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# AGRICULTURE

## Bettering The Social Life Of The Country

By President K. L. Butterfield,  
Massachusetts Agricultural  
College.

It has sometimes been said that isolation is the main characteristic of country life, as congestion is the main characteristic of city life. Isolation means a good many things. Translated as loneliness, it may apply to the great city more completely than to the average country community. If it means lack of contact with one's neighbors, it may apply far more truly to the great city, than to the representative country community. The fact remains that in the city people live crowded closely together, in the country they live apart. Families are separated from one another. Farmers are separated from other classes of people. There is thus a separation which forms the essential social feature of our American country life. This relative isolation produces both good and bad results. It makes for thoughtfulness, for sturdiness of will, for freedom and independence of attitude. But it conduces to overmuch

individualism, to the absence of the cooperative spirit, to narrow horizons, and to neighborhood prejudices and feuds. Undue conservatism on the part of the individual and unwillingness, or even inability, to work in common with others, are the worst fruits of this mode of living. In the best farming regions this isolation has been reduced to low terms and constitutes a distinct advantage. In the less favored regions people are still living a narrow, isolated life and are seriously handicapped thereby.

There is little doubt but in our present emphasis upon the social aspect of our human life we are very apt to minimize the individual. We are overinclined to plan for great groups of people, and particularly to want to do things for the mass. We urge the community idea as if it were antagonistic to individuality. We ought to rejoice in the sense of independence among the farmers who resent this sort of doctrine when applied to rural life. Nevertheless, there exists a tremendous need for the development

## Fundamental Facts About Wool

In the course of an article bearing the above title in the Breeder's Gazette, Prof. C. S. Plumb says: Wool is the most durable and most wearable of the fibers in common use in cloth. It has tensile strength of high character, it takes the dye with great efficiency, it has high resistance to use, and it offers the greatest comfort to the human body in varying changes of temperature. For cool damp climates no garment gives protection equal to that of wool.

Wool grows from the body in the same manner as does hair, being established in the skin. It consists of three parts, a central core or tube, next a series of tubes laid lengthwise about this core, and lastly a series of transparent scales laid about the tubes or cells. These scales lie over the whole outside of the wool fiber, and are in a measure comparable with the shingles on a roof, all lapping toward the end of the fiber. An oil gland in the skin by the root of the fiber gives off oil, and this works along on the wool to its tip. Some breeds of sheep, like Merinos with heavy folds, have much oil and their wool is greasy, as we say, and may scour away to lose 75 per cent of its original weight. Wool does not absorb water, as it is not so greasy. Wool buyers do not like a fleece heavy in oil, although all wool is actually purchased on the basis of its value when accurately cleaned.

Wools differ greatly in length and diameter of fiber. The short-fleeced Merino has a staple about 2" long or thereabouts, while a long-wool breed, such as the Lincoln, may have a fleece 8" long or more after a year of growth. The Merino fiber in its finest form may be one two-thousandth of an inch in diameter, while the Lincoln fiber may measure one four-hundredth of an inch through. The finest ladies' dress goods are made from the Merino fiber, while carpets and horse blankets come from the coarser long wools. The wool covers the body more or less completely, according to the breed or degree of improvement of the stock. Many Merinos are almost completely covered with wool down to their nostrils and toes, while some breeds, like the Cheviot, are bare-faced and have no wool beyond the base of the skull or below the knees and hocks. The wool about the shoulder is longest and best, that on the side next best, the back next, while on the thigh and belly the staple is coarsest and shortest. The miller as man goes over each fleece and grades the wool into the different kinds suitable for special purposes. True hair does not take a dye, and where hair is found in the fleece it is known as kemp, which is very objectionable. Such hair is easily seen, being larger and sharper pointed than wool and of a different surface color and character.

## The Natural Sifting Of Farmers

The social complexion and financial condition of the rural population of the older states are slowly but surely passing through the transition stage from the cosmopolitan pioneer status to the differentiation of the progressive man from his indolent neighbor, and the sharp distinction between the successful business farmer and the thrifty soil-miner. An unfortunate rendering of the unity of spirit which is so characteristic of the pioneer status in the neighborhoods accompanies the change. It cannot be otherwise.

These who have toiled steadily to enlarge their acreage and to appreciate of the nobler inspirations of life through home, church, books, periodical literature, music and the companionship of kindred spirits bent toward the same high aim, have gradually drawn away from those who are content to spend the spare time in changing threadbare tales by the stove

and whose logic blames the government if prices are not always high and the weather if their crops become smaller year by year. Somehow the same neighborly spirit, yearning for the better things that enrich the soul and mind, also leads to prudent management of the soil, to the gradual accumulation of property. Those who lack this inspiration to make the most of every opportunity attempt to shift responsibility for their failures onto so-called bad luck, low markets or drought-stricken crops. As the country grows its mature social status asserts itself. The cordial friendship between one and all of the older settlers changes to an attitude of tolerance and of close and of secret envy on the other. The progressive farmer succeeds in buying more land for his children; his shiftless neighbor turns his ardent loaves upon the world to shift for themselves

## If Fields Could Speak

We sometimes wish fields had a voice and could answer intelligent questions when put to them by an intelligent farmer. Unfortunately, they are voiceless, or at least have no audible voice. They speak, but in a voice and a language which the farmer does not always understand or interpret correctly.

If the farmer was disappointed in the yield of any particular field this last year, he should ask himself the question: Why have I been disappointed? If some fields could speak, they would answer the farmer who is disappointed in his corn crop something in this fashion: I did the best I could. The fact is, you have been working me too hard. You have asked me to grow year after year. You have allowed noxious insects to multiply and increase and render futile my best efforts. You have allowed the roots of the corn to be eaten off by the corn-root worm. You have allowed the corn-root louse to suck the substance of the plants. You have not given me sufficient water to feed the cornstalks. As a result they

prayed for rain every hot day. You had enough water in the soil, if had conserved it. You could not conserve it to good advantage because you did not have done so in the previous year. You did not plow your sod ground in the fall, and thus did not have the help of nature, freely given, to do it for you. You did not destroy the grub worms and the grub worms, on the part that was in some other crop last year you did not destroy them early enough in the spring. You did not disk before you plowed. You allowed clods to form, thus increasing the air spaces and also forcing out, I did the best I could. The fault is yours, not mine.

Some fields would say: You cultivated my soil when it was too wet. You let it run together. You could have helped that; but you did not. You have done all you could for me, and yours, but you did not do your part. Some of the winter wheat fields would say: You did not prepare my seed bed right. You sowed broadcast instead of drilling. You did not harrow in the spring. You did not have the right kind of wheat. You let your cattle break in and pasture down my wheat in the fall or in the spring. I have done my best; you did not do your part.

These are some of the complaints the fields would make if they could speak. It takes some time to understand the language of the fields; but it is easier to understand it than to acquire a foreign language. They do speak. Their language is like the speech of the stars, like the voice of the wind, like that of the silent forces of nature. It can be understood by those who have ears to hear, eyes to see, who are in sympathy with nature, by those who, by training or experience understand the language of the fields. For, like the voice of the heavens, which David heard, "Their lip is not out through the earth, and their words to the end of the world." After all, the success of any man in any calling is largely measured by his ability to see things that are going on around him every day.

WALLACE'S FARMER

## Veterinary Notes

Disturbances in digestion are by far the most common ailments of cows. On the first signs of indigestion in a cow the food should be investigated, and at this time if a saline purgative is administered the attack will often be aborted. A drench consisting of one to one and a half pounds of Glauber's or Epsom Salts in solution of water is the best purgative at this time.

Inflammation of Udder in cows is often infectious and can be carried from the affected to healthy members of the herd on the hands of the milkers. A good practice to follow is to segregate any animal showing disease of the udder until it has recovered. The milk should wash and disinfect his hands after milking such a cow.

Depressed appetite (pica) in cows, in which they eat dirt, gravel, etc., is generally the forerunner of a more serious affection of the bones, and is due to a deficiency of bone forming elements in the food. Finely ground bone meal added to the food assists in overcoming this affection. Such cows should also have access to a piece of rock salt where it can be licked at will.

Young calves suffer from a variety of diseases, such as inflammation of the joints (joint ill), diarrhoea and pneumonia, that are due to infection taking place through the unhealed umbilical cord (naval string). These affections can be stopped by a thorough cleaning and disinfection of the calf bars, and washing the udder with a 3 p.c. solution of creolin, after which paint it with tincture of iodine.

Cows lose their calves (abort) from a variety of causes. However, infectious abortion is very prevalent in the dairy herds of this country. For this reason, take no chances. Isolate immediately every cow as soon as she shows signs of impending abortion. When she aborts burn the calf and its membranes. Clean up and disinfect all discharges. Wash her hind parts with a 3 p.c. solution of creolin. Keep her out of the herd until all signs of discharges have disappeared.

Never use force to remove a calf from a cow unless you are sure the calf is in the right position. Use force used when the calf is in some positions will result in severe laceration and tearing of the cow and might result in the death of the latter.

Flooding (excessive bleeding) which sometimes occurs after calving, can often be controlled by dashing cold water over the loins of the cow.

Bloody milk is caused by injury to or disease of the udder; also by functional derangement of the udder due to excitement in heat, eating of irritant plants, etc. In all cases a reduction in rations and the administration of a purgative dose of Glauber's or Epsom Salts is advisable.

Milk sometimes becomes red tinged after standing a while. This latter condition is due to the presence of a microorganism that enters the milk after milking. Thorough attention to cleanliness and sterilization of milk utensils will prevent the condition.

Mastitis (inflammation of the udder) may often be induced in a cow by rough milking when the teats are sore or chapped. Chapped teats may be relieved by gentle rubbing with vasoline before and after milking. Several applications of zinc ointment to sore teats, after cleaning them, will relieve most cases.

## Flea-Beetles And Their Control

The Division of Entomology of the Experimental Farms Branch of the Dominion Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, has recently issued Entomological Circular, No. 2, by Mr. Arthur

Gibson, Chief Assistant Entomologist, on "Flea-Beetles and Their Control." The Flea-Beetles are an important group of insects which attack the foliage of many plants. They are par-

ticularly destructive to the leaves of several kinds of vegetable crops, such as turnips, potatoes, tomatoes, radishes, etc. The chief injury is effected in spring and early summer when

the plants are visited by large numbers of the beetles. Numerous small holes are eaten into and through the leaves; in fact, some of the species completely defoliate certain plants. Owing to their jumping habit, these insects were given the popular name of flea-beetles. In size they range from one-twentieth to one-quarter of an inch. In Canada there are five species which are of considerable economic importance, and these are discussed and figured. In addition, descriptions are given of eight other species which occasionally appear in destructive numbers. A chapter on "Methods of Control" gives full particulars as to remedies which have been found most

successful in the control of these insects. Copies of this publication may be obtained from the Publications Branch, Department of Agriculture, Ottawa.

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