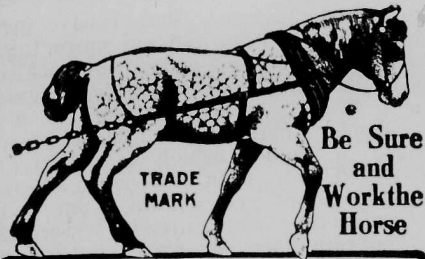


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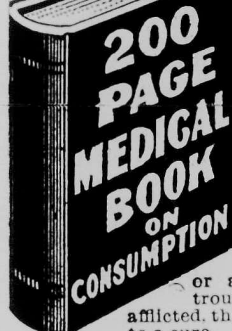
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larity enjoyed by the facilities afforded by our still imperfect system. During the past season a scheme of winter classes has been carried out in most of the Irish counties for young men and boys, who have received thereat a useful classroom teaching in the science of agriculture, without having to neglect their routine practical work on the farm day by day. Almost one thousand pupils attended these classes during the winter just passed, and received, while engaged in the actualities of farm practice, a systematic course in the more scientific subjects bearing on their calling. Widespread has been the enlightenment thus produced, and nearly one thousand young farmers have had their interest genuinely aroused in the acquisition of fuller knowledge. Next year these winter classes will be considerably increased in number. Towards that other great agent of instruction, the sound agricultural journal, Irish farmers are showing a more marked appreciative attitude than ever, and the farmer who reads generally succeeds.

I also detect a significant sign in the fast-growing recognition by Irish agriculturists, that, single-handed—i. e., as individual units—they are comparatively impotent to hold their own in the struggle for supremacy. United action is what the modern, strenuous life demands, and never were farmers' societies, clubs, and show-promoting bodies more numerous or more enthusiastically supported than at present in Ireland. On more than one occasion within the past few years, combined action has secured many a boon for farming, and averted many threatening incursions upon the sights and privileges of those engaged in it. The consistent and extending activity of these organizations demonstrates in the most forcible way the existence of a living spirit of independence and progress among those who constitute them.

Passing on to yet a third satisfactory sign, an observer who happens to be "in the know" cannot but detect the keenness with which the more advanced class of Irish farmers are looking out for improved market openings and better methods in getting their produce to the consumers. No doubt, in this respect (if I may say it without giving offence) many of them are "out-Yankeed" in cuteness, and "out-Scotched" in canniness, and may have, in some other characteristics, to acknowledge themselves less accomplished (?) or, let us say, adept, than their compeers in other lands; but, withal, every student of the commercial aspect of Irish agriculture will concede to the credit of our farmers a well-developed, and straightforward business instinct. Space does not allow me to cite examples, but I could do so, if necessary.

LABOR-SAVING IMPLEMENTS.

A rather interesting thought now arises, as to whether the effects of enlightenment, co-operation, enterprise and other beneficial factors will be sufficient to counteract other tendencies which have of late years been reducing the tillage area of Ireland. This, from a purely agricultural standpoint, is the crucial feature, and assurance that the plow shall enjoy a reign of greater popularity in the future than it has done in the past would go a long way to enhance our expectations. As I have, on more than one occasion, intimated in "The Farmer's Advocate," the labor difficulty is one of the chief obstacles—but not the only one—to the extension of tillage. Realizing this fact, a notable effort, recently put forth in the County Waterford by some public-spirited men, materialized in an event which ranks as absolutely unique so far as the United Kingdom is concerned, at any rate. This was a big working demonstration of almost every conceivable kind of up-to-date tillage implements, about 300 separate machines being exhibited by over 40 different firms. The appliances included motor plows, four and double furrow plows, one-way plows; harrows, both spring-tooth and disc patterns; various kinds of cultivators;

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