

Home and Farm Magazine Section Editorial Page

Suggestions From Our Associate Editors, Allowing for an Interchange of Views, Written by Men of Experience on Topics With Which They Are Fully Acquainted—Hints Along Lines of Progressive Farm Thought.

A WOMAN WORTH WHILE.

LIFTING THE HAT is a mark of respect.

Our hat is lifted high to Mrs. Scott Durand.

She is a rich woman and she lives in Chicago.

A few years ago she went into the dairy business.

Bought some Holsteins.

Bought some Guernseys.

Mixed the milk.

Established a high priced market in Chicago and sold it.

She knew nothing of the business.

She worked it out by reading dairy books and farm journals, and by talking to dairymen, and by using her own head.

Yes, we confess, she was a book farmer.

But she made her 270 acres pay for four or five years and then—

She went to the Wisconsin Agricultural College.

What in the world ever possessed her?

But she went and studied, and talked to college professors, and returned to her farm and her 200 head of cattle.

She has toiled.

She has fought.

She makes \$12,000 a year.

Too bad.

If she had only not gone in for "book larnin'" and that course at Wisconsin she would be a rich woman.

AS THE TWIG IS BENT.

SOMEHOW we wish we were a tow-headed boy once more.

There came to the desk the other day from the Oregon Agricultural College at Corvallis, Oregon a catalog of a boy's short course in agriculture.

That means the opportunity to any young Oregonian to imbibe farming lore for two full weeks at a merely nominal cost, that of his board and transportation.

It is quite possible that in various sections of the country other agricultural colleges offer similar opportunities. We have not heard of them.

In presenting this course, E. D. Ressler, director of the Summer School, says:

"The purpose is two-fold—the value to the boys who attend; the influence on the school represented by those boys.

"Both consciously and unconsciously our ordinary school education places the emphasis on preparation for the professions and other occupations relating to a public career.

"In the minds of many people, work upon the farm is menial. It means early rising and early retiring and hard grinding labor from sunrise to sunset. It is not supposed that any intelligence or high degree of education can be used by a man on the farm.

"These erroneous ideas must not only be banished from the minds of the boys and girls who will be the future farmers and farmers' wives, but an opportunity must be given to show what a great field for the application of scientific training is offered, how the greatest creative genius may be called into play in working out the problems which confront not only the American farmer but the great American public as well.

"The old notion that any sort of labor which requires manual activity is necessarily uninteresting and unintelligent must be driven out of our schools. The skilled hand must be directed by the highly trained brain and, still above and beyond this, it must be recognized that only those who can build up for themselves ideals which will arouse all the energy and ambition of which their natures are capable, can be truly happy in any occupation or profession."

That strikes us uncommonly like good sense.

School boys who imbibe scientific farming at their earliest years are going to be inspired with the desire to attend an agricultural college in later years and learn how to improve on the ways of their dads.

Their fathers often had to learn in the school of hard experience.

And there are easier ways of doing things than the school-of-hard-experience method.

The youngsters at Corvallis will study a few hours every day. The balance of the time they will spend hiking, in sports and recreation.

The supervision will be that of the "big brother" order.

The instruction will be very practical and suited to the age of the boys.

As a result of these two weeks' study, it is expected that the boys will learn to identify the principal field crops which they may see as they go about the country, learn something of their method of planting, cultivation and harvesting; will have some practical experience in caring for vegetable gardens which will be put in on the farm, so that by the time the boys reach Corvallis the various vegetables will be available for their study and cultivation; will be able to recognize the principal breeds of cattle, sheep, swine and horses, and to know something of the points of a good animal; will become interested in the problems of breeding up a good flock of chickens that will not only be ornamental but profitable as well; will recognize some of the common plant pests in orchard and garden and know how to treat them.

In short, the object of the course is to place in the possession of the boys interesting information that will be of some practical use to them immediately and will fill them with an appreciation of the great scope of the study and arouse their interest in pursuing their investigations further.

"IDEAL" FARMING.

WE RECEIVED this letter the other day. Somehow it interested us, for we believe that the misconception of the writer is the misconception of many. He said:

"I am a city man. I was always under the impression farming was an ideal occupation. My farming friends say I am wrong. Which is right?"

Answer: City Man—farming is ideal IF—

Farm lands are low in price.

Farm products of classes are deficient in supply.

Farming is conducted on an enormous scale.

The producer has a reputation, especially for breeding pure-bred stock; raising the finest grade of fruit, and so forth.

Markets are advantageous.

Animals kept are productive.

There is a large yield with relatively little labor and fertilizer.

Cost of production is low by good farm organization.

Products are staple in character.

That is about all for the present, but we think you will catch our drift, City Man.

You will find some of those conditions on every farm.

There are mighty few farms you will find them all.

In other words, farming is ideal—

In Utopia.

Anywhere else it is just a plain business and profession with the same hardships and the same successes you will find in everything else the world over.

FARM WAGES.

THE LABORER on the farm is often an almost invariable complainer.

His moan is most frequent on the subject of his pay.

In fact, it might be said that his moan is precisely that of the rest of humanity:

"I want more money."

Yet consideration of his case does not make it the deplorable one it has been pointed out as being.

