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EDITORIAL.

Threshing old straw will not multiply the bulk of fodder in the barn nor fill the granary bins.

The cheering hum of the cutting-box has been heard in many districts, slicing the corn and blowing it into the silo.

And now the motor horn has become such a perpetual nuisance in England that the public cannot sleep at nights.

Any live business requires continuous endeavor, but progressive farming demands a continuity of purpose to a greater extent than most other vocations.

One of the greatest problems confronting the present-day agriculturist is the conservation of the fertility and resources of the soil for the present and future needs.

It is not necessarily the bulk of products from the farm that count, so much as their quality, produced and disposed of in such a way as to leave a reasonable margin of profit.

Judging from the crops of corn being harvested, farmers who have built silos are fortunate. Feed promises to be scarce on many farms, but not so where the silo holds an important place in the housing of winter feed.

The keeping of live stock is the natural means of returning to the soil the food constituents taken from it. The grass, grain and other crops are consumed on the farm, and the richness of the soil goes back again to the land for the production of more feed for the stock. Thus, a very important cycle is kept up.

Few greater means are there of increasing the value of the corn crop than by ensiling it. The efficiency of the silo is being widely and deservedly recognized. The feeding value of the corn crop is said to be increased twofold, threefold, and often fourfold by its use. Two valuable farm assets are the silo and the herd to consume its contents.

Among the incidental results of the recent election will be the opportunity afforded the new Cabinet and Minister of Agriculture, at Ottawa, to separate from that Department a lot of branches, like Archives, Copyrights and Patents, that do not properly belong there, and give to it the quickening and practical inspiration of a chief officer in touch with the agricultural and live-stock needs of the country.

One of the greatest problems of rural communities is what to do to make rural life more attractive, and thus check the tremendous migration to the cities. Surely the broad acres of the farm, where there is every chance to study and become familiar with nature in its host of different aspects, offers enough advantages over the crowded, smoky city, with its artificial life, to induce the most able, ambitious, progressive, thinking people to spend their days working out the intricate problems which confront the tiller of the soil.

Backward and Forward.

The Babel of tongues explaining why one party got in and the other got out, almost equals the pre-election storm of platform and newspaper press. By compelling an appeal to the country on reciprocity, the Opposition gained an advantage in the impression made upon the public mind; and it was not favorable to the Government to go to the polls on a policy involving fiscal changes, when older Canada, particularly, was enjoying such prosperity. Industrial interests, apprehensive of other possible tariff changes in the future, threw themselves solidly into the contest, but now that it is over, a disposition to press for higher schedules would not commend itself to the people. We do not so interpret their dictum. Real economic questions involved in the central issue before the people, such as the advantages of a more natural interchange of products, and the reduction by corrective competition of needless and burdensome transport, received little serious consideration amid contradictory and confusing clamors in the newspapers about prices in Buffalo and Chicago, Toronto and London, accompanied by representations that, while one class would receive more, another would pay less. Influenced to a greater or less extent by other appeals, and becoming distrustful of what might happen, the electorate finally turned the whole proposition down, giving all hands a chance to start afresh, some at home, and some at Ottawa. It was just such a sweep as the people made of a former Canadian Government some fifteen years ago—and they can do it again. There is a large detached vote in the land which makes and un-makes governments, Federal or Provincial, and the safety of the country depends upon having periodically a fair expression of an enlightened common will.

Importance of Detail.

The success or failure of any business enterprise depends largely upon the attention given to detail. What other calling would stand as little attention as is given by the average agriculturist to his work? It is a fact that farmers are very prone to let the small things slip, without much care, and it is also true that these seemingly trifling branches of his occupation are in reality the very foundation of it. A small leak will sink a great ship. Slipshod methods are never profitable, and tend to make the proprietor heartily sick of his work, and to also give the public a bad impression of him and his calling. The profits are not always made from the larger undertakings in connection with agriculture, but more often from the smaller branches which are allowed to go untouched by the great mass engaged in crop production. The general level of everything in connection with the agricultural calling can only be raised by placing more importance on the "little things." Dr. G. C. Creelman, President of the Ontario Agricultural College, recently stated, in an address delivered in Toronto, that if seeds were hand-picked, and only large, plump seeds returned to the soil, twenty per cent. crop increase would result. Yet this is considered by many as a "little thing," and seed selection is not practiced on anything like the scale it should be. This is only one of the many important phases of the business that do not receive the attention that they merit. The scarcity of farm labor makes it more difficult to give every part of the work due recognition, but there are many who, even if they had abundance of labor at their

disposal, would overlook the details and exert all their energy upon the larger phases of their occupation. They forget that the keenest competition is found in the big undertakings of their work. Human nature cannot content itself with working at the small end of the business. It must do something big, and, in attempting this, the smaller and often more profitable branches are entirely overlooked, or, at most, worked in a very unprofitable manner. Let the detail connected with the farm work be done as carefully as that of the main branches of the business, and see if the results do not warrant the most careful application to the "little things" of the business.

Next the Machine.

Every farmer who has worked among threshing machines, cutting-boxes, circular saws, and other machinery of that kind, knows that, as a general rule, the hardest places are next the machine. In threshing, for example, the man in the mow who is pitching to the table, or the man behind the carriers or blower, has harder work than the man in the back of the mow or the man on the outside of the stack. This is true even when they have but a short pitch. Why? Is it not principally because of the deadly regularity of the motion? The pitcher who throws up the sheaves from the back may give them a long sling, and may seem to be working like a trojan, but now and then he has a breathing spell, while the man ahead of him has to keep on forking sheaf after sheaf with mechanical precision. He may handle no more grain, and usually does not pitch it as far, but the clock-like regularity of his work is hard on muscle and nerves.

And yet the most monotonous work of this kind is varied and interesting, compared with the labor of many mechanics, who stand minute after minute, hour after hour, day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year, repeating perhaps but a single motion thousands and hundreds of thousands of times, developing but the one faculty, the one set of muscles, while the other faculties become atrophied for lack of use, the faces drawn, the mind sluggish, vacant, or tending to superficialities. To be sure, there are mechanics who are more fortunate. Some of them have two or three motions to repeat, while others, still better off, may have half a dozen articles to work on from time to time, but the great majority of mechanical occupations are, at the best, deadly dull, monotonous and exhausting, compared to farm employment. It is a matter of common remark how leisurely navvies work at such jobs as railroad construction, street-paving, and the like. It is true that many of these are inclined to shirk, but it is also true that the average farmer, if put at the same work, week after week, would conclude that the pace was about fast enough.

The point we would impress is that the farmer, with his endless variety of labor from winter to autumn, is peculiarly fortunate in one very important regard, and by reason of this fact can accomplish a great deal more work than if obliged to beat his life out, stroke after stroke, year in and year out at the same job, like the pendulum of a clock. We have never yet been able to see sound reason why a man with a liking for the farm should leave it for the nominally higher wages, but really less earnings, and the apparently easier, but really harder, labor of the machine shop or factory. A wise man makes it a point to keep away from the machine.