

failed to do it, he writes another letter in which he says:

"Some of our western farm sentiment makes me weary. When you hear the United Farmers, of Alberta, say that the British Government must pay \$1.50 minimum f.o.b. for prairie wheat to equal their \$1.77 guarantee to the British farmer, they are handing out a chinook variety of hot air. If the United Farmers will guarantee no submarines to sink ten per cent. of Canadian wheat en route to England there might be some sense in the \$1.50 minimum. But when a man in Calgary says that with hogs at over \$13 per cwt. it would pay better to feed \$1.30 wheat to the hogs you may sure he is talking about somebody else's hogs. That man never had any hogs, and never intends to have any. And he is so busy talking that the first thing we know he will have no time to work."

IN a mind so excited as Hodge's, it is difficult to trace any direct sequence of ideas. But with another effort to sit on a chair with both feet under him he gets off a satire on the man who has camped on the trail of the farmer and the railroader in the West and is now keeping back production. He refers

to the millions of acres of arable land right along the railway lines of the Saskatchewan valley that are idler now than when they grew grass for buffaloes.

"I speak with some criminal authority on this point," he says, "because one of these land companies has some of my money tied up in this dastardly conspiracy against economic production. Of course I never expected my money would help to keep labour divorced from land. I had the idea that these lands would be sold quickly at a good fat profit conferred by the railway—which I think is all right. But I never dreamed that any land bought by my money would block the way to market for producers in the back townships who were not only being forced away to high-cost areas of production, but were compelled also to boost the value of the speculators' land along the railway by improving their own. I don't hesitate to admit that land speculation of this kind is villainous. The land-barons of England have history and sentiment between them and the time when their ancestors grabbed the glebes. The land hogs of Canada—well, if there isn't some way to make them open the lands for settlement it ought to be found by a scheme of taxation. Every acre lying idle along a railway should be made pay into a fund for

keeping back-settlement wheat up to a fair price. How this will ever be done heaven only knows. But I'd rather be a knight not entitled to a title than a land hog not entitled to anything but the curses of my countrymen."

Hodge is plainly getting roused. We suspect him of being a radical. Any man that thinks so violently as this is likely to break out into action somewhere. Mrs. and the Misses Hodge are probably wondering what Hodge will do after he gets done writing letters to the editor. But here is one that seems to get him close to a point of taking some action:

"Dear Sir,—You are a townsman. I daresay you were raised on a farm. If not, the Lord pity you—for you have missed a lot. I don't think your paper has ever been a booster for big cities. In fact, I distinctly recall one editorial in it a few years ago pointing out the curse of big cities in a new country. But a paper like yours can't be produced in a small town or a country village; therefore, I assume you are in favour of large towns. You may have lamented the growth of our urban population at the expense of the rural. Everybody does that. Any moral reformer that pays his fees to an expensive club—I do—is bursting with scorn at the pampered lives that people live in congested communities. He knows just as well as you or I do that on a basis of population a big city is a poor producer compared to the same number of people on the land. For instance, the population of Montreal is thirty per cent. larger than that of Saskatchewan. Honestly, which would you rather drop off the map?"

WITH this epistle Hodge's correspondence suddenly ceased. That one was penned only ten days ago. We fancied from his silence that Hodge must have got spring fever. Well, perhaps he did. But having a personal interest in this man whom we had never seen we made a discovery.

Just the other morning Hodge was on his way down town in a street car. A load of hay, caught in the ice ruts, upset in front of the car on which Hodge had paid his fare. He got out along with thirty other able-bodied male passengers and watched the farmer struggling by the aid of a policeman to get the waggon and the load together again. Hodge had forked enough clover on his father's farm to know that one man couldn't both pitch a load and load it at the same time.

So he took a sprint to a nearby hardware store and bought a pitchfork. Some of the young blades having a wayside smoke joshed him a bit, saying, "Here comes old Neptune with his trident," and other such things. Hodge paid no attention. He chucked his coat and vest into the motorman's vestibule and said to the farmer:

"Now you climb up on that rack. I'm going to fork this timothy up to you so fast that——"

Much to the edification of the bystanders, Hodge went at the hay with the gusto of a pup to a root. Inspired by memories of his youth that came rushing back he never paused once as he flung the sudden energy of his 180 lbs. at that ton and a half of hay, rolling it up in great wads that half buried the farmer on the load and almost hid the pitcher from the eyes of man. Conductor and motorman and policeman all thought he was crazy. Which indeed he was. But when the last scrape of the hay was up, Hodge's collar crunched down in a rain of sweat on his red neck like a dingy snowdrift round a brick house. He made the farmer a gift of the fork, resumed his coat and vest and went to the nearest haberdasher to buy a clean collar.

Thus did Henry Hodge put all his letters to the editor into one glorifying spasm of raw-beef energy. His heart was still going at 92 and his face was uncommonly red when he took lunch at the club.

"Whatever have you been doing, Harry?" asked Mrs. Hodge, that evening.

"Haying," he said, as he tried to hide the water-blisters on his hands. "Pitching hay. Getting my second wind. And I feel like a god that's just been pulled through a knot-hole."

This load of hay was the thing that stopped Hodge's letters to the editor. In that sublime half hour or so he discovered that after all the pitchfork—under certain conditions—is mightier than the pen. In the next sketch about Hodge we shall show how he got to work after his sudden conversion.



HIS FIRST RIDE IN A FARM WAGGON.

When the great Duke of Norfolk was buried recently his body was carried from the castle gates to the chapel in a farm waggon. The servant marching ahead carried the coronet.



THE PROUDEST FATHER IN WINNIPEG.

The Governor-General of Canada presents to Mr. H. T. Clark, Winnipeg, superintendent of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co., the Victoria Cross won by his son. Sergeant George Clark belonged to a Winnipeg battalion. In an attack on an enemy trench, Sept. 15, 1916, almost single-handed, by means of emptying his revolver and two rifles in quick succession, he sent two Boche officers and twenty men to right about face. A month later this daring warrior was killed in action.