

Progress in Western Agriculture

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tial to the rest of mankind. The grain grower is the most dependent of mortals, for he cannot produce at all without the aid of the implement manufacturer and a dozen of others, nor is his product of any use to mankind until some other groups of men have put a lot of work on it, eliminated the useless parts, and cooked the useful parts.

Hence it will readily be seen that progress made in dairying is progress indeed, and I gladly record that most gratifying progress is being made at this time, when the competition and lure of the comparatively easy and usually (at present) profitable business of grain growing is considered. For the first time in the history of Saskatchewan, all of the government operated creameries will continue to run, at least until New Year, and most of them certainly throughout the winter. This means that an increasing number of our farmers are coming to recognize that winter dairying, properly conducted, is the most pleasant and profitable dairying, that all-the-year-round dairying pays, and that two cheques per month throughout the year with an additional big one twice each year is a satisfactory addition to the somewhat problematical annual one from the sale of grain.

And is a fair proportion of the profits resulting from this progress in production and marketing being devoted to welfare uses rather than being hoarded or re-invested in more land? I believe that progress is being made in this direction also. A generation ago the Ontario government had to pay premiums to induce students to enter its agricultural college. Now such colleges cannot be organized, built, equipped and enlarged fast enough. Fathers are now willing and proud to be able to send their boys to the agricultural colleges, and this will soon be as much a matter of course with our best and most progressive farmers as it is for a successful business man or lawyer to send his children to college and university. More money each year is being spent on the erection of comfortable farm homes, equipped with modern conveniences, tastefully furnished, and surrounded with trees and lawns. All of this makes for the refinement of life and reacts on the thoughts and ideals of those brought up amongst such surroundings. The man who, having only a half section, breaks it up, tills it, equips it as he can with fences, buildings, trees, a permanent water supply, and live stock, then gradually broadens the base of his farming, rotates his crops, seeds down, winter feeds, goes into dairying, tries his hand at fruit raising, and gives his children a good education, does more for himself, his children, his country and his generation than does the man who skims the cream off one farm, uses it to buy another, and continues the process indefinitely until he has acquired a huge unwieldy holding which he does not and cannot work adequately, which has by its incessant claims defrauded his children of their schooling, which has been a source of worry to him, and which someone else will have to clean up, build up, and properly equip after he is gone. Many of our older men are wishing that they had followed the first course outlined instead of having striven for the half-equipped acres. Many of our younger men are determined to follow the first course through life, and are equipping themselves for the task.

I hope that in this article I have not painted too rosy a picture and left an impression that everything is all right and we may rest easy. That is not so. All that has been written merely points to two facts—we are actively alive, and we are headed in the right direction, travelling the right road. The bulk of the work lies ahead of us, not behind. The weeds are on the farm, the greed on the market place and the materialism in the home; but we are just beginning to nicely organize to change these conditions and others they merely typify. We are travelling the road named "Progress," concerning which word a great Italian once said: "If there is one word that should be sacred to all peoples it is the word 'progress.'"

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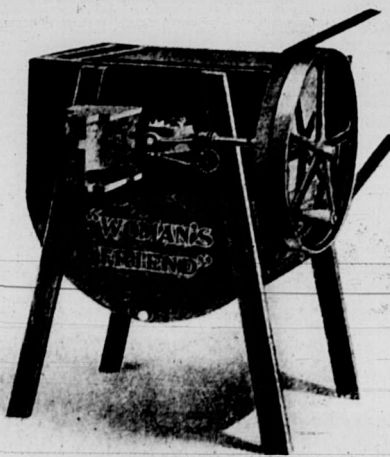
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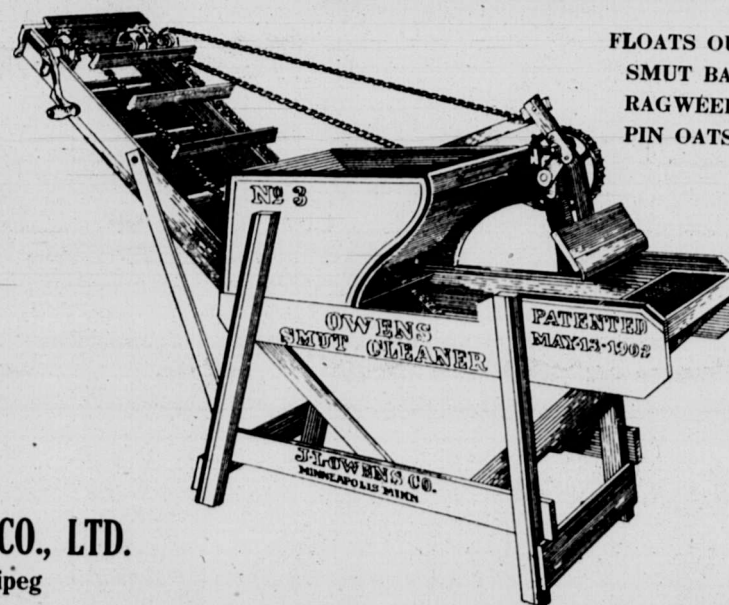
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THE COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT

