

Correspondence

Should Farm Boys Enlist?

Napinka, Man., April 14th, 1917.
Dear Editor:—Well here I am again writing to the Correspondence Column. I was glad to see my former letter in print. I see by the April number, that "Pocahontas" is a splendid example of the class of girls which I referred to. I did not expect one of them to answer it, but I guess the cap fitted too well, so "Pocahontas" grasped it, and apparently is wearing it, even though it is a little tight.

She says in her letter that she presumes that I haven't any brother at the front and no loved ones. Well, I beg to inform her that I have a soldier brother, and have only one other brother, who is not old enough to go. I also have five cousins there, besides one who has already paid the supreme price.

As for the young boys going, they are more expensive to the government than they are good, for they cannot stand the strain on their nerves. But were they here working on the farm until they were older, they would be doing their bit much better. Of course some are more physically fit at eighteen or nineteen than others are, but the average boy at that age is not fit to go. I am proud of my brother too, just as proud as any girl is of hers, but just because he is there, I do not think every boy ought to go, as does "Pocahontas." She thinks every boy ought to go, even though they are young farm boys. I would like to ask her to read the papers and then express her opinion on the subject. I am convinced it would be of a very different nature.

She says the business men need their boys, just as much as the farmers need theirs, because their business is their living and as important as farming. Where are "Pocahontas" brains (if she has any) to express such an opinion. Where would Canada be to-day if all the business men were here and all the farmers at the front? Do the business men feed the Allies or do the farmers? As for the farmers who are farming merely for the "Almighty dollar" what does it matter whether they are or not, so long as they raise the grain to feed the Allies? Besides these farmers referred to are very scarce at this critical time. Self may be a great portion of the reason they farm, though not wholly so by any means. Many of the business men's boys previous to enlisting were not in their father's business but going to college or something similar. Of course, there are shirkers, but as I said before, there is a decided difference between these and the farm boys who are doing their bit on the farm.

There are just as many girl shirkers as there are boy shirkers. Some girls think their duty is to go around and tell men and boys to enlist no matter what they are doing. If their time was spent in the Red Cross rooms instead, or at home either writing to the boys at the front or cooking dainties to send them, it would be more to the point. Some of these girls are not even Red Cross members.

I too would be glad to have conscription, as I think it would settle things up more squarely. However the government knows more of such things than I, and I am willing to leave it to them. Our government doesn't need continual criticism, but sympathy. It is absurd to say that we know who are able to go and who are not. In many cases we only think we know. "Pocahontas" says every boy is a hero in her sight who is wearing khaki, also that she would not be seen with a civilian unless wearing the rejection button or with a reasonable excuse. Although I greatly admire the boys in khaki, still I think there are many civilians who are heroes and who do not wear their "reasonable excuses."

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on their breast. I don't know of any girls who will feel the difference in giving their brothers to their country as much as the farm girls will. They will not only miss them, but will have to take their place on the farm. 'Tis easy for the town girl to say the girls will take the farm boys' place, but let the town girl come to the farm and another story will be told.

Certainly, "High School Kid," you have a right to your own opinion, everyone has, no matter how young. Of course, I do not say I am right, but that is the way it looks to me, so I wrote it so.

Well I must close now if I expect to see my letters in print, so wishing The Western Home Monthly the season's best wishes, I will sign myself as before.

"Spitfire."

Scarcely Time for Writing

Alberta, April 9th, 1917.

Dear Editor—I was very pleased indeed, that my last letter missed the W. P. B. and was printed. It is 12 months since I wrote last, and seeing a lack of Alberta correspondents, I thought it must be my turn to represent that Province again. I have not seen a letter from Criss Cross, appear in the paper for a long time and many others who used to write from Alta.

I have been very busy with all of my work this past year, both inside and out, I have not had much time for writing, hardly to answer the one very nice correspondent who wrote to me, after seeing my last letter in this paper. She seems to be pretty good natured if I do not answer promptly. Of course when not so busy in the winter, a person has more time to write.

I have been very much interested in most of the letters, which have appeared from time to time during the last year. I must say the good work is progressing. Our united farmers of Alberta, are doing their share in aiding the Red Cross and other relief organizations. We had a box social and dance a couple of weeks ago and the proceeds amounted to over a hundred dollars. That was pretty good for a school house party.

