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ARE FARMERS DISCONTENTED?

We have been told so many times
that some of us have come to think
it is a fact that farmers are the most
discontented and uneasy people in
the world, all the time finding fault
with their condition, and ready at a
moment's notice to abandon the
farm and throw everything to the
wind. Is this a fact? Arg the farm-
ers of this country, as a class, more
subject to the disease of discontent
than are men engaged in other lines
of business? A study of human na-
ture, running over a period of a
good many years, has convinced me
that there are always some men in
any given profession who think
their lot not so filled with happiness
as it might be if they were otherwise
employed. There are physicians
who would be happier, so they
think, if they could practise law,
and lawyers who would rather deal
out pills and listen to the complaints
of humanity. Some carpenters
have a tender feeling for the farm,
and some merchants are ever dream-
ing of a time when they may retire
to the quiet of the country. I now
have in mind a dentist who has been
more than ordinarily successful in
his profession, but who seems never
so happy as when talking about the
day when he means to say goodbye
to the forceps and find a peaceful
old age among the rocks and birds
and flowers of the country. In fact,
the pasture over the fence seems to
some men the sweetest of any in
the world. It may be the good Lord
has put this longing for different
surroundings into our hearts for the
purpose of showing us how really
unsatisfactory this old world of ours
is in and of itself, and how absolute-
ly incompetent it is to make us
happy. But I am going to make
what I believe to be an incontro-
vertible statement, and that is that
if we could have an accurate can-
vass of all classes of men in all the
world, it would be found that there
are more really happy and content-
ed people upon the farms of Amer-
ica, according to the population,
than would appear in any other
calling. The most of the farmers
I know of are reasonably satisfied
with their lot. True, not all of
them are getting rich very fast;
many of them are far from wealthy,
and always will be so. Some of
them live in quite humble homes
and dress plainly. But they feel
sure that, all things considered, they
are as comfortable and just as happy
as they would be anywhere else.
Once in a while a farmer boy feels
something within his heart push-
ing him, not away from the farm,
but toward some other calling.
From the ranks of these youth have
come our Lincolns, our Grants, our
Blains and our Whittiers. It does
not follow that all boys born upon
the farm should become farmers.
The stick which will make a good
ox bow would make a very poor axe
helve. The boy's destiny depends
upon the bent God gave him in the
beginning. But to say that as a
rule the farmers of our country are
universally possessed with a desire
to do something else is very wide
of the truth. Form of government,
nature of the laws enacted, meth-
ods of taxation and general princi-
ples of men who do public business
have much to do with the happiness
of the people. A stern and un-
compromising government, shown
arbitrary laws, unjust taxes and a
disposition on the part of public
officials, has a direct bearing on
the spirit of contentment prevailing
among the people. Good laws do
not make good and happy people
necessarily, but they do much in
that direction. And in this coun-
try we are not very apt to get far
away from good government for
any great length of time. From
administration to administration is
but a step, and the people know
and understand that this is so, and

the men who do business for them
in a public capacity are not apt to
forget it, either. Why not teach
that our farmers are, as a class,
happy and contented? Why should
any one say that because now and
then a man feels discouraged and
tries to find some more congenial
occupation therefore all farmers are
uneasy and discontented? Brother
farmers, let us take brighter views
of the world and all things in it.—
Edgar L. Vincent, in New York
Tribune.

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