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TEMPERATE FARMING

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OUR
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THE FIRST WEALTH OF THE FARM is the same as the first wealth of the nation, viz. its health. We quote from a very thoughtful letter sent us under the above caption, the substance of which we propose setting forth in this page. Referring to our day of "strenuous endeavor" and the fact that the exacting conditions of the West under the stress of its rapid development demands the best of manhood, this correspondent goes on to point out some of the many object lessons the country offers in the science of living and thriving. It is "essentially the trying out ground" of the manhood and womanhood which the nations are sending out to make a fresh start on the road to that objective which the humblest worker never has out of mind.

THE HARDIHOOD OF THE NORTHERN RACES stands out everywhere in bold relief when we look for examples of that virility that seems to dominate and conquer against all odds in an open field when it comes to a contest between "plain living and high thinking"

and the supineness of a more easy-going indulgence. The average farmer, says our correspondent, is supposed to be a very healthy individual owing to the fact that he breathes so much of the fresh air in his daily round. This, however, is only partly correct as the farmer in many cases has set up conditions which to a greater extent than he suspects counteracts the natural advantages of his outdoor life.

STUFFY FARM HOUSES, especially during the winter months, and the rapid consumption of meals every day of the year are to be regarded as among the chief set-backs to the otherwise salubrious environment of the farming life. Our friend points out also that the long hours spent at the threshing outfit involving just as long a fast followed by the "galloping consumption" of some unusual and often hastily-prepared food is bound to leave its impression for the worse sooner or later. He pays a tribute to the porridge-fed plowmen of Scotland—offering as they do a good example of the beauty and value of an easily digested diet of simple, wholesome, inexpensive food.

FRANKLIN'S STRICTURES ON OVER-EATING are more needful today than they were at the dawn of the American Republic. The old printer, philosopher and statesman laid down some stringent rules for the guidance of himself and others with regard to "feed", and made the observation which is as up-to-date in our day as it was in his that the destructiveness of over-eating is by far and away ahead of that of under-eating. Most people agree that "we all eat too much", but most people still continue to follow the custom of getting rid of just exactly what description and what quantity of food is

placed before them, and the drug business of this western country offers a sad comment on what its population finds it necessary to submit themselves to by way of "correcting" their habitual indulgence.

THE SPEED FEVER OF THE WESTERN FARM, however, is another point in our correspondent's onslaught upon this absurd idea of the art of living. Everything is being geared to a higher and still higher speed till the notion of a "sober thought and the enjoyment of life with its embellishment of art" is being completely swallowed up in the rushing tide of a life that cannot stay. The prospects of a "quiet eventide" are becoming sadly remote to many men on the farms to-day as well as to the no less insane "pacers" of the city's business life.

LIFE AT A WHITE HEAT all the time, whatever the reward in dollars' worth at the end of it is a fool's game. Our correspondent recalls the picture of restfulness at the end of the day, of the ideal of that life of work and worship that is alone worth living, described in Burn's "Cottar's Saturday Night". And he is positively right when he presents this as offering "an ideal ambition to become a millionaire of contentment with vigorous health and little worry, rather than to race through life chasing the will o' the wisp of money-bought pleasure". The highest wisdom is to be found in a rational adjustment of the periods of toil and recreation. Intemperance in either case is a blight and a curse.

THERE'S REAL ENJOYMENT even in hard work, but hard work cannot be carried on continuously at top speed without some rational interlude of rest or re-creating of exhausted nerves if a man is to "enjoy" his work. And recreation isn't worth the name unless it has been earned. Real hard work is the only royal currency for the purchase of any honey-pot of rest and recuperation that hasn't got a fly in it, but the everlasting grind that submits to any or every "mortification of the flesh" that will add one more dollar to the pile has not one recorded instance in history or biography to commend the practice to any seeker after true success.

"**CONTENTED WITH LITTLE**, I have found more than I sought", was the life-long experience of a countryman of Robert Burns, who began life under conditions of poverty and hardship not unlike those of the poet himself. It was part of his creed that no man is permitted to accomplish more than the Almighty had instructed him through his own commonsense he was able to manage. This man rose early, fared plainly all his life; was known to his friends as "Genial Johnnie," and this sobriquet was engraved on his coffin plate by one whom he had helped again and again from his treasury of love and a purse that was never empty.

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