The condition of the farm laborer is, financially and otherwise, superior to that of the factory employe.

The money wages of farm labor increased about 2.5 per cent during the past year, and about 11.0 per cent during the past four years. Since 1902 the increase has been about 36 per cent.

Wages of farm labor tended upward during the decade of the seventies; they were almost stationary during the eighties, and declined from 1892 to 1894, since which time they have steadily tended upward. Farm wages now, compared with wages during the eighties, are about 55 per cent higher; compared with the low year of 1894, wages are now about 67 per cent higher.

The current average rate of farm wages in the United States, when board is included, is, by the month, \$21.38; by the day, other than harvest, \$1.16; at harvest, \$1.57. When board is not included, the rate is, by the month, \$30.31; by the day, other than harvest, \$1.50; by the day at harvest, \$1.94.

Wages in different sections of the United States vary widely.

For instance, the monthly rate, without board, is \$56.50 in Nevada, \$54.00 in Montana, and \$51.00 in Utah; but \$17.90 in South Carolina, \$19.60 in Mississippi, and \$20.20 in Georgia. The highest state average, \$56.50, is thus seen to be 3.2 times higher than the lowest rate, \$17.90.

This wide difference in the wage rates in different sections of the United States is gradually lessening. In seven investigations made between 1865 and 1881, the average of wages of farm day labor (without board) in the Western states (where wages are highest) was about 100 per cent higher than in the South Atlantic states (where wages were lowest); whereas, in seven investigations made since 1898, the Western states averaged about 110 per cent higher than the South Atlantic, and in the past year they were only about 90 per cent higher.

The money wages of farm labor have increased relatively more than wages for labor in city manufactories during the past twenty to thirty years.

A comparison of the average of wages per employe in manufacturing industries, as reported by the census of 1910, 1900 and 1890, indicates that the wages of such employes increased 22 per cent in ten years (1900 to 1910), and increased only 23 per cent in the twenty years; the increases in farm labor wages were approximately 27 per cent in the ten years and about 55 per cent in the twenty years. This relative gain of rural upon urban wages acts automatically upon the movement from country to city.

Wages of farm labor have been increasing rapidly, not only in the United States, but in most, if not all, other countries of the world. In Hungary the wages of agricultural laborers increased about 60 per cent in the ten years from 1897 to 1907. In Denmark, from 1892 to 1905 wages of farm labor, with board increased about 20 per cent, and without board 22 per cent. In Sweden wages of agricultural laborers increased 35 per cent in the ten years from 1895 to 1905. For Norway we have data showing the wages in country and in towns, wherein is shown that wages with board, increased 19 per cent in country and 15 per cent in towns, during the ten years of 1895 to 1905, thus showing a greater gain in country than in town wages. In Japan where economic conditions have been changing rapidly, the yearly money wages of agricultural labor more than doubled in the fourteen years from

1894 to 1908 and increased 43 per cent from 1898 to 1908.

VALUE OF ORGANIZATION.

THE Home and Farm Magazine Section is not interested in politics.

Nevertheless we keep an eye on things.

Hence we noted that the Republican voters of Oregon nominated Dr. James B. Withycombe to be their candidate at the general election against the Democratic nominee, Dr. C. J. Smith.

There are a number of lessons or ideas from the nomination of Dr. Withycombe.

First of these is that the farmer anywhere is a mighty power when he chooses to exert himself.

Republican farmers chose to have one of themselves as a contestant for the ultimate prize at the general election. They proceeded to carry out that idea by voting.

The ballot box is the mightiest power for good—or bad—we have. How rarely we exercise it!

Another idea we received from the nomination of Dr. Withycombe, who was formerly director of the extension department of Oregon Agricultural College, was the value of cohesive organization.

Loyalty to their college caused hundreds of O. A. C. graduates all over Oregon to rally to the banner of Dr. Withycombe.

It was as fine an exhibition of real "college spirit" as we have ever seen. It brought results.

Incidentally, those graduates showed their strength by standing together.

The farmer represents the basic wealth of this country. Alone he is helpless. United he makes a power that can not be withstood.

Whether it be through co-operative organizations or through his Grange, the farmer united has a voice the very stridency of which can force the country to take notice at any time.

In politics the farmer united can make and upset political parties. He is apt to do it, too.

When the farmers of America realize their strength then will they receive greater consideration than has previously been their wont.

A FARMER knows that a bank savings account is the most beautiful thing on earth. There are no microbes in it to steal away his peace of mind. It is a promoter of sweet sleep, and an aid to digestion.

A CITY man who tries his hand at farming is filled with good resolutions, but they too often die of malnutrition.

YOUR farmer knows the truth, and he knows the average man's opinions are generally of more value to himself than to any one else.

A FARM is one place where a fair exchange is no robbery, even when a farmer trades his money for experience.

THE FARMER knows that the banker who shakes his hand most effusively when crops are good and he has money to loan, shakes him altogether when it's gone.

NO FARMER can be popular and tell his troubles.

YOUR richest farmer most often is the fellow with the worst digestion.

SOME farmers think they can't make a hit in their neighborhood unless they buy an automobile.

A FARMER boy who leaves the country for the city should know that while it is hard work to reach the top, it is still harder work to stay on top.