



## Practical Talks to Threshermen

Conducted by PROFESSOR P. S. ROSE

TALK No. XXXV.

In reading the letters published in the Correspondence Department of this magazine I have noticed a good many requests for a discussion of grain separators. It would appear that a series of lessons on this topic might be of interest and my own observation in the field convinces me that there is as much need of instruction along this line as any other in the threshing business. The proper handling of a separator is just as important as the proper manipulation of the engine, and separator men are paid just as large wages as engineers. As a matter of fact, there are probably fewer really good separator men than good engineers. It would seem advisable, therefore, to present a series of lessons on the separator and this is what I propose to do.

At some future time I should like to present some more articles on the business side of threshing if the readers would care to have them. I have taken no little pleasure in writing the lessons on this topic which have appeared in these columns during the past few months. There is still much that might be said on this subject, but we will pass it up for the present and proceed to a discussion of threshing machines, first giving a little of their history.

From the time when the Lord rejected Cain's poor offering of the fruits of the soil down almost to the present time, agriculture, with a few exceptions, has not been an honored profession among the nations of the earth. For untold ages little was done to elevate agriculture to the position it deserved and which it has so recently achieved. The tools used in all its branches were crude and clumsy. Men exercised their genius in seeking ways to destroy life, not in means for preserving it. Swords and spears and cutlasses for mutilating the flesh, engines of torture for prisoners, devilish machines to send poor wretches to eternity—all these were invented and made, but nothing whatever to help make more bread to feed the starving millions.

Decades of centuries rolled by without seeing a suitable plow devised to stir up the soil, a harrow to fit it for the seed, or tools to gather the ripened fruits. All these things were evidently considered beneath and below the efforts of those who had the genius of construction. These were ages of false ideals and it is only recently, this morning as it were, in the history of the race, that the breezes of common sense and sanity have sprung up and blown away the enveloping fogs and mists of a miserable past with its gaunt specter Famine dancing

and circling about, ever near and ever ready to spring out of the mists and wrap us in the cold embrace of death.

The great nations of antiquity did not realize, apparently, that their one great and implacable enemy was Hunger. They did not realize that all other foes were pigmies in comparison. They cut and slashed and fought each other. Nations rose and fell, art and literature flourished. Great captains led mighty armies over plains and mountain ranges and across the deep waters in search of empire with never a thought for the great common mortal enemy of all.

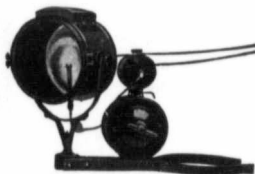
Such is the wretched history of the past with its petty personal vanities, its court intrigues, its poverty and suffering, and its starving millions. It is only this morning, as I said before, that we have awakened to a new and better day. We have at last discerned the real enemy. We have made war upon him, dismantled his guns, stormed his barricades, and entrenched ourselves in the rich valleys and fruitful places of the earth where he can never again assail us. The Goliath of the centuries has been slain with the pebble of Science and Invention. It is the greatest of the world's decisive battles and the real beginning of a better civilization, for to be happy and content and to feel the real spirit of brotherly love man must first be fed.

When the Western nations first began to realize the absolute necessity for more food, they were confronted with the difficulty of obtaining it without proper tools. Crude instruments were at first devised for tillage and as the harvests of grain became large with their subsequent development it was found that the old method of hand shelling by women and children, the beating of the straw with a flail, or the treading out of the grain by oxen and horses was too slow and too expensive. Other means must be found and inventors took up the problem. They realized at once that either of the two century old methods were available. Either the grain might be rubbed out of the chaff as in hand shelling or it might be beaten out—as by flailing or the tramping of animals. It was evident that the successful mechanical threshing machine must be constructed upon one or the other of these principles. Both methods were tried, as I shall presently show, and both are in successful use at the present time.

A Scotchman named Michael Menzies was one of the first of a splendid group of men who experimented with threshing machines and his efforts, while not

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