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READING IN THE FARM HOME

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One must use judgment, weigh, consider and apply, if he would truly master.

IT IS indeed true that the time is rapidly passing away when anyone can make a living by farming; he may exist but he cannot live. Thinking people are coming to realize that to be progressive, up-to-date farmers they must have an intelligent understanding of their work, a knowledge of public and political questions, and an interest in the welfare of the people around them. These may be acquired through the medium of reading.

But the busy, work-a-day farmer asks, "How am I to get the time?" and possibly this is one of the hardest points to solve to his satisfaction. By making an intelligent study of his work and the principles underlying it, he could re-arrange his methods that they would not require nearly so much time as they do at present. Many farmers, through lack of information, are still sticking to old, obsolete methods which not only require much more time but do not give as good results. Much of their effort is fruitless and oftentimes they are actually losing money. Indeed, the spectacle is by no means uncommon of men selling their farms because they cannot make a living on them. Intelligent reading would not only be a means of saving time and bringing increased returns—thus necessitating less work for a living—but would give an interest to the work which would make it a pleasure rather than a drudgery.

Many people do not know how to read. Some read so that they become practically intoxicated. They rant over without applying their reasoning powers, without questioning the statements. To read properly one must weigh and consider—"Will it suit my case?" or using the Biblical text, he must "prove all things." He should not be afraid of wasting time by re-reading, as he will often get more by reading the second or even the third time than from the first. One must use judgment, weigh, consider, and apply if he would truly master.

THE PLACE OF AGRICULTURAL JOURNALS

Now every farmer cannot avail himself of the advantages of attending a college where the principles of agriculture, as known and practised by the leading agriculturists of the world, are taught; but he has the opportunity of reading in his own home on subjects pertaining

to his work. An abundance of suitable reading material is open to him, the most common of which is the agricultural papers. These are now being published in almost every province and the farmer should choose the ones most suitable to his conditions. They contain the experience of some of the leading agriculturists of the present day, and deal with questions of interest to the average farmer in a very able manner. The editorials are written by men who have a deep insight into agricultural knowledge, men who have a healthy view of agriculture and are endeavoring to raise it to its proper position. Such papers are bound to give farmers a wider



CULTIVATING CORN ON A FARM IN HURON CO., ONT.

For the farmer with any considerable acreage of corn to cultivate the one-horse scuffler is out of date. The spring tooth cultivator can be adjusted to cultivate corn, and it will do the work not only better, but with more facility and less labor.

outlook and a greater respect for their work; and they give information which, if applied with discrimination, will go a long way towards making farm life attractive and more profitable.

THE VALUE OF BULLETINS

Other means of educating the farmer in his work are the free bulletins which are issued from time to time by the different Departments of Agriculture. They occupy a position between the agricultural paper and the agricultural text book. They are written by capable men—specialists in their line—and they deal with special phases of agriculture. They are scientific, but are written in such a practical manner that they may be understood by any person of average ability. They are up-to-date and are, therefore, more reliable than the average text book. In this progressive age books soon become old unless they contain foundation principles which

never change. But standard agricultural books fill an important place in education for the farmer.

MUST KEEP ON READING

It is little use to read the agricultural papers, etc., and then consider them finished. If it were possible to retain the ideas set forth from a mere reading, we might indeed become "walking encyclopedias." The important thing is to know where to find just what we want at a certain time and this can be best facilitated by having a library properly indexed. The numbers of the paper should be bound in with their index and kept for future reference. The bulletins and text books should be looked over carefully or read if opportunity offers, so that one may know where to get information on any question which happens to come up. If used in this way they may become a valuable fund of knowledge to the owner.

The agricultural papers, bulletins, reports and standard books, which may be procured from time to time, should form the basis of a good farm library.

FARMERS IN PARLIAMENT

But the farmer should be more than a mere machine. He will be a broader and more useful man if he be public-spirited, which means to take an interest in the public questions of the day. If he is going to vote intelligently he must inform himself on such questions as the ownership of public utilities, immigration, and transportation. Besides these broader questions which affect the public generally he should be especially interested in questions which concern his profession, namely: the tariff, marketing of produce, and agricultural education. By taking an interest in these questions he may not only improve matters so far as he himself is concerned but he may be of service in the broader sphere of humanity. This is likely to remain an agricultural country for some time to come, and the farmers of Canada have it in their power to better their condition through the franchise. Realizing their privileges they should so educate themselves that they may know what is best for them. The percentage of farmers in our parliaments is very small when we compare the large number engaged in agriculture with the numbers engaged in the other professions. Who knows better than the farmer what is the best policy to promote his calling? Why should not more of our well-trained, prosperous farmers occupy po-