

THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE.

Perhaps the most remarkable feature of the new life, which, since the discovery of steam power and the consequent continual and cumulative development of commercial and industrial activity, has become general throughout the world, is the subordination of agriculture from its proper place at the head and front of all human activity to a position in which it is regarded, at least by most unthinking men, with a careless toleration, in some cases bordering on contempt.

That, under modern conditions in civilized countries, the masses have already lost sight of the importance of agriculture as the primal factor in human affairs, is evidenced in many different ways.

Among these may be mentioned the constant and ever increasing trend cityward, as shown by the growing preponderance of urban over rural population; the tendency of the farmer's son to abandon agriculture for commercial pursuits or for one or other of the so-called higher professions and the superior attitude unwarrantably assumed by many city dwellers towards their country cousins.

Even in these great western provinces, where agriculture is and will always continue to be, the leading industry, we find in our urban communities a woeful lack of proper perspective in this regard.

This is shown by the tendency to build up and develop, largely through artificial means, cities and other centres of population without any apparent regard or consideration for the welfare or interests of the tillers of the soil in the territory tributary to these centres, and on which they must of necessity depend for their future maintenance and support.

In the hurly-burly of present day life, the farmer would appear to be a scarcely considered factor, although, without him and his produce, the wheels of commerce would not revolve for a single day, while, if farming operations throughout the world were suspended for but one week, our whole commercial and industrial fabric would fall to pieces and it is best not to think what would happen to the so-called giants of finance.

While the masses are thus too generally prone to ignore, or rather overlook, the importance of the farmer, it is fortunate that in all civilized communities there is to be found a different element consisting of intelligent and thoughtful men who devote their lives and energies to the betterment of agriculture and the improvement of agricultural methods both scientific and practical.

It may be laid down as a general rule that the more highly civilized a country is, and the more fully developed its agriculture, the greater is the consideration shown towards those engaged in this pursuit.

The personal verification of this statement would lead to many surprises among these unfamiliar with agricultural conditions in the older countries of the world.

Those of us who have watched the growth of settlement on these western prairies have often observed the mutual benefit derived from the commingling in close neighborhood of tillers of the soil from many