

Home and Farm Magazine Section Editorial Page

Timely, Pertinent Comment Upon Men and Affairs, Following the Trend of World News; Suggestions of Interest to Readers; Hints Along Lines of Progressive Farm Thought.

TO ADVERTISERS.

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SAFETY FIRST!

ANATIONWIDE movement is now on with the one object of preventing those accidents that are caused through carelessness. To the autoists who speed through crowded thoroughfares with reckless disregard for life or limb, pushing their machines to the speed limits and over, is held up the warning: Safety First. To the pedestrian who crosses streets through congested traffic, dodges behind street cars and in front of auto trucks, is sent the admonition: Safety First.

And how sensible this movement is! There is a spirit in this modern age which forever cries, "Hurry, Hurry!" The American man is noted in Europe for his impetuous desire to get to whatever place he may be going in the quickest possible way. True, much of the time saved by the American's hurry is worth dollars and cents to him. But how often it is that this hurry is unnecessary. How often it is merely an expression of nervous energy which should be kept under control.

So little thought accompanies the desire to get somewhere quickly. If a man thought, would he deliberately run across a crowded street to catch a street car that would net him a few minutes' time? Probably not, if he considered the chances of his being struck by a passing automobile, or knocked down by horse or street car. Would possible death, permanent or temporary physical injury weigh less than the three minutes of time saved?

Now that three minutes are saved, what does the man do with them? Ninety-nine times out of one hundred he uses them foolishly. A distinguished English visitor to this country asked in amazement why it was that a gentleman he had noticed dodging beneath the up-reared hoofs of a horse and barely escaping death under the wheels of an auto in his frantic haste to get somewhere, should have spent the next fifteen minutes in gazing in the window of a drug store where a man was demonstrating a new style of safety razor. Was it for this he had risked his life? It was for the satisfaction of his desire to hurry. His haste had no purpose and had he asked himself he would have known of no real reason why he was hurrying.

Safety First! The men who are working in this new movement hope to bring out clearly the foolishness of useless hurry, and to make America a nation of saner persons.

But what has this to do with the man in the country where congested thoroughfares are only seen on circus or fair days, and where chores are seldom done with mad haste? Safety First, does not mean only less hurry. It means carefulness in every sense of the word.

Suppose you go into the loft to let hay down to the horses. You notice a board is loose in the flooring. Sometime later it might slip from its place, causing someone to stumble and fall to the floor below. Safety First. Suppose the weather bureau sends out frost notices. It isn't cold so you think you will take no precautions to protect your produce, particularly as it would mean much extra labor that would be useless in the event that there was no frost. Safety First. Suppose the bull has battered a large board from the gate of the corral. Oh, well, he can't get out yet. Safety First.

Why fireproof a building? Why put block systems on the railroads? Why put emergency brakes on automobiles? Why put lightning rods on a farm building? Safety First!

AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND A PROMISE.

WE OWE a great debt to our contemporaries. If, in the pages of this magazine, you occasionally find an article that recollection says you have seen somewhere before, it is not unlikely that memory is correct. The Farm Magazine was only born this year. We have been striving to give our readers the best we can. When our own writers' inspiration fails, we have—frankness compels us to admit—resorted to "shear steal." Yet, when advisable, we aim to give credit to any publication from which an article is taken. But though we frankly admit that all of our material is not originated in our own office, most of it is.

In selection from contemporaneous literature when necessary to fill a column, we have always endeavored to glean that which would be of most profit to our readers. We think we have succeeded in a marked degree. From letters which we have on file we find that many of the suggestions contained in our columns have been adopted with excellent results.

And now to our promise. If you support us by patronizing our advertisers, we promise to grow, both in quality and in size. As far as it is financially practicable our staff of writers will be enlarged, new departments will be instