



FARM AND DAIRY



Its Welcome Practical Progressive Ideas

Trade increases the wealth and glory of a country; but its real strength and stamina are to be looked for among the cultivators of the land.—Lord Chatham.

Vol. XXXIV

FOR WEEK ENDING JANUARY 7, 1915

No. 1

The Call of the Farm to the Wage Earner

A City Man, Once a Country Boy, Tells Why He is Going Back to the Land

By "URBANITIS"

I HAVE a young nephew up in Huron county who wants to leave the farm. He has just written me about his plans. He told me that it was my example that had inspired him with his desire to get to the city. He says he is going to do as I have done. He is going to leave the farm and get a good position like mine at a long salary. He finds the farm dull and lonesome. The financial returns do not satisfy him; "a fellow can't make anything of farming," as he puts it. He thinks the first of the New Year a good time to strike out for himself.

Reading between the lines, I see that this nephew of mine has formed his ideas of the city and city life from the shining autos filled with pleasure-seeking people that rush past his father's home. I believe, too, that he made a short visit to the Western Fair at London a few years ago. I remember that he talked much of the big buildings, of the fine shop windows, the well-dressed people, and the wealth that was to be seen on all sides. Being only a boy, he did not go very deeply into things. He did not realize the great effort required to attain even a moderate amount of wealth in the city. Certainly he does not know how little chance he has of ever making more than a bare living.

I have just finished writing to this boy; a New Year's letter, if you please. My letter will give him a surprise. I have told him that I, in spite of my generally supposed position, am going back to the farm. I hadn't intended to let any of the folks know it so soon, but if my example was going to take that young fellow from the farm, I decided that the best way to get him to change his mind was to let him know that I had changed mine.

Encouraged to Leave the Farm

It is a part of human nature to discount heavily the advantages that we have, and put a big premium on the advantages that we have not. This was the mistake I made. As I remember myself, I was just an ordinary bright country boy. I say "bright," because I headed the classes in school and was quick to "put my hand" to anything around the farm. I remember that one of my early accomplishments was a home-made windmill that seemed to the neighbors to indicate unusual genius. Friends began to tell me that I was never intended for the farm. My youthful ambitions were stirred. Equipped with only a business college education, I went off to the city to compete with others just as bright as myself.

My first years in the city were discouraging ones. Had it not been for my pride I would have gone back many a time. I was just as bright as the majority of those with whom I came in contact, but I had been reared on the farm. Farming was the one thing I could do well. My new associates had been reared in the city. They were acquainted with city life and city ways, and hence had an advantage over me. I persevered, however, and soon things began to get easier for me.

A Big (?) Salary

Folks back on the farm think I have been successful. My salary is \$1,600 a year. That looks big to them. So it did to me at one time. They

tervative. I can go back to the farm. I may have lost some of the sleight-of-hand that enabled me to do farm work well when I was in my early twenties. It will come back to me. The little capital that my wife and I have saved by scrupulously counting every cent that went out, will start us on a small place. We will be satisfied with moderate returns and independence. I will know that as my hair greys that no one can put me out of a job, and that no one can step in and take my place so long as I own a little bit of land of my own.

A Typical Wage Slave

All things are not so rosy in the city as many country boys, such as my young nephew, seem to believe. I was sitting in the barber's chair

having a haircut the other day. If I am not greatly mistaken that same barber has cut my hair every two weeks for the last 10 years. He gets practically the same pay to-day as he did 10 years ago. I told him that I was going back to the farm. He, too, was dreaming of a farm, although I never knew it till I mentioned my plans to him. He, however, has never had any experience in farming. He may not know a hoe from a pitchfork. He feels, however, that he would be independent. Probably his dream will never materialize. It will be better for him if it does not. Without any experience in country life, he would be a more miserable failure on the farm than he has been in the city. I fear that he like thousands of others, will remain a wage slave to the end.

The same day I was walking down one of our main streets with the head salesman of the furnishing department of one of our large department stores. His salary was larger than mine. He had a neat little home of his own. He was reared on a farm in Halton county. To him, too, I imparted my ideas of a farm of my own. "Just what I have been thinking of," said he. "I have got as far as I can here. From now on I am on the downhill grade. I want to be independent."

The Drink Habit

This man might make a success of the farm. He is a bright fellow with business ability. But he has one bad habit: Occasionally he gets off on a spree. It is very, very easy for the city young man to get the drink habit. You never know how liquor will grip you until you get into the position where it more than trumps you. It is part

(Concluded on page 6)

A Country Boy's Creed

"I believe that the country which God made is more beautiful than the city which man made; that life out of doors and in touch with the earth is the natural life of man.

I believe that work with nature is more inspiring than work with the most intricate machinery.

I believe that the dignity of labor depends not on what you do, but how you do it; that opportunity comes to a boy on the farm as often as to a boy in the city; that life is larger and freer and happier on the farm than in the town; that my success depends not upon my location, but upon myself; not upon my dreams, but upon what I actually do.

I believe in working when you work, and in playing when you play, and in giving and demanding a square deal in every act of life.

—Western Farmer.

make the same mistake as I did. They don't count the extra expense. I pay \$30 a month for a small house on a poor street. Likewise I pay for everything that we eat and wear. There are no fresh eggs, garden "sass," cream, milk, and butter to be had first hand, minus the middleman's profit. We pay middlemen's profit on everything, and by the time you add car fare to the long list of expenses, there is very little left. Then a man who holds a reasonably decent position in the city must keep up an appearance of prosperity if he would hold his job. I have come to see that I will never get very far ahead. When I came to the city I had visions of myself as proprietor or manager of a manufacturing firm or owner of a departmental store. I now know that my salary will be \$1,600 a year or thereabouts until old age overtakes me and I become one of the city's cast-off inefficients. Industry in cities has become centralized. It requires more capital than I can ever accumulate to start a business of my own.

I don't appreciate the idea of being an office slave the rest of my life. There is only one al-