

Farmers Should Organize.

A great many farmers fail to make use of their opportunities, and frequently display apathy in not bringing themselves into harmony with the great questions that naturally affect their welfare. While agricultural papers are doing much good by disseminating useful and valuable information among the farmers, and invoking a spirit of activity among them, still this commendable work on the part of the agricultural press could be largely augmented and supplemented by the farmers uniting as a body and cheerfully responding to the suggestion to organize societies among themselves for the free and independent discussion of matters pertaining to farm topics. It is only by mutual co-operation and unity on the part of the farming community that light and knowledge can be obtained, and all the effort required to bring about this state of affairs is for the farmer to realize that his interests demand that he should be in possession of a fuller knowledge of his calling. While it is admitted that the Model Farm and the Experimental Stations, founded under the patronage of the Ontario and Dominion Governments respectively, are doing good, still both political parties frequently accord more praise to those institutions than they are entitled to, and their defects are smoothed over by party speakers and writers. The *ADVOCATE* was opposed to the establishment of those institutions, and many of the evils attendant on their introduction into this country have been removed through the influence of the fair and independent stand taken by us. This publication owes no allegiance to any political party, nor will it allow its principles, which have been faithfully expounded in its columns for over twenty years, to be wilfully misrepresented by those who are jealous of the success of this journal. The *ADVOCATE* recognizes the fact that those institutions are now permanently established. As the farmer contributes largely towards their maintenance, he should be in a position to receive such information and instruction as they impart. It is only by making himself conversant with the workings of these institutions that he will be in a position to offer fair and impartial criticism, or to receive any benefit which may be derived from these establishments.

A farmer's ambition should be to soar to greater heights in acquiring a clearer knowledge of his calling, as the history of the past reveals the fact that the majority of great men, whose names adorn the pages of history, were men of humble birth and whose parents were tillers of the soil. Many a truly and noble man, for the want of confidence in himself, and who could have been a great benefactor to the race, has lived and died, without having accomplished the work for which he was eminently adapted, his latent talent not being developed by early training when the mind was susceptible. If farmers are true to their interests and organize farmer's clubs and institutes, and conduct them with a view to improve their intellectual standing, the farmer will soon rise to the level of his calling. Other professions have societies for mutual improvement, and why has not the farmer?

Subjects which tend to unite the agricultural interests of our country should be freely discussed by such a society, and every member should be prevailed upon to take part in the discussions, and above everything else speakers

should guard against using technical terms and expressions, which are intelligible only to the learned, as the majority of farmers feel considerable timidity when they attempt to express their views in the presence of those who endeavor to impress their greatness on their audience by a pedantic display. Such speakers confuse rather than instruct. Let there be simplicity of expression and sound deliberation, and the result will be an individual interest by every member of the society.

In the long winter evenings the farmer will soon be privileged to enjoy a season of comparative rest, which he should utilize by endeavoring to consolidate into one harmonious whole the greatest of all interests in this country, and endeavor by united effort to raise the standard of agriculture and protect his interests from the aggression of combines. Let there be united action on the part of the great farming community of this country, and the *ADVOCATE* will go down to the battle as a faithful standard bearer to a loyal and patriotic people whose interests it has guarded jealously for nearly a quarter of a century.

Agricultural Depression.

BY JOHN DRYDEN, M. P. F.

There are those who, through the press and from the platform, are constantly telling us that the farmers are prosperous, and ought not to complain. Those of us who have our hands to the plow know that these statements are not correct, and that it is harder now to clothe and feed the family, and make any interest whatever on the investment, than it has been for many years in Canada. A great many persons realizing this fact conclude that it would be better to quit the business altogether. They are ready to advise any member of the family, who has in mind the occupation of a farmer, to choose some other more profitable calling. Now, it is very discouraging to work hard the year round and realize nothing from it, as many farmers have had to do; and yet, if the farm will not pay, it will not be long before no other business in our country will pay either. The farmer is at the head of the stream. If the fountain becomes dry, it is not long before the brook is without water also. In times of depression the farmer is affected first; the others see the water still running, but it issued from the fountain head some time before, and is only just passing them. Soon the stream will become weaker as the supply is cut short.

The merchant and tradesman understand this thoroughly, as is evinced by the anxious inquiry, when you go to town, "How are your crops?" Some may have thought that it is their interest in the farmer's personal welfare which causes them to propound this question; but a close observer will see it is rather anxiety for their own business that prompts the inquiry. The village merchants cannot sell goods to farmers who have no money, and succeed in maintaining a profitable business. Nor will the wholesale merchants be able to place large orders with retailers, who have comparatively few customers. The manufacturer cannot sell his goods to those who have no money to buy. If these must cut short their business, then it follows that the clerk and artisan in turn must be pinched; and so every branch in time feels the depression.

Let the farmer, who determines to change his business for another because of depression,

beware lest he meets in his new occupation troubles and difficulties altogether unseen and unknown before. Whoever, therefore, is fitted for the farm had better remain steadfast to his business, and let his motto be, "*Excelsior*."

The common effect of temporary distress and failure tends towards discouragement, and when this gets a strong foothold, everything about the farm bears testimony to that feeling.

The tillage of the farm is poorly done because, it is said, it does not pay to expend labor upon the land. "Any kind of seed will do; it will not pay to give higher prices for the best." Fences and buildings are gradually allowed to get out of repair, causing endless waste and trouble; and if the farmer gives his attention to stock-raising, anything will do to use on his flock or herd. "It will not pay," he says, "at present prices to procure the best."

Now, my theory is entirely the opposite of all this. If the price of wheat is low, then I must devote all my energy to produce a better crop than before in order to make up for the deficiency. It will not do to slacken a single effort. If the price of beef is low, then I must strive to get such an animal as will produce a greater amount of beef at the same cost. It will not do to say that anything will do under these circumstances; that is following a certain road to ruin.

In Great Britain, where prices are much higher, the rent on the land has also been much higher, and the farmer finds himself pressed as hard to make his rent. But this has only sharpened his perception, and he has not been slow to see that it pays to secure the best of everything, and so agriculture, in every department, has been carried in that country to greater perfection.

Let our farmers remember that this is not the only agricultural depression which has been felt in this country. Our fathers have passed through severer trials than any we have experienced in these days; but these dismal days did not always last; neither will ours of to-day. Already the prospect brightens; hope is beginning to dawn. Let us redouble our energies, and while we may look to our governments to remove obstacles, let us learn to depend more upon our own energies and resources, always remembering that our success is at the foundation of Canadian prosperity.

Mr. W. Drouson, of Vermont, writing of his experience of ensilage, says:—"To sum it all up, I think corn the best of all our crops for ensilage, and the nearer the glazing stage, the better. Cut with the ears on it makes a cheap feed, and will not need much grain to make cows do well. They do not want a large ration and nothing else. I feed a half bushel of ensilage, night and morning, to each cow, and a little hay, all the time. It will pay, and the feed will be good, if the air and frost are kept from the pits. The silo should be near by the stable. Stables should be warm so that nothing freezes in them. The cattle will then enjoy summer weather, in the barn, and will have the appearance and laxative condition of pastured cows. Of course, cows so cared for, should never be left out in the cold of winter. Neither should they stand in cold winds to drink."

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