

Dr. Maria Montessori

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No. 1083

EDITORIAL.

A Happy and Prosperous New Year.

"The Farmer's Advocate" is nearing the half-century mark, and is still steadily growing.

Now is the time to be keeping the good resolutions made during the closing days of 1913.

How would it do to give Royal Commissions a holiday during 1914 and let the governments get busy?

A Dominion Commission on the cause of the high cost of living has been named. It was unnecessary. The government knows now.

Those who had cattle ready for the Christmas market were well paid for having them finished early. It pays to finish well, and those feeding stock should bear this in mind.

Resolve to keep more closely in touch with all things concerning your business in 1914 than you ever did before. Read more, think more and by so doing accomplish more than in any past year.

There is work in the country for many of the idle of the cities. Full course meals at a farm table where the best of everything is provided should be more appetizing than the thin soup of the city soup kitchen.

Who has the most at the end of the year, the man who works for the ruling wages in the progressive farming district, gets his board, his lodging and very often his laundry work thrown in and saves from two-thirds to seventy-five per cent. of his wages, or the man who works for the average laborer's wage in the city and pays out from week to week his entire earnings for the necessities of life? Again the farm wins.

The advent of the parcel-post system in Canada furnishes another strong reason for improving and maintaining in an improved condition the highways, ones which the rural mail couriers travel. Usually also these are the roads over which farmers travel to market, factory and mill. Time and money will be saved, both in mail delivery and marketing, in proportion as the roads are good.

Stop "knocking" farmers' meetings. It would be far better to attend all these meetings possible, and discuss feeding, cultivation, rotation and all such questions there with the speakers and other practical men than to remain at home thinking that your own knowledge of these things is complete, and the other fellow "doesn't know what he is talking about." Go out to the meetings and help broadcast good practical agricultural information.

Urban people will after the advent of parcel post in January, be exchanging goods with people of the country. Not that this practice is now unknown, but it will develop in the future and necessitate better roads. If the parcel post is as remunerative as the operations of express companies have been in the past no better use of the surplus could be made than devoting it to the reparation and maintenance of roads rather than thinking of constructing improved highways and imposing a frontage tax upon individuals who will not get the greatest benefit therefrom.

Farm Work for City Unemployed.

As the days commence to lengthen and the cold to strengthen, we hear more and more about the unemployed in our large cities. Urban Eastern Canada, perhaps, does not feel the pinch quite as severely as the cities of the Western Provinces. However, we are told there are hundreds out of work, walking the streets looking for jobs in the larger and even in the smaller cities of the East as well as in the West. There must be work for all to do in a thinly-populated expanse of country like Canada, but it is sometimes necessary for those looking for employment to do certain things for which they have not the strongest liking. It does seem strange that so many should be out of work in the thickly-populated centres, while so many in the country districts are desirous of hiring farm labor at a fair wage. Again many of the idle of the city are, no doubt, men who have had farm experience in their younger days, and perhaps at not so very far remote years. These men seem to abhor rural employment, laying too much stress on the buzz and blare of the city, and upon the so-called isolation of the country districts.

It was said quite recently that the Dominion Immigration agent had over two hundred applications from farmers for help over the winter. No doubt this is only a very, very small percentage of farmers who could profitably employ, and who would do so could they get the men—farm labor. It would not be right to advise all kinds and classes of men out of work to hurriedly pull up stakes and leave the city for the country, but the city-employment problem in such winters as the one we are now experiencing, where there is a tightness in the money market and where everyone seems to be playing safe, would be largely solved if a large number of the men who walk the streets in search of employment would extend their journey to the surrounding country, and at a reasonable wage engage with a good farmer to work for the winter, and better still, by the year. Usually the man who looks for work and can't get it does not look in the right place, otherwise there is something wrong with the man. It should not be beneath the dignity of any man to don the blue overalls and smock and the heavy boots and go into a comfortable stable and attend live stock during winter, or to go to the wood lot and cut wood or lumber for the farmer's own use or for sale. A man out of work in the city very often seeks employment at some work other than that to which he has been accustomed. If he is capable of doing this, he must, in many instances, be capable of applying himself to farm conditions and farm work. He should be able and willing also to put up with a few of the, to a great extent, imaginary drawbacks of life in the country, such as the so-called isolation of a good country home rather than walk the streets of a crowded city, often without money, without friends, and depending upon charity, and more alone than he would be in any good farming community. Why is it then that many farm-bred young men will persist in remaining in the city and out of employment when comfortable homes, fair wages, good board and honest, faithful and elevating labor awaits them only a few miles distant in the country?

Divided We fall.

The component parts which go to make up the industry known as agriculture are so diversified in their interests that it does seem that a policy to suit all is very difficult to obtain. No large question affecting farming directly or indirectly comes up or has come up, but that a certain number of the leading men representing the active farmers' organizations line themselves up on one side while a like number throw in their influence with the opposite faction. No later than the middle of last month was this fact again brought strikingly before us. Two deputations journeyed to Ottawa, each composed of agriculturists. One asked certain things of the Dominion Government; the other attempted to refute the arguments of the first, and asked in substance the direct opposite of the first. What can these men expect of the powers that be at Ottawa? We sincerely hope that neither deputation, in anything which they said or did at Ottawa, were prompted by political leanings to one or the other of the strong parties represented in Parliament. It is to be hoped also that none were prompted by any selfishness or hope that certain things done would favor their own particular branch of the great farming game at the expense of some other, perhaps equally important department of our basic industry.

Go where you will and you will hear the remark made when any important economic questions come up, that the farming population of our country can never be depended upon to get together and to stand together. Is this true? Events seem to be only too strong proof of it. Selfishness and petty jealousies crop out in many local meetings throughout the country. One man is afraid that his neighbor is getting a little more out of certain operations than he should, and he immediately "flares up" and a wrangle once started, like false rumor, dies hard. The same thing that is prevalent in local gatherings crops out in larger and more important meetings, and divisions occur even among those who go to the heads of government to state the case of the man on the land. It is time for a change. No government can be blamed for "considering" arguments under such conditions, and for taking so much time in considering that the ardor of the agitators has grown cold or other questions have loomed up on the horizon and partially or totally obliterated former appeals. The first need of the influential men of agriculture is to know what they want. It is not enough to know what a few fruit growers, a few live-stock men, a few grain farmers, a few market-gardeners or a few poultry fanciers want, and for these men to appoint for each branch of the calling a deputation to go separately to Ottawa or anywhere else and demand that their case be heard and their grievances adjusted by acts of parliament, only to find that a like deputation from another branch of their own business comes along, and warns the government against the folly of doing what the first deputation has asked. These things should all be threshed out long before the government is approached. A spirit of give and take should exist between all those representing different branches of agriculture and between the members of each branch, and when it is necessary that Parliament be asked to do something in the interests of the agriculturists a deputation should go down to Ottawa as solid as a British square, impregnable in front, flank and rear, and make demands which would not only be considered but acted upon. In fact, if such a front were shown by