

Farmers' Clubs.

What one thing can we mention of more importance in the advancement, socially and intellectually, of the farmer than Farmers' Clubs? It is the isolated mode of life of the farmer, more than anything else, that is the great drawback of his attaining that great social position to which he is entitled by his moral worth and intellectual strength. His work-a-day life in the field with his hired man of inferior capacity to himself, prevents the polishing of the mind, for it is well-known that in dressing or polishing diamonds we must use tools equally as hard as the diamond, or there can be no polish given; just so it is with the mind. Mind must rub against mind in order to enlarge and strengthen mind. Books may do it to a degree, but books and papers alone do not put on the polish. Man must come in contact with man, and if there is a clashing of intellect all the better for the polishing process. The intellect of the solitary farmer bears a great resemblance to his ungrounded edge of the true steel is there in all its strength and metal, and ring, but it lacks the keen cutting edge and the bright polish essential to be of use.

It is true the farmer can and does think (we all think and are thinking all the time during our waking hours) as he follows the plow, yet his thoughts are sluggish, dry, dull or proxy, and need something to rub against to quicken and give them polish. Let this same farmer meet his equal at the post-office or village store, and his slow thoughts are quickened, he becomes quite a different man, and if his fellow has his own waratah, both are infected and we shall see that they are capable of thinking with some acuteness, for heat has no greater tendency to equilibrium than hammer'd vigor when mind meets mind. Whence comes the keenness of the broker, merchant, or city news-boy? It is not because of superiority of intellect or education, but rather from mental contact. In what the farmer wants, the men of trades, professions, &c., abound in. While the farmer is educated by his crops, tree, cattle, brooks, Sabbath sermon and weekly newspaper—all good teachers as far as they go—the city man or boy is by contact with living men. While the factory boy is proverbially cute, the farmer boy is more likely to be much less so, if not actually dull, the reason for which is as plain as daylight as from dark. Polished minds and polished manners can only come from intercourse with men, just as the quartz stone from the shore or sand bank becomes polished from being tossed and whirled among the sand and gravel. Now, the Farmers' Club is just the place where the farmer may get this rubbing. Here he can compare notes and observations with his neighbor farmer, and if he only commences to interfere with his experience with others he soon becomes warmed up in spite of himself. But we do not mean he should attend the club as a passive listener merely, but as a participant in all proceedings. When such is the case it is wonderful how the mind and thoughts will be developed. It is scarcely possible but that there will be diversity of thought and opinion; and it is just this which brings out facts. None so humble but that he may add something to the stock of information; and it should be the duty of every member of the club to contribute his mite towards the general stock of knowledge. When every one comes with this intent and performs his part, ignorance, prejudice and narrow conceit, will be apt to ask for other quarters. Farmers, the long evenings of winter furnish the time for this meeting together and comparing notes and experiences; by thus doing you benefit the head and the heart; cultivate the sweet charities of life, become better neighbors, better citizens and better farmers.—HARRY, in *Germania Telegraph*.

Profitable Farming.

There are too many men who put their all in a single venture, and if that fail are utterly used up. There is perhaps no business wherein "two strings to one's bow" are so important as in farming. Other pursuits have certain rules which have been founded on experience, and which the shrewd man of business can take advantage of with an almost assured certainty of success. But we cannot do this. We cannot tell what will happen to our crops. Sometimes it will be over dry, sometimes over wet; sometimes we are plagued with swarms of insects, at other times we are afflicted with blights and mold. Against none of these things do we get the slightest hint. Trouble never strikes everything alike. Some will succeed. But, independently of all this, the young farmer should never be cast down by misfortune. It is here where so many fail. We know one, once, who had made by city work some eight thousand dollars. He had originally been brought up on a farm and had always made up his mind to return to it as soon as he had accumulated enough to warrant him

in making a start. But he put away two thousand dollars, and invested only six in the farm and stock. It so happened that the next two years found him in terrible losses; but they brought experience, and he fell back on his small reserve, and thus, with his new experience, gave him a new and good start. It is not so long ago, but he now considers himself worth about twenty-five thousand dollars, and is one of the most ardent advocates of the position that farming will pay.—*Germania Telegraph*.

What shall we Cultivate?

That is a question that is puzzling many a farmer this spring. Perhaps the crops grown last year did not command a remunerative price, and there is much speculation as to what changes are necessary to produce a better result in the cash receipts of the farm this present season. It is certainly a safe plan to look ahead and make calculations as to what kind of crops one can cultivate with profit, but it is not best to change too often; for an article that sells at a low price only to rise very likely to advance the next crop, because it is not at all well suited to the soil. When it is the price commences again when it is dear. A man who is anxious to take advantage of the fluctuations of the market, is the one always in market, with a large crop when there is a scarcity and prices are correspondingly high.

There are three distinct classes of agriculturists found in every community. First, those who pursue a steady, systematic course, always raising the staple crops best suited to the soil and climate, never varying the quantity or quality, no matter how great the fluctuations in price. They win when high prices rule, and perhaps lose a little when they are low. But in the long run we think this class is the most prosperous. We have known farmers to cultivate a certain number of acres each year with a particular kind of crop, to hold to vary the quantity more than an acre or two in twenty years, and thus proved to be a profitable system.

Secondly, those who watch the markets throughout the country and make changes as often as it appears to be advisable. When certain products are very low in price they begin to cultivate, expecting enough will come to raise them to send up the price. An overstock of beans, onions, cabbages, or other vegetables, or of grain, is a hint that there will be a scarcity the following year. A man who does not visit the markets or read an agricultural paper need not attempt to become one of this small class of prosperous farmers.

But the most numerous class we place as one-third, which includes the many thousands who are always undecided what to do, but continually change from one thing to another. This year they believe sheep will be more profitable than cows, and a change is made and a good flock secured by the time wool and mutton are down to zero in the market. Then next year they will go back to the cows, and butter or cheese making just in time to find wool up and dairy products low. They are the unlucky part of the human race, and are always swindled by middlemen, as they call those who purchase their products.

In deciding upon crops to cultivate the coming season, we advise putting in only those which can be well taken care of without being placed at the mercy or caprice of untrustworthy floating laborers. We know that farmers in localities where wheat is the only crop that commands ready cash, will think they must sow a certain number of acres in order to pay their debts next fall, but would it not be better to sow a less area and do it in the best manner, instead of going over a large space to get a little, with a corresponding increase of labor in harvesting? Every farmer should adopt some system by which he can be master of the situation, even if he does not cultivate more than a dozen acres.—*New York Sun*.

A correspondent of the *Ree Journal* says that bees are fond of water-melons. He left them in the field, cut in two, "and the bees took most of the inside out."

It is not muscle that produces the crop which carries off the top price in market, but brains. It is care, attention, with brains, that are required—more head work than hand work.

Scientific Farmer.—The man who produces the largest yield to area cultivated, with the least expense, and increases the fertility of the soil, is the most scientific farmer, however ignorant he may be of the fact.—*Rural Southland*.

Dr. Hall asserts in the *Prairie Farmer* that the simple use of soft soap, put on hot, is quite as effectual against the borer, for the exclusion of the moth from laying her eggs in the bark, as the carbolic soap, and not one-eighth as expensive.

Keep Your Farm.

Hately visited at a farm-house where the aged grandfather was the sole proprietor. Some half-dozen years before, a son had returned with his family to work the farm and take care of the old gentleman for the remainder of his days. The place was very "old fashioned," but "father liked it," and so nothing was changed. The family drew water from the well in an "iron-bound bucket" attached to a "well-sweep." A colony of white hens, some nine or ten years old, roamed at will about the barn. They had been "grandmother's pets" six years ago, and "grandfather could not bear to have them killed." The stock-sored horses were grandfather's, and when the young man wished to use them, he always asked father if he was willing he should take them and the carriage, specifying the distance he wished to go. At table, all possible pains were taken to make the old man comfortable, and see that his wants were well supplied. That worthy old man was never missing, and his cup of tea or coffee was replenished as quick as it became empty. He was very deaf, but his questions were always answered with the greatest promptness. I could not but observe the marked contrast between his household and others I had seen, where the father had given up all his property into the hands of a son, and left himself in his old age a pensioner on his bounty. No matter how kind and affectionate your children are, they will love you none the less for keeping your property in your own hands during your lifetime.—*Farmers' Chain*.

Farmers Writing for the Press.

In writing articles for publication do it in the fewest words that will make your meaning plain. When you have done this, stop. You may perhaps find something in it that you may condemn, perhaps to alter, possibly something to add. Never let incorrect spelling or bad grammar deter you from writing, if you have important facts to communicate or what you consider such. The editor is always ready and willing to correct errors for the sake of the facts; but mere literary efforts will generally be consigned to the waste basket, if they require very much correction, unless they contain original ideas also. An editor must judge of what will be of interest and value to his readers; it is his business to know that which he has spent years in studying. Ideas should be expressed in as short, terse and comprehensive language as possible; and are always valuable, as being the result of practical experience. All farmers know how to conduct the ordinary operations of the farm. All however do not accomplish these processes alike, or in the most economical manner. It is this difference which makes the successful and unsuccessful farmer. Facts relating to these operations are never too much trouble for an editor to correct.—*Er*.

Fun at Home.

Don't be afraid of a little fun at home, good people. Don't shut up your houses lest the sun should fade your carpets, nor your hearts lest a hearty laugh should shake down some of the musty cobwebs there. If you want to ruin your sons, let them think that all mirth and social enjoyment must be left on the threshold when they come home at night. When once a home is regarded as only a place to eat, drink and sleep in, the work is begun that ends in gambling houses and degradation. Young people must have fun and relaxation somehow. If they do not find it at their own hearthstones, it will be sought in other, and perhaps less profitable places. Therefore let the fire burn brightly at night, and make the home ever delightful with all those little arts that parents so perfectly understand. Don't repress the buoyant spirits of your children; half an hour of merriment round the lamp and firelight of home blots out the remembrance of any care and annoyance during the day, and the best safeguard they can take with them into the world is the unconquerable of a bright little domestic sanctum.—*Er*.

A Scrap Book.

Every farmer should keep a book in which to paste agricultural scraps. Every one, in reading a paper, will see a number of things which he will wish to remember. He will perhaps see suggestions, the value of which he will desire to test, or hints which he will want to be governed by in future operations. And yet, after reading the paper, he will throw it down and will probably never see it again. In such a case all the valuable articles will be lost. To prevent such a loss, every reader should clip from the papers such articles as he desires to preserve and remember, and paste them in a scrap book. Such a book, at the end of a year or two, will be interesting and valuable.—*Er*.