

The Farmer's Advocate AND HOME MAGAZINE.

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a very large proportion of Ontario agriculture. We have influential men who can outline a policy and gain its support; their counsel and advice are sought by authorities who have matters of state in hand, they are valuable men to the Province, but unfortunately too few of them have seen fit to identify themselves with the United Farmers of Ontario and make it what it should be, the one big organization through which the farmers of this Province could exert an influence. The reason for this is lack of leadership. Individuals with Dominion-wide reputations for wisdom and good judgment will not support an organization whose policy and actions they cannot endorse. For half a century "The Farmer's Advocate" has preached the gospel of united effort through co-operation, or whatever one wishes to call it; the name matters not so long as farmers get together and stand together. We are no less zealous in the cause than ever and for this reason we should not like to see progress in the Province of Ontario retarded for a quarter century, simply because we did not start aright and inaugurate something sufficiently attractive to draw to it the men and support necessary to make it serve the Province as such an institution should.

When the United Farmers of Ontario organized in March, 1914, we pointed out its weaknesses, many of which still exist, and made suggestions. One was that new blood be drawn from going concerns and that representatives from the various branches of the industry be included, in order to make it what the name implies, "The United Farmers of Ontario." This was never accomplished for reasons already explained, and until big men are singled out and put in command any progress made will be in spite of, rather than on account of, the present guidance this organization has. The present leaders are gentlemen and so far as we know they treat others as such, but that is not the point when the future of Ontario's agriculture is involved and at a time when farmers should be preparing to take a more active part in politics with a view to getting proper and adequate representation in Parliament.

The inestimable value of leadership is being exemplified throughout the world to-day as never before. Great accomplishments depend not so much on the numerical strength of the opposing forces as on the personal

magnetism, wisdom, judgment and determination of those in command, and in whom the peoples of the civilized world are imposing an unprecedented measure of confidence. Let us translate this principle and adapt it to the United Farmers of Ontario so it will deserve the support necessary to make it the farmers' parliament of this Province and enable it to grow up unwarped to maturity and to a position where it will merit the goodwill of all interested in agricultural advancement, and command the respect of those with whom it may hold differences of opinion.

What Sandy Views as Essential Work.

BY SANDY FRASER.

"I see," says I to the auld wumman the ither day, "that there is some talk in the papers o' the Government 'eliminating the non-essential industries.'" "What's that?" inquires Jean, looking up for a minute from the dishes she wis washin'. "Weel, frae what I mind o' the dictionary," I replied, "it means that the unnecessary jobs are to be cut oot. In ither words all the people in this country that are daein' wark that isn't o' first-rate importance to the health an' welfare o' the world at large will be compelled to change their occupation an' go at some o' the jobs that have tae be done, if humanity is to continue to live on this auld earth. An' there's need for somethin' o' the kind, too." I went on, "for, gin I'm able to judge, a lot o' the folks that I see in the town an' elsewhere might be better employed than warkin' at the jobs they're at."

"Like the tramp that wis here the ither day, for instance," says Jean. "I asked him why he wasn't tryin' tae earn an honest living in some way, and he said that he used to be an agent for stove-pipe holes but since the war he hadn't been able tae mak' a livin' at it."

"Weel, that's just about the size o' the business that a lot mair o' the hangers-on in this country are engaged in," says I. "The only difference, they think they're daein' something, while your tramp knew that he wasn't."

"Na doot there's a guid mony men sellin' whiskey an' tobacco, doon in Quebec an' ither places, that might be better employed," agreed Jean, "I never could see the sense o' that in war-time, or any ither time."

Jean wis brought up a pretty stiff Presbyterian, an' would hae become a crank on the question o' liquor an' tobacco if I hadn't taken her in hand when I did. She's no' inclined to mak' muckle allowance for the weaknesses o' humanity.

After a meenute she went on again. "I suppose, when you come tae think aboot it, there isn't mony o' the trades an' professions that we couldna' get along without. In the days o' oor feythers and grandfeythers things werena' sae complicated, and maistly ilka family did what wis needed for their ain support an' comfort. The man o' the hoose supplied the raw material for the clothing o' his family by raising sheep, and their food came by way o' the pigs an' cattle he kept an' the horses that helped him tae till the soil. It wis a sort o' self-contained institution where all the necessities o' existence were to be had right at hame. That wis the time when the farmer had some right tae be called independent. But noo-a-days everything we raise on the farm we sell, and everything we want we have to buy. We sell oor wool to the mills, oor pigs an' fat cattle to the drovers, an' oor milk we send to the creamery or cheese-factory. Then when we want anything to eat or to wear we have to gae oot an' hunt for it. When the butcher gives us the wee bit o' meat that we ask for he doesn't forget tae charge us for it and a little extra towards the support o' his wife an' family. An' when you want a suit o' clothes you gang tae the tailor for it and pay him, at the same time, for every operation in connection wi' it, frae the time the wool left yer hands till the finished suit wis handed tae ye, done up in a box. There wis a time when the women in the homes were the tailors."

"That's right," I interrupted, "women were the stuff in the auld days. It paid a mon in those times to get married. It wis a poor woman then that couldna' support one man. An' if he felt like daein' ony wark himsel', that wis sae muckle tae the guid. There's been a big change in a short time," says I.

"Hoot," returned Jean, "if the women hae changed the men havena' improved much. There'd be a lot o' loafers among them if they were permitted tae follow their inclinations. They're rounding them up now in the cities, I hear, an' makin' them work whether they want to or not. But I havena' seen that they had to dae onything o' the kind in the case o' the women."

"Weel, as I wis sayin'," I went on, "there's been a big change, and I wouldn't be surprised if the next ten years saw as muckle o' a change the ither way. About the only men we seem to be unable to get along wi'oot these times are oor soldiers an' those that are supplying them wi' food an' fightin' materials. So maybe the Government is on the right track when they're talkin' o' 'eliminating the non-essential industries, an' pittin' ilka man an' woman on the wark that is likely to be o' maist benefit tae the country."

"I dinna ken that that will wark," objected Jean. "For instance, how could we get along wi'oot doctors?" "Oh, all right, I guess," I replied, "A lot o' people must hae grown up before there were ony doctors, sae that's proof that we can get along in some kind o' a way yet, even if they're all sent to the war or put on farms. An' the dentists might gae along wi' them. That chap

that fixed yer teeth the ither day and that charges ye, as ye say, whatever he happens tae need at the time, might be earnin' an' honest livin' in some munition factory."

"But what aboot yer carpenters an' blacksmiths?" "There'll be na trouble aboot them," says I, wavin' my hand. "Farmers hae got tae be such jack-o'-all-trades these days that they can maistly do their ain carpenter wark, an' as for the blacksmith he can gae to the war too, an' we will let oor horses go barefoot the way they do oot West. And onything in the way o' repairs that we hae been in the habit o' takin' to a blacksmith we can fix up oorselves wi' a piece o' hay-wire an' a pair o' pliers. What can't be fixed wi' hay-wire is past help."

"Weel," says Jean, after a while, "if you men can dae that I guess we women can get along wi'oot oor dress-makers an' milliners an' sae on. Oor mithers used to mak' their ain dresses an' bonnets, an' it wouldn't hurt us to dae the same. We wouldn't be wantin' changes sae aften, I'm thinkin'. It's gaein' back tae the 'simple life' sure enough, Sandy, but maybe it's the cure for what ailed us. There's anither mon ye didna' mention yet, but I'm sure ye willna' be for takin' his job away from him. Are ye minded tae let the preachers go on handin' us out a couple o' sermons a week as usual?"

"I dinna ken as I am," I replied slowly; "it all depends on the quality o' the sermon an' the character o' the man that preaches it. The best kind o' preachin' is what is done by example, and for the mon that isn't sure o' his callin', or that doesna' mak' itherers sure o' it, I wad say let him get tae producin' somethin' o' some value, whether in a factory or on a farm, or else go across maybe, and shoot a few Germans. We'd tak' off oor hats tae them if they did that, like we used to do to the ministers in Scotland lang ago."

"Weel," says Jean, "I've got tae be attendin' tae the rest o' my wark upstairs, but there's one profession yet that ye havena' mentioned. What aboot oor school-teachers?" "We'll leave them juist where they are," I replied. "They're warkin' wi' exactly the same object in view as the rest o' us, and that is the welfare an' happiness o' the future citizens o' this country. The school-teachers are developin' the citizens and oor producers an' soldiers are tryin' tae provide them wi' a free land in which to live. Isn't that right?" says I. "Sure," said Jean. "I'm glad ye've said something sensible at last." And she took the broom and went off upstairs, leaving me to my reflections.

Nature's Diary.

A. B. KLUGH, M.A.

Among all our Canadian birds there are few which are more generally beloved than the Bobolink. It is one of the species which figures largely in the songs of the children, who carol joyously "Bobolink, Bobolink, Spink-spink-spink." It is the same in the northern States. The reason is not far to seek—the Bobolink is a bird of the meadows, he is out where we can see him as we work on the land or as we drive along the road, his song is most joyous, musical and distinctive, and his colors are attractive. So enshrined in song and story is the Bobolink that we are inclined to regard this as one of the aboriginal species of eastern Canada, and yet as a matter of fact it is only a comparatively recent "settler" in this region. The Bobolink is a bird of the open places, never found in woods or groves, avoiding in fact even well-grown orchards, and when eastern Canada was mainly forest this species was unknown here. It is indeed only in comparatively recent years that the Bobolink has made its way into the more northerly portions of Ontario, the first being seen in Parry Sound district in 1899, and is even now still extending its range to the north.

The Bobolink is beloved not only in Canada but in the northern States, but in the southern States it has quite a different reputation. There it is the Rice Bird—a veritable plague to the rice-growers.

This double role of the Bobolink is probably unique in the annals of bird life, and its explanation is as follows:

At the time when America was first settled the whole northeastern portion was forested and it presented but few localities, and those of limited area, suited to the Bobolink. When the great forests of New England, New York and eastern Canada were cleared away, and transformed into farms, with extensive areas of meadows, intersected with springs and brooks, the Bobolinks were not slow to avail themselves of these new opportunities, and soon colonized the whole. At the same time the southeastern coast region was also brought under cultivation, and the tidal and river lands were devoted to the growing of rice. Since the Bobolinks pass the winter in South America, the southern coast of Florida naturally presents to them the point of departure for the long sea flight to their winter homes. Before reaching this spot, however, they stop to rest and feed in the rice fields of the South, where they remain and recruit their exhausted energies preparatory to their final migration. When the birds arrive from the North they are in poor condition but they soon recuperate with the abundant food furnished by the rice, soon become very fat, and then resume their journey. On the return migration in the spring the conditions are very similar, the birds arrive from their winter homes tired with their long flight, and find the fields either newly sown with rice or else with the tender blade just appearing above ground, and they take advantage of this food-supply.

It is probable that long before America was discovered the Bobolinks gathered in the marshes on the southeastern coast and fed upon wild rice, and other wild plants.

So we see that in the case of the Bobolink the cultivation of the land in the South introduced a more abundant