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Perhaps "Dundee's" wild-warbling measures rise,

Or plaintive "Martyrs," worthy of the name;

Or noble "Elgin" beets the heavenward flame,

The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays: Compared with these, Italian trills are tame;

The tickled ears no heartfelt raptures raise;

Nae unison hae they with our Creator's praise.

The priest-like father reads the sacred page,—

How Abram was the friend of God on high;

Or Moses bade eternal warfare wage With Amalek's ungracious progeny;

Or how the royal bard did groaning lie Beneath the stroke of Heaven's avenging ire;

Or Job's pathetic plaint, and wailing cry; Or rapt Isaiah's wild, seraphic fire; Or other holy seers that tune the sacred lyre.

Perhaps the Christian volume is the theme,—

How guiltless blood for guilty man was shed;

How He, who bore in heaven the second name,

Had not on earth whereon to lay His head;

How His first followers and servants sped; The precepts sage they wrote to many a land;

How he, who lone in Patmos banished, Saw in the sun a mighty angel stand, And heard great Babylon's doom pronounced by Heaven's command.

Then, kneeling down, to heaven's eternal King,

The saint, the father, and the husband prays:

Hope "springs exulting on triumphant wing."

That thus they all shall meet in future days;

There ever bask in uncreated rays,

No more to sigh, or shed the bitter tear

Together hymning their Creator's praise, In such society, yet still more dear;

While circling Time moves round in an eternal sphere.

Compared with this, how poor Religion's pride,

In all the pomp of method and of art, When men display to congregations wide,

Devotion's every grace, except the heart!

The Power, incensed, the pageant will desert,

The pompous strain, the sacerdotal stole;

But, haply, in some cottage far apart,

May hear, well pleased, the language of the soul;

And in His Book of Life the inmates poor enroll.

Then homeward all take off their several way;

The youngling cottagers retire to rest:

The parent-pair they secret homage pay, And proffer up to Heaven the warm request,

That He, who stills the raven's clamorous nest,

And decks the lily fair in flowery pride, Would, in the way his wisdom sees the best,

For them and for their ones provide; But, chiefly, in their hearts with grace divine preside.

From scenes like these old Scotia's grandeur springs,

That makes her loved at home, revered abroad;

Princes and lords are but the breath of kings,

"An honest man's the noblest work of God!"

And certes, in fair Virtue's heavenly road,

The cottage leaves the palace far behind:

What is a lordling's pomp?—a cumbrous load,

Disguising oft the wretch of humankind, Studied in arts of hell, in wickedness refined!

O, Scotia! my dear, my native soil!

For whom my warmest wish to Heaven is sent,

Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil Be blest with health, and peace, and sweet content!

And, O, may Heaven their simple lives prevent

From luxury's contagion weak and vile!

Then, how'er crowns and coronets be rent,

A virtuous populace may rise the while,

And stand a wall of fire around their much-loved isle.

O, Thou! who poured the patriotic tide,

That streamed through Wallace's undaunted heart;

Who dared to nobly stem tyrannic pride,

Or nobly die, the second glorious part,

(The patriot's God peculiarly Thou art,

His friend, inspirer, guardian, and reward!) O, never, never Scotia's realm desert:

But still the patriot and the patriot bard In bright succession raise, her ornament and guard!—ROBERT BURNS.