So long as we can have good crops, and the price of wheat stays up, we can make things go, so I am hoping for another good crop this year.

I quite agree with "Starlight" in regards to the slurs, which are thrown in some of our boys' faces for not enlisting. The boys cannot all go, as there are not enough men left in the country to take their places, and every man in this district is working all the land he possibly can handle, in order to let most of the young men away.

Now I think I have got to the end of my say. My address is with the Editor.

"Progressive."

Busy Seeding

Dear Editor—May I enter the circle? It is my first letter to your correspondence page. I have read The Western Home Monthly for a year and I like it very much.

I am working on a farm and we are very busy now. We have 240 acres to seed this spring.

My father enlisted last fall and goes to France soon, also two of my uncles have been fighting in France for two years and a half. I have five sisters and a brother.

I would like to correspond with "Blue Eyes," if she will write me first. I will answer all letters promptly. My address is with the Editor.

"A Farm Boy."

Worth Being Called a Slacker

Dear Editor—I have just read the correspondence in The Western Home Monthly for April; and the letter by "Pocahontas" has got "me going." I do not think that she knows about farming, or she wouldn't say that any other business is just as important in this stage of the world's history. Barring munitions, farming is the one thing that is winning this war to-day, and a boy is more good on the farm than he would be in the trenches (by boys I mean ones under

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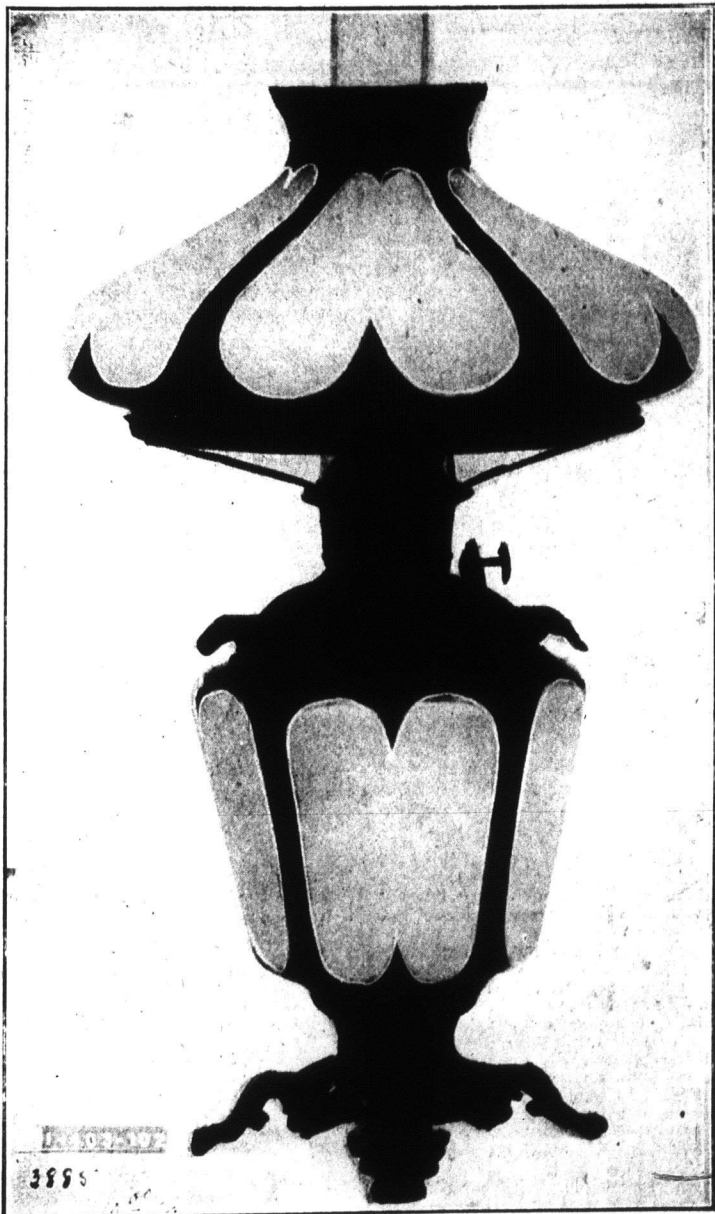
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