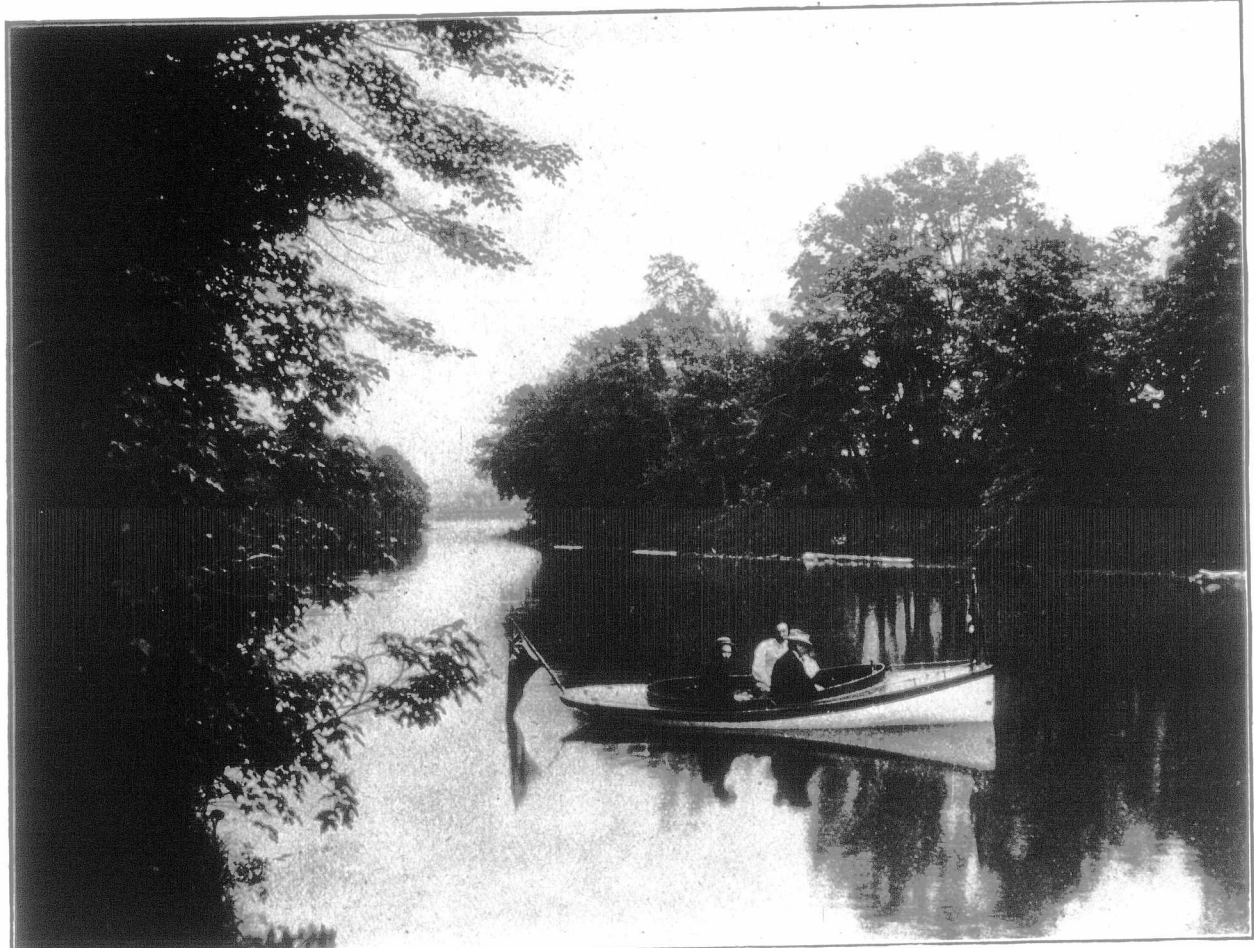


Photo by H. F. Albright.

"ON THE NASHWAAKSIS."
The "old flag" afloat near Fredericton, N. B.

only, for nature keeps strict accounts with us, and if we overdraw our account by taking too much from the soil, and returning too little to it, our drafts will sooner or later be dishonored, and we will find our future prosperity discounted. Our great aim as farmers should be to use our soil, which is our capital, so that we will always be able to keep it up to a profitable standard of productiveness.

Agriculture is certainly the broadest of studies. It covers the process from the plant-food in the soil, up through the plant, and reaches its highest development in the animal that the skill of the breeder has brought to such a high state of perfection; and, again, it covers the process of returning to the soil all the waste product, which goes to keep up the fertility after the wants of animal life are supplied. Certainly this is a broad study, and within it is room for many special studies.

When we farmers rise to a proper conception of the dignity and importance of our calling, we will then be able to enthrone our children with a love of agricultural pursuits, which may induce more of them to stay by the farm rather than go to seek a living in the already overcrowded city, where the chances of success are so uncertain. Many who do go live to wish themselves back in the country, the owner of a snug little farm.

Many of us are farmers because we enjoy the freedom and independence of country life. We are the lords of the soil, and call no man master. We would not think of exchanging positions with the man who serves the public day after day, shut up in an office, or with the man who, often at the expense of principle, makes it his continual study

Our occupation as farmers is so varied, and we come so closely in touch with nature, that we always have something new to interest us. Surrounded with so many varied forms of plant and animal life, the development of which is of such intense interest to the student, we can take our nature lessons while we are doing our work. The book of nature, as far as it relates to the surface of the earth, is always an open volume to us, and as we turn page after page we learn lessons in every department connected with our calling.

There is no class of people who have more leisure or better opportunity for mental improvement than the farmer. During the long winter evenings he has abundant time to read what is best in the literature of the day, to store his mind with general useful information that will fit him to take his part in all the duties of life. He may never be rich as the world counts riches, but if he does his best by mother earth he will always be assured of a living. And now at this happy Christmas time, when peace and good-will are uppermost in the minds of each and all, who is there who can enjoy the holiday so thoroughly as the farmer whose granaries and larder give assurance of plenty, and that there is no danger of the grim wolf, Hunger, which looks in at so many doors, coming to his; and who, thankful for all his blessings, does not forget to reach out his hand to make others on whom fortune has not smiled so freely happy on this auspicious day.

Yes, being a farmer is something to be proud of, and—

"A heritage it seems to me
Worth being poor to hold in fee."