

# The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine

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## EDITORIAL.

The best way to strengthen the nation is to strengthen its country life.

In breeding light horses, we do well to remember that the market for misfits is on the wane.

What composer has ever written, or what performer ever executed a sweeter melody than the music of falling rain after a drouth?

A day at the fair may be a day of education, as well as of pleasure. How many make it both?

Excepting the model of an ocean boat and a few cycles, the only means of conveyance on exhibition in the Transportation Building at Toronto Exhibition were automobiles, which were there in hundreds. Thus do fashions change.

Press comments and correspondence alike thoroughly endorse the position recently taken in this paper in favor of a much heavier taxation of automobiles to go towards road maintenance and road improvement, with particular attention to the alleviation of the dust nuisance.

### Hired Help and Social Snobbery.

A daughter who does not wish to be courted by the hired man, replies with spirit to that fine-tempered letter of the Rainy River District farmer, published in "The Farmer's Advocate" of August 31st. We feel certain that our feminine correspondent has misinterpreted this letter, prompted quite possibly by unwarrantable presumption on the part of a hired hand she has known. Of course, no man, whatever his rank or occupation, has any business to presume a right to any lady's company, and no gentleman will take advantage of accident of employment to push himself in where he is unwelcome.

But, to take the position that hired help, whether male or female, should comport themselves as menials, of necessity inferior to their employer's family, is not merely unchristian and uncharitable; it is snobbish and brutal. Those who look at the matter in that light do not deserve to have any help, and the prevalent tinge of that spirit, exemplified commonly in social ostracism, is contributing considerably to make good hired help difficult to secure. A man's a man, whatever his occupation. The writer of this paragraph has in time past been a hired farm hand himself, and is at present an employer. He should therefore, be in a position to regard the subject from both standpoints, and has always considered that an efficient farm hand of good character, habits and culture is every whit as much to be respected as a premier or a king—and a great deal more so than some specimens of royalty that might be named.

### Farming Commercialized.

In these days when emphasis is being very properly placed upon business methods in farming, is there not a danger of specializing and organizing and commercializing until the most delightful occupation of mankind is resolved into a mere money-coining business, tending to a condition typified by the notorious cornbelt farmer, who wanted to grow more corn, to feed more hogs, to buy more land, to grow more corn, to feed more hogs, and so forth, and so forth, and so forth, to the end of life? What but a miser's pleasure could there be in a career spent to such end and purpose? What is the good of it all? Is such a life successful in any satisfying sense? We are not of those ever fretting for a chance to turn back the hands of the clock. We believe that on the whole the world grows better and farming progresses steadily. But we do sometimes wonder whether certain improvements have not detracted somewhat from the interest which formerly attached to farm life and farm work. Take maple-syrup-making for example. No one will deny that the modern evaporator, with its syphon-connected compartments and its thermometer or saccharimeter for determining the proper density, has reduced the labor and improved the purity of the maple product. Has it not also lessened the fun, the sentiment and the wild primal exhilaration with which the boys welcomed the sugar season, when the sap was collected in wooden buckets, carried or drawn to kettles or pans at a sugar camp in the center of the bush, boiled over fires kept burning all night, to the music of the denizens of the woods, and taken off the fire after repeated sampling and discriminating tongue laddling? Step by step as the maple industry has been commercialized it has lost its fascinating charm.

Is it not so likewise to some degree in other lines? Does the modern farm, whose every acre has been cleared and devoted rigidly to the maintenance of its maximum of cows or steers or hogs, present as many features of interest as it did in the old days, when it was more self-contained; when the clothes were made from wool grown, spun and woven on the farm; when the house and furniture were homemade; when every autumn was a busy season of drying and preserving fruits and vegetables, curing meat for home use, gathering nuts, and preparing in a hundred ways with squirrel-like thrift for the forthcoming winter season? In those days the dense woodland was the farm boy's park, and all outdoors a wild menagerie.

During recent decades the trend has been to clear the last-remaining acres, and specialize agriculture in such a way as to reduce the variety and narrow the interest of farm life, or at least to counteract in part the interest that scientific study should add.

Far be it from us to discourage business methods. We believe in them strongly, and advise every reader to keep books and study margins, that each important department of his farm may show a balance on the right side of the ledger. At the same time we would have them regarding their occupation as something more than a means of money getting. We would counsel the advisability of preserving considerable variety in farm practice. We would prefer a dozen kinds of crops and four or five branches of live-stock husbandry to three or four crops and one or two classes of animals, even if we made a little less money from the greater variety—though, as a matter of fact, we doubt whether we would make

less; perhaps we might make more. But we would remind our readers that the farm is a home, that it should be made as beautiful as possible, as interesting as possible, as full of variety as possible.

We would, while making some one line a leader, preserve considerable variety in crops and stock, would retain or plant a wood-lot, comprising all kinds of nut trees suitable to the locality, as well as maples and numerous noteworthy specimens. We would have nice drives, pleasant walks, artistic shelter-belts, various kinds of fruit, vegetables, shade trees, vines and lawn grass, with perhaps a few flowers. We would, further, take particular pains to conserve the sociability of rural life. In short we would, while keeping business principles in view, avoid becoming wrapped up in these, remembering that full living is vastly more important and satisfying than soulless acquisition.

Of course one cannot idealize a farm all at once. Few have the capital, even had they the knowledge. It is a life work to create a real home farm. But before the creation can be accomplished there must be the ideal. It is ideals we are seeking to stimulate by this article. "What are you living for?" is the question we would raise.

### Sensational Exhibition Prizes.

One of the proverbial admonitions of the past was not to look a gift horse in the mouth. Lovers of live stock at the National Exhibition, Toronto naturally watched with keen interest the work of the judges in awarding the two \$500 plums to the owners of the best animals, irrespective of age or sex, in the Shorthorn and Holstein classes. In making such sensational offerings, the expectation was doubtless to attract a large entry and whet public interest in the events. By its sponsors it was regarded as a strong advertising card for the exhibition, and other breeds will naturally be looking for some such trophy in the future. By the way, the ribbon handed out to the animals adjudged worthy of second place was rather a long and precipitous descent from the substantial check accorded to the owners of those above. Presumably, the judge sorted out what appealed to him as the pick of the great array of males, and then the premier female. The question naturally arising next would be which of the two was the better representative of its sex, with the odds in favor of the bull as the more important individual from a breeding standpoint. Many about the ring-side were disposed to think that where such large sums were offered as prizes, the progeny or "get" should have been forward as evidence of the value of competing animals as breeders. The American judge who made the selection in the "Black-and-White" class was evidently not greatly enamoured of the situation in which he was placed, remarking, as he handed out his decision, that it was scarcely right to put females up against males in that way. As a matter of fact, in each case, as the prize-list shows, the cash awards went to the latter. A half or quarter of the amount would have made a handsome prize for a single individual, and more breeds could have been covered by the benefaction, though the spectacular element would have been lacking. The attendance receipts for the exhibition will doubtless leave the association still on "easy street," and without making any further references to the handsome prizes that may be hung up for stockmen in 1912, we would suggest that, if the management wish to do something solid, as well as