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EDITORIAL.

"Three cheers for the farmer—and an appropriation," is a popular rallying cry with those who have the first call on the appropriation.

The trouble with a great many well-intentioned schemes to benefit farmers is that most of the melon disappears before reaching him.

"Milking machines, the hope of inventors and the despair of dairymen," is a particularly apt phrase employed by a recent correspondent of "The Farmer's Advocate." Too true, as yet. Let us hope for better things in store.

When it comes to a showdown of net profit, egg-production under farm conditions beats any other line of stock husbandry to a standstill. The only trouble is that it cannot be prosecuted with proportionate advantage on a very large scale.

The author of the verses entitled, "A song of the Cornfield," in "The Farmer's Advocate" of February 8th, complains of a typographical error, by which the phrase, "In the light of the morn," was made to read, "In the light of the moon." In extenuation of the long-suffering printer, we must state that the word was not very plainly written.

One of the best assets of a farm is a library of at least a dozen agricultural books, all the bulletins to which one is entitled, and anywhere from two to half a dozen of the best agricultural journals dealing most fully with his particular line or lines of farming. As Seager Wheeler says, one important part of farming can be done in a comfortable arm chair by the fireside. It is in some respects the nicest part, and the one most often neglected. When judiciously combined with physical exertion, it pays well. Book-farming is no longer a joke.

The alacrity with which good-roads enthusiasts welcome the prospect of Federal subsidy indicates that they look upon Government subvention as something in the nature of "money from 'ome"—something which costs them nothing, and goes to supplement their own resources. The fact that money from the Dominion exchequer is simply taken from the pockets of the people, to pay back to the people, minus the heavy cost of collection and distribution, seems to escape them. The nearer money is raised to the scene of expenditure, the more economically, as a rule, will it be collected and used. Under the existing fiscal system, Federal taxes are about the dearest taxes we pay.

About three hundred good-road delegates from Ontario, many of them being town, board of trade and motor-league men, laid siege of the Government at Ottawa recently for Federal aid, to improve the 50,000 miles of highways in the Province. Premier Borden replied that the supplementary estimates would provide grants to the different Provinces, but it would be for construction and not for maintenance, and according to methods of outlay not yet determined in co-operation with the Provinces. Taxpayers, particularly men of municipal experience, know to their cost that the construction of roads is comparatively easy, but the tedious and more costly problem is that of maintenance, if the benefits of the initial outlays are not to be lost.

Stand for the People.

At the conclusion of the general election last year, assurances were publicly given that the result was not to be interpreted as the mandate for imposing additional fiscal burdens upon the people. And nothing could be clearer than that to anyone who studied the campaign and the swing of public sentiment. A tariff commission is being appointed to make rigid and specific inquiry into affected industries, and it would manifestly be a breach of faith with the public in advance or in disregard of what its findings may be to proceed, by bounty or tariff, to levy upon the people for certain "interests." It is hopeful to find members of Parliament, irrespective of party, resolutely resisting proposals of that nature, and in doing so they are on wise and prudent ground, and undoubtedly voice the mind of the people. With or without encouragement, there are piratical interests ready to raid the treasury for their own enrichment, but Parliamentary leaders should be courageously sustained by the rank and file in resisting them at the very outset. Some industry may draw a fat allowance every day of the year in bounty money, and another by reason of watered stock may make a 12 or 14 per cent. dividend look innocently small, but does anyone propose bounties to the farmer, whether he can make ends meet or not? Elusive schemes there are in plenty to aid him, but they are no warrant for lobby proposals that are now being resisted on Parliament Hill. The true friends of political parties are those within them with vision and courage to state the truth and stick to their guns.

What Ails the Farm?

"The Lord made the country, but man made the town," is such an old aphorism that people actually forget that the normal or natural life is living in the country. The man who does not touch the fresh-turned sod, tramp through the bush, fodder the cattle on a winter night or morning, or watch the garden grow, has missed a great charm of existence, with independence, productive industry and fair monetary reward added. In all directions towns and cities are growing, and they are likely to continue to grow; and, while there are symptoms of a swing of public sentiment towards country life as a desirable ideal for jaded town folk, the best young blood of the farm continues to be drained into the city. This will probably go on until, by education and otherwise, people acquire more sense. Hit or miss, young people take their chances in the towns which are fighting for population and factories. It seems idle to tell even some men that they would be better off in the country at a much lower wage. It takes time to teach them what town life costs.

Harvey W. Wiley, Chief Chemist of the United States Department of Agriculture, who has been in the public eye because of his enforcement of pure-food laws, questions if a man who works in the city at \$2.50 per day is as well off financially at the end of the year as the man on the farm at \$18 per month, with board and lodging. Even at less than that the country worker would be ahead, and his children better fed, than the town man's. Dr. Wiley has been a life-long farmer, and a thorough investigator of farming, to boot, from a scientific viewpoint, so that his judgment is worth something. The cost of living is not going down. It is likely to increase. People flocking to the town might as well make up their minds to that. The cost of farming and of farm life

has gone up, and if the consumer pays too much, that is because of costly transportation and faulty methods of distribution, which the Government will yet have to regulate more closely. Otherwise, there is no prospect of relief for the town worker, whose cost of living will probably rise still higher, for the army of consumers constantly increases, while the number of producers becomes smaller.

Intensive farming is being recommended, but in large sections of Ontario and other Provinces of Eastern Canada, in most respects the choicest farming country in the world, farms are increasing in size. The land is gradually falling into the hands of the more capable men. Farming now requires greater capacity and skill than ever. Some who drift into towns to work for others, or to try "keeping store," hope to make money faster, or at least more easily, but, stripped down to the naked truth, the change means that the old law of the survival of the fittest is invariably working. Farming is a man's job. As Dr. Wiley very truly states in his article in "The Century," it is a business requiring the greatest industry, the keenest intellect and the best training of all the professions. If there is an extra-bright boy in the family, he should be the farmer; the others will do for lawyers or something else. Improved machinery and skilled labor skilfully directed are helping to solve the problem of the farm, to hold its population, by making the farm a more productive place and its prospects for a career more certain. Good roads, a better rounded-out home life, the work of the rural church, the school, and local libraries, wisely directed, will combine, with economic advantage, to multiply the charms and satisfactions of life on the farm; but, for the impatient and short-sighted these processes may seem slow when they look at the surroundings and reputed accumulations of some captain of industry and finance who is the exception, and not the rule. And even these exceptionally successful men of the town yearn for that contact with nature which farm pursuits offer, as scores and hundreds of them have confessed.

A Good Farming Movement.

An important branch of the Canadian Commission on Conservation, with headquarters at Ottawa, is the Committee on Lands, presided over by Dr. Jas. W. Robertson. The heads of the Commission are not salaried, but necessary expenses are defrayed, and funds are set apart with the authority of Parliament for carrying out policies designed to preserve and promote the agricultural resources of the country. Since the organization of the Commission, a couple of years ago, steps have been taken in making what might be called a preliminary survey of over 1,200 farms in all the Provinces of Canada, but an extra number in the more thickly-settled ones—Ontario and Quebec. The farms in question are of the better class, and the inquiry into how they are conducted, the success attending them, etc., has been begun something after the manner pursued in the farm surveys in New York State, the results of which formed the basis of the valuable series of articles by Dr. J. F. Snell, published during December and January in "The Farmer's Advocate." The survey or observation is made over groups of farms out of which, by reason of what has been learned by the men from the Commission, certain ones naturally emerge as especially meritorious.