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EDITORIAL.

WEALTH VERSUS GOOD LIVING.

It is always difficult to compress comprehensive views into restricted space, and, as lengthy articles are but little read, the journalist usually prefers to content himself with treating one or two phases of a subject at a time, depending upon his readers to follow him up from week to week, and thereby come finally to appreciate his general attitude and his outlook over the situations with which he essays to deal. It naturally happens that a certain portion of readers will miss certain of the views he advances, and, on finding some particular phase of a subject presented a few times, with emphasis, will infer that the editor has overlooked one or more sides of his subject. A case in point is furnished by the contribution headed "The Farm vs. the City," signed "A Farmer's Son." The letter is well written, and well to the point, but the writer has apparently missed some of the editorials which have appeared in our columns during the past year or two, and which he would find somewhat substantially in line with some of the opinions his letter conveys, although we do not go as far.

Our correspondent, alluding to our recent editorial, "The Farm and City as They Are," contends, in substance, that the real reason that the sons leave the farm is because the great majority of people in both city and country are intent on money-getting, and the farm does not offer as good opportunities in this line as some city occupations; that it demands, in fact, unremitting toil and thrift to accumulate a competence, with small opportunity for mental or physical relaxation, and with scant prospects of setting the children up in the same occupation until such time as they can step into their parents' shoes. Freer economic conditions, with less toll to the middleman and more profit to the farmer, are the essentials our correspondent stipulates as necessary for the uplift of agriculture and country life; and he suggests local organization as a means of accomplishing it.

The picture is overdrawn. The generality of Canadian farmers are not nearly so hard-pinned as our friend represents them to be, and there are an increasing proportion of farmers nowadays who enjoy numerous comforts, privileges, and even luxuries, once confined almost exclusively to the towns. Time will bring more, and distribute them more widely. Suffice to say that few good, up-to-date business farmers to-day, except those visited by special misfortune, are denied a reasonable measure of leisure and of the creature-comforts of life, although some do deny themselves and their families unnecessarily, and it is not infrequently just such deprivation that drives the young folks from the farm.

But while rural economic conditions are not so bad as they have been painted, there is no gainsaying that injustice is being done. Transportation charges, middlemen's tolls, and tariff-bolstered prices on manufactured goods, are among the exactions that sap our financial strength. There are reasons why we are willing to bear a moderate tariff impost, but all considerations of prudence and equity demand that it be progressively reduced. Transportation charges, also, must be modified, and the service constantly improved, while, by co-operation, it will be possible, in many lines, as in fruit shipments, for instance, to escape the cost of middlemen's services, minimize risks by cash

sales f.o.b., and reap such indirect advantages as accrue from getting close to the consumer. Public ownership (though not necessarily public operation) of certain public utilities, agricultural co-operation and organization, and agricultural aggression and influence in political life, are among the factors which will tend to reduce the farmer's economic burdens. All such movements, when judiciously conceived and promoted, "The Farmer's Advocate" champions.

But it may as well be recognized that, no matter how favorable economic conditions may be made for agriculture, farming will never be a business offering opportunities for great and speedy enrichment. All wealth comes originally, from the soil or the sea, and the greater part from the farm; but the farmer deals chiefly with nature's products in the raw, or elementary, stages, and his operations are frequently and seriously inconvenienced by and dependent upon seasonal conditions, which render it difficult to organize and execute in an extensive way. For this and other reasons, farming is not a business which lends itself to profitable prosecution on a large scale, hence the opportunities for amassing great wealth by realizing profits on the labor of others are very limited indeed. Farming in this country is, and, we hope, always will be, a business conducted in a small, or, at least, a modest way, by a very large number of people. The baron, with his thousands of serfs, is a factor fortunately foreign to our occupation.

Such being the case, it is perfectly clear that clever men, of questionable integrity and overweening ambition to be rich, are not likely ever to choose the farm. Farming is a poor business for the man whose chief anxiety is to become rich.

But what is the good of wealth, beyond the provision of a reasonable competence? Has wealth brought happiness to the rich people of your acquaintance, even where honestly won? Young people commonly expect it will, and many parents encourage them in the belief; but does it? Why should so many people bring the frown to their brows, the stoop to their shoulders, the unrest to their minds, and insomnia to their pillows, chasing the shining dollar, which loses its lustre in their hands? What is the sense of getting rich, anyway? We have in mind an old couple who have spent a lifetime endeavoring to amass wealth, toiling early and late, depriving themselves of every privilege and every luxury that cost anything, in order to settle their children around them. They accumulated some twenty thousand dollars, but the children did not take to that kind of life, and struck out for themselves, leaving the parents with their money and—what else? Is there anything much more pathetic than an old couple, facing the sunset of life, ambling down hill, clutching their miserable, blood-sweated shekels, over which their heirs will presently squabble? We have no fault to find with thrift. It is essential to success in farming. But so many run to the extreme of penury, living miserable lives in a frequently vain endeavor to die rich. And what good is it all? Why should a generation of people slave till old age, in order to learn wisdom? Why not take a more philosophical view of things in youth?

It is to this end we write so often of the advantages of farming. We are not holding up the occupation as a money-making one. If there were nothing better than that to say for it, we should have sorry inspiration indeed. It is because the farm offers unrivalled opportunities for

the living of a healthy, thrifty, interesting, moral and happy life close to God and nature; because it affords an ideal opportunity for the nurturing of a vigorous family and a sturdy race, that we uphold it; and just in so far as freer economic conditions conduce to these ends, will they be an advantage. What is needed most of all is a larger number of examples of broad-gauge success on the farms, that our people may realize the advantages which the farm offers, and derive the help and inspiration necessary to make agriculture a prosperous, progressive, widely-coveted and highly-esteemed occupation. Such examples are multiplying about us, but we need many more of them still.

Then, as to schools. Nothing is farther from our minds than to picture agriculture in the schools in oversanguine tints. That would defeat its aim. What we want is a kind of rural schooling that will open the pupils' eyes to the real opportunities and advantages of their occupation. If, for instance, we could illustrate to them the value of the soil-mulch in conserving moisture and promoting growth, it would unfold the edge of investigation into the physical processes of nature. Agriculture is a science the study of which can never make men sordid, because, not only does it help them to make more money, but it makes their daily work more interesting, and brings them closer to nature's heart. Reformed rural education will not only remove the prejudice against agriculture that our schools have been constantly creating, and incline more pupils toward the farm, but it will make them better farmers, better citizens, and better men and women. And good living is the great object of life.

INSANITY IN STOCK BREEDING.

For the purpose of this article, insanity may be defined as a tendency to irrational extremes, or a lack of mental balance. In the field of animal husbandry and live-stock breeding there is a great deal of insanity, and it is particularly rife on the American continent. It leads us into all sorts of indiscretion, and the trouble is we seldom perceive its drift until much mischief has been wrought. We are becoming wiser, however, and succeeding generations, profiting by the present and the past mistakes, will undoubtedly avoid many extremes of which we have run foul.

The splendid success of the breeders of Britain and Holland may doubtless be attributed, in part, to the stability, the conservatism, the rationality of their ideals and purposes. They maintain a staunch regard for the cardinal essentials, constitution, thrift, soundness, essential merits of conformation, and, in the case of milking stock, high average production, without undue forcing or extravagant premiums upon the phenomenal. In America we chase after freaks, fads, world-beaters, and star-performers. The result is that, while we develop some of these, we also produce a great many weeds, culls, misfits, and animals which, for lack of constitution, hardiness, prolificacy, substance, or wearing conformation, fail to perpetuate their good qualities in satisfactory degree. We fail, as a rule, to produce races of stock of uniform high standard. In straining for one point, we neglect others; often, in pursuing fads of form or pedigree, we sacrifice utility. Thus we play out good strains of blood which might have been combined and developed to good purpose.

Examples? Take the Standard-bred horse, bred for speed alone, to the egregious neglect of