

gon. However true it may be that the farming population is one very hard to clear of old and well settled prejudices, it is just as true that small farming, or farming on a smaller scale than heretofore, is the inevitable for this state; the logic of the march of events. A large proportion of those holding large tracts of farming lands in this state, partly obtained under the donation law, and partly the legitimate accumulation of the years since, have become convinced of the fact, and have evinced a disposition to divide up, or sell small tracts to newcomers. Of course, other things have operated to bring about this change. Those who were the recipients of the donation land, and who are still living, have grown too old to manage such an estate; and an examination will show that, largely, the children of this class of early settlers have drifted away from the farm. Again, debt has gathered over against the holding. These are some of the compelling conditions of the change. Not for an instant, does anyone entertain the thought that any other than compelling, or selfish, motives would have made it. But it has come about; the figures given here show that the small-farming class is immigrating to Oregon. And there is every reason for thinking that, on this account, our state has entered upon a permanently progressive and prosperous condition.

There are tenable arguments enough in favor of this reform in farming in this state. If we look over the common country, we find that of all agricultural people, those are the most independent in the states where the farming lands are held in the smallest tracts. In this state, it is the large land holder or grain grower, who is most crippled by debt. Such men are growing poorer year by year. Half the time, this man's crops are anticipated by a mortgage to cover a grocery bill. If he gets enough at the

end of the season to square up, he is forced to begin again for another year. The man with a small place, on which he is always raising something for the market, either that which comes to his door in the shape of a butcher, or a poultry buyer, or the wants of the dealers in town, always has money in hand with which to buy goods, to get them where they are cheapest. This man does not have to keep a long-range field glass in order to watch the progress of things at the other end of his ranch, but he has a neat, thrifty, well-cultured, paying place of twenty or thirty or fifty acres, and is out of debt and making money; slowly, it may be, but making it all the same.

The assertion that our cities and towns do not have population enough to make this small and diversified farming profitable, is the veriest nonsense. What is such a statement worth in face of the fact that, for the last two or three years, we have been sending upwards of a million dollars a year to California for fruit and dairy products. Out in this splendid valley, rich in all that pertains to agriculture, men who count their acres by the hundreds and thousands are eating California butter. It is a pretty safe proposition, that these same men are paying heavy interest bills on mortgages. And so it is an encouraging sign that the immigration now coming is in search of small farms, and that so many of our large landholders show a disposition to divide up these immense properties, for it is obvious, certainly, to any person who has traveled about the state sufficiently to note the make-shift farming, the sprawling unthrift of fields and orchards, the lack of pride in the appearance of homes, that agricultural reform is the greatest need of Oregon. Not only do we want something of that eastern system of farming, that results from a population trained and educated up to the highest standard of generous