

decline of the old yeoman pride; the decay of the local spirit and of the habit of association;³ a lowered interest in politics and civic matters, so that even the old contentions and educational town meeting is but a very occasional sanction of De-Toqueville's panegyrics; and discontent, brooding or active, signified in the long procession of the younger sons of the farm moving to the cities or to the west.

Political economists usually deal with this situation by the academic argument urging the New England farmer to retrenchment. They say to him: "Return to the old simplicities of farm life, discard fashion, stop imitating the whims and luxuries of the upper classes and adopt, so far as may be, the ancestral habit of self-denial." They emphasize the modern love of dress on the farm, the buggy which has supplanted the old box wagon, the expensive tastes of the younger sons of the soil, and the general scale of living too high for the farm to sustain now, just as it would have been too high a century ago. And they aver with considerable force

Twelve farms in large factory towns, some of them containing cities, have an asked price, including buildings, of about \$31 an acre or \$18.34 less than the average value per acre of Connecticut farms as given in the census of 1880.

* In one New England county no less than sixteen small "country stores" last January gave up business—many of them doubtless of the "little country store" type that used to be found at every important crossroads and in the small hamlets. To those who are aware what a principle of association these stores with their "bema of the barrel head" have represented in rural Yankee life their downfall under the competition of the modern system of trade certainly has a social significance. In the same direction is the change unfortunately made necessary by elections under secret ballot laws, which exclude the electors from the ballot boxes except for the immediate purpose of voting and impair much the social character of the old voting days.

that, if the New England farmer will join self-restraint with hard toil, then improved methods of agriculture, cheaper articles of farm consumption and, on the whole, higher prices of farm products will "make the farm pay," enable the owner to lay up money and attain a fair degree of comfort and of self-cultivation.

The plea has its strength, and no apology is offered here for the too common habit on the farm of aping the luxuries of the rich. Yet it is a frailty deep rooted in human nature and not confined to the soil. Moreover there are certain directions in which the farmer may plead abatement. For example: The country doctor of the old days charged fifty cents a visit. Now his usual charge is two dollars. Shall the modern farmer therefore call in the physician less often, and is he not fairly entitled to good medical service? Can he in death dispense with the costly offices of the modern undertaker and go back to the times when friends dug the grave, the farm supplied the hearse, and the plain butternut coffin enclosed its silent tenant. Again there is the far more serious problem of farm education, when the times demand a higher degree of training than the little red school house used to give or gives now. Where and how can the farmer educate his sons and daughters? If he happens to live in a large town with its high school, that branch of the life problem may be solved. But in the little farm towns, where even low taxes are a vexing burden, and where the district school and three R's are still the educational standards, in what direction toward the higher training shall the farmer's rational ambition for his children turn?¹ There is just here, moreover, an enigma, not merely for our farmers, but for our universities

I See the recent report of the Connecticut Board of Education on the condition of the public schools in New London County.