

LETTER No. 6.

My Dear E,—

There is a quaint old book redolent of a peaceful countryside, through whose verdant pages the bleat of young lambs and the tinkle of the cow bells echo: a book well rounded and pleasant to the literary palate, a book well worth reading. Its author, Mish St. John, must have been one of those fine old types we have so often imagined. He calls his book "Letters from an American Farmer." It made its first appearance in the year of grace, 1782, and gives a splendid view of the peasant proprietor. There is somehow a pleasant smiling fatness about the book; it reeks of the gross prosperity of the small freeholder before the coming of machine industry. Would that our CANADIAN FARM SLAVES might read it, and digest the contents thereof.

Listen for a moment to that rubicund old farmer speaking of HIS SOIL. Is it not that very voice of the past we spoke of in a former letter?:

"The instant I enter upon my own land, the bright ideas of property, of exclusive right, of independence, exalt my mind. Precious soil, I say to myself, by what singular custom of law is it that thou wast made to constitute the riches of the free-holder. What should we American farmers be without the distinct possession of that soil.....? This formerly rude soil has been converted by my father into a pleasant farm, and in return it has established all our right. On it is founded our rank, our freedom, our power as citizens, our importance as inhabitants of such a district..... It is not composed, as in Europe, of great lords who possess everything, and a herd of people who have nothing. Here are no aristocratic families, no courts, no kings, no bishops, no invisible power giving to a few a visible one, no great manufacturers employing thousands, no great refinement of wealth."

Compare it with this from the United Farmers' Convention, 1914:

"Whereas the Homesteaders located in those districts who own pre-emptions find it impossible under present conditions to meet