

knowing the relations of these elements of plant food to plant life? Such, nevertheless, is the case, and is it any wonder that the soils in many sections of the country have become impoverished under such unfortunate methods of management? Is it surprising that the soil should be frequently cultivated in a manner that rather locks up instead of setting free, plant food? Is it surprising, under these conditions, that the soil should be systematically robbed of the vitalizing food it contains, until it is brought into such an impoverished condition in a few years that its cultivation is no longer profitable? Have you ever ridden across the country on a train and examined the fields and farms as you passed along? Have you ever thought of the millions of dollars uselessly spent each year in an effort to wring from the soil a bare existence by brute force, when the same industry, applied with intelligence, would have made the farm profitable and a source of joy and pride to the tiller of the soil? Is not this a sad picture, and yet it is one witnessed on every side. There is enough potential energy ignorantly wasted on the farms of this country to turn every mill wheel and run every factory we possess. And what is the result of this useless expenditure of effort? Impoverished farms, plain and unadorned homes and a life of drudgery. Is this painting the picture too strongly? Not at all, for those who are familiar with our conditions know these things to be true. At the same time this is not to be taken as a pessimistic view of the situation, not by any means, but rather as an attempt to call attention to some of the vital facts concerning agriculture which speak like the flaming sword of old, of the necessity of educating the farmers that they may rise about these unfortunate surroundings and become indeed the lords of nature which the Almighty intended them to be when he planted them in the garden of Eden; for the garden of Eden was after all, not confined, as some of us may think, to a small scope of country in some isolated section of the world, but rather the whole world, when viewed through the happy glass of prosperity, makes up the garden of Eden, which has been given to us for our profit as well as our pleasure and enjoyment. Think what it would mean then if it were only possible to teach every farmer the rudimentary principles of soil formation, the relations of soils to heat, light and water, the value and importance of each element of plant food, the conditions under which these elements of plant food may be stored in the soil and brought into rich contact with the growing crops. What nobler, grander work awaits the young men of this country than to become the leaders in a movement that will bring a sense of peace and happiness and prosperity and contentment into the hearts of thousands of farmers, who to-day ignorantly toil and sweat to no purpose and without profit to themselves or to their families. This picture is not overdrawn. It is not possible to paint it in too glowing colors, and yet all this and much more may be accomplished through the teaching of agriculture intelligently in our great colleges and in the public schools of the country; for we must reach out and assist the children in the public schools, as a great majority of them will never have an opportunity to study elsewhere, and they, after all, must furnish the brawn and muscle and the brain that shall build up