

# FARM AND DAIRY

AND RURAL HOME  
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**The Rural Publishing Company, Limited**  
PETERBORO, ONT.

"Read not to contradict and to confute, nor to believe and take for granted, but to weigh and consider."—Bacon.

## The Christmas Spirit

SOON we shall celebrate anew the birth of Him who we lovingly know as "The Prince of Peace." Can we close our eyes to the awful travesty of His teaching that is now drenching the fields of Europe in human blood and feel again the old Christmas spirit, the spirit that has brought joy to young and old at this season of the year for many generations?

The old fashioned Christmas was a day of glad reunion when all the family gathered together at the old home to partake of the good things "mother" had prepared with so much care, but more still to be together again and enjoy each other's society for the day. The old fashioned Christmas was far removed from the commercial Christmas of to-day. Gifts were few and simple, and treasured because of the giver. The poor of the community were not forgotten when Christmas benevolences were prepared.

It was the spirit of Christ that made the old-fashioned Christmas. In spite of the contradiction of the present day events, which are the antithesis of Christianity, let us try on Christmas day, 1914, to bring back to earth something of the spirit as well as the form of the old-fashioned Christmas. It will do us good.

## County Educational Control

THE first duty of a commonwealth is education; that is now conceded by all intelligent citizens. Few would care to go back to the old system of each family paying for the education of its own children, unless the disgruntled ones be childless or hopelessly selfish and reactionary. And yet our system of public school education in rural districts cannot be called a success. The rural school to-day is almost exactly where it was twenty-five years ago. In some sections we find the school rate high and the educational facilities poor. Nearby sections may have a low rate and educational facilities good. These things are not as they should be. If the system of public instruction is not wrong,

then the trouble must lie in its application. What is the remedy?

Those who read the articles by Inspector Lees on The Rural School Problem, in Farm and Dairy some months ago, will remember that he recommended a larger administrative unit for the governing of rural schools, preferably a county unit. This, he believed, would remove the rural school from the influence of local jealousies, petty quarrels between trustees and ratepayers, false economic ideals and unjust distribution of cost. The plan suggested by Mr. Lees is already being experimented with extensively and successfully in the United States. Already twenty states of the American Union have abandoned the district school section. In a dozen of these states the township has been made the administrative unit. In the remaining states of the twenty, where rural education has attained its highest development, the county is now the administrative unit. Such a system, it is claimed, makes for a fairer distribution of the burden of public school expenditures, and gives all the youth of the country equal educational advantages. Farm and Dairy would like to know what Our Folks think of enlarging the school unit in Canada.

## The Cost of Education

SCHOOL government is not the only phase of the rural educational problem calling for adjustment. The problem of financing rural education is of equal or greater importance. The old idea that the parents should bear all of the cost of educating their children has gradually given way to the idea of community responsibility. In late years the sense of responsibility has broadened and the provinces have assumed a share of the educational burden. We are coming to see that the parents do not benefit so much as the state through a high standard of education. If we could apportion the benefits received we would be in a better position to distribute the burden of school taxation justly.

Farm and Dairy believes that the city should bear a larger share than it has of the cost of rural education. A great percentage of the professional men of our cities received their early training in the district school. Leading men in all the walks of life are from the country. The city is reaping the benefit of the education that has been imparted in the country and paid for out of the pockets of country ratepayers. It is only just that the city should make a return for benefits received.

Here is another phase of the situation worthy of consideration. The country is the nation's seed bed. Were it not for the new and virile blood carried to the cities by the boys and girls who leave the farm, the cities could not long continue to exist. Educated and intelligent citizens are the ones who can do the cities the most good, and just how desirable may be the influx to the city from the country depends largely on the efficiency of the rural school. Here, too, the cities have an interest in promoting rural education; but how shall they contribute?

If the advantages of education are province-wide, then the tax that pays the educational bill should be levied on a provincial basis. Coming more directly to the beneficiary of educational expenditure, we find it to be the value of land. It is now almost an axiom with political economists that the land derives the full benefit of all government expenditures. City land values have unquestionably been increased by the flow to our centres of population of the educated boys and girls of the country. For this the city has made no commensurate return and the burden of taxation should be so placed that the cities will contribute much more than they have in the past. Just to illustrate how a tax would work levied on provincial land values, we need only mention

that the land values of the city of Toronto would pay more taxes than the farm lands of all of Western Ontario put together. Such a system would make better rural education possible and result in benefit to both country and city. Strange as it may seem, it would not impose an undue burden on the cities. Here again we would like the opinion of Our Folks. Do you believe a provincial tax on land values for educational purposes advisable?

## Self-Sacrifice and Happiness

TWO thousand years ago there walked and taught amid the hills of Galilee and plains of Judea a man whom men called the Nazarene. When He yielded up His life for all, He left a devoted little band with a great mission; to carry the gospel their Master had taught to all lands and all peoples. Surely no more seemingly impossible task was ever given to any people. But that little band went forth with faith, their numbers gradually increased and their power extended till, even as the Amazon increases its volume, so did Christianity its influence, until now it is one of the greatest powers of the world, certainly the greatest force for good.

Wherein lay the strength of that appeal which over all these years comes to us to-day with all the sweetness and the power that it inspired in the hearts of those who sat at His feet? It was the appeal of the highest in man, the spirit of self-sacrifice, of brotherhood. "He went about doing good," they said of Him. Those who truly follow Him have ever since gone about doing good. We who would follow in His footsteps must be willing to do as He did—sacrifice our own pleasure for the happiness of others.

Never before was there such need for Christian self-sacrifice as at present. Thousands of little children whom He would love and cherish are homeless, motherless, fatherless. Many of us have room in our homes and our hearts for these little ones if we only would. What grander thing could we do to commemorate Christmas, 1914, than to take care of these little ones for our own? What though it does call for some self-sacrifice! In self-sacrifice only can we get the higher, truer happiness, the happiness that comes from Christ himself. Let us remember the Belgian children this Christmas Day.

## Hold on to Live Stock

THE Ontario Provincial Winter Fair has come and gone. It was a great success from the standpoint of both exhibitors and spectators. But this year, as never before, the fair had a mission—to emphasize the importance of conserving our live stock when there are so many temptations to sell. Chief of these temptations is the price of grain and hay. War conditions so far have tended to enhance feed values, but have had the opposite effect on cattle values. At the same time farmers, not knowing what the future may bring forth, have sought to retrench by liquidating their live stock. Even the breeding to a certain extent has been sacrificed in many sections.

During the course of the fair, stock breeders, government officials and college men had an opportunity to get together and discuss the future. They unanimously agreed that it would be the part of wisdom to carefully conserve all the good breeding stock in the country. Present conditions are but temporary. The future for live stock is bright. Already thousands upon thousands of horses have been taken for war purposes. In the older lands, the breeding herds of both beef and dairy cattle are being seriously depleted. Our cattle will be in demand to replenish these European herds. From the standpoint of soil fertility, too, we cannot afford to go in for grain farming exclusively, unless the prices soar much higher than they have to date.