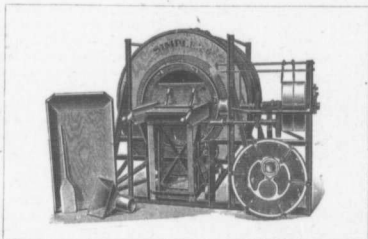


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### The Needs of Country Life

The country life commissioners appointed by President Roosevelt, after touring the United States investigating the conditions of country life, have sent in a report of their findings. Congress has received from the president a summary of the report, accompanying which was a special message by the president emphasizing the points made by the commission. Among the things needed by the farmers, it was asserted, are more co-operating improved schools, and better means of communication. The president's message begins with the announcement that not a dollar of the public money has been paid to any commissioner for his work. The report indicates the ways in which the government, national and state, may show the people how to solve some of the rural problems and suggests a continuance of the work which the commission has begun. The president's statement in brief of the three great general and immediate needs of country life is:

"First, effective co-operation among farmers to put them on the level with the organized interests with which they do business."

"Second, a new kind of schools in the country which shall teach the children as much outdoors as indoors and perhaps more so, that they will be prepared for country life, and not, as at present, mainly for life in town."

"Third, better means of communication, including good roads and a parcel post, which the country people are everywhere and rightly unanimous in demanding. To these may well be added better sanitation, for easily preventable diseases hold several million country people in the slavery of continuous headaches."

The commission points out, and the president concurs in the conclusion, that the most important help that the government, whether state or national, can give is to show the people how to go about the tasks of organization, education and communication with the best and quickest results. This can be done by the collection and spread of information. The only recommendation specifically made by the president is that an appropriation of \$25,000 be provided by Congress to enable the commission to digest the material it has collected and to digest much more than is within its reach, and thus complete its work.

The president says: "Crop growing is the essential foundation of country life; but it is no less essential that the farmer should get an adequate return for what he grows; and it is vital that he and his wife and children should lead the right kind of life. The United States Department of Agriculture should become without delay, in fact, a department of country life, fitted to deal not only with crops, but also with the larger aspects of life in the open country."

### THE CONDITIONS FOUND

The commission says that, broadly speaking, agriculture in the United States is prosperous, and the conditions in many of the great farming regions are improving. There has never been a time when the American farmer has been as well off as he is to-day. Yet, it is true that agriculture is not commercially as profitable as it is entitled to be for the labor and energy that the farmer expends and the risks that he assumes, and that the social conditions in the open country are far short of their possibilities. Rural society is lacking chiefly in a knowledge on the part of the farmers of the exact agricultural conditions and possibilities of their regions, resulting in a widespread depletion of soils in the proper training of the country life in school, in good highway facilities, and organization for buying and selling. There is an absence of adequate system of agricultural credit and shortage of labor and lack of institutions and incentives that tie the laboring man to the soil.

The life of the country woman is burdensome and narrow. There is need of adequate supervision of public health. The farmer is handicapped by the speculative holding of land, monopolistic control of the streams and forests, waste of natural resources, and by restraint of trade.

### WHAT IS NEEDED

Much emphasis is laid upon the need of training toward the agricultural callings in the country schools; agricultural instruction should be a part of our regular public school work. Special agricultural schools should be organized. Better roads are needed, and rural free delivery should be extended, and there should be a parcel post. The commission says that each state college of agriculture should organize, as soon as practicable, a complete department of college extension. Local, state and national conferences on rural progress should be held to unite the interests of education, organization and religion. The suggestions of the commission only outline a general plan whereby the strong resident forces in the open country may themselves build up a new and better rural social structure. To accomplish this the entire people must be aroused. The time for this is at hand.

### Dairy Ligation Wanted

At a meeting of the executive of the Eastern Ontario Dairymen's Association held at Kingston recently, a committee was appointed to wait upon the Minister of Agriculture and ask for legislation which will in future prevent the building of cheese or butter factories in any locality unless a certain number of cows is assured and the site of such building has been approved by the chief inspector or some other appointee of the government.

A resolution was also passed that the Department of Agriculture at Ottawa be requested to grant the same amount of money to cheese factories as is now granted to creameries providing the factories put in the appliances for the cooling curing in the cheese.—R. G. Murphy, Secretary.

### A Correction

A rather misleading error occurred in an article on the taxation question entitled "Proposed Change in Municipal Laws," by L. B. Walling, in our issue of Feb. 4th. The quotation from the petition should have read "so that municipalities may tax improvement values at a lower rate than land values; business assessments, incomes and salaries to be classed with improvement values, and the difference in the rates, in every case to be determined by the municipality." The words "at a lower rate than land values" were omitted.

### Items of Interest

A case against Herman Beares and Thomas Howard, young men belonging to Blenheim Township, Oxford Co., Ont., who were charged with sowing rye in the wheat field belonging to Wm. Forman of the same township. Wm. Forman was tried recently, when the accused was ordered to pay \$25,000 damages to Forman with \$18,25 additional cost of the case. They were then released on suspended sentence.

W. B. Williamson, a Toronto horse dealer, was convicted, a few days ago, in Judge Winchester's court, Toronto, of entering a forged document in connection with a Clydesdale pedigree. Williamson sold a Canadian-bred Clydesdale mare to Messrs. Morgan & Irwin, of Ripley, Bruce Co., Ont., presenting a certificate of registration for an imported mare. Sentence was suspended, Judge Winchester remarking that if a similar case came before him that the penalty would be to the full extent prescribed in the statute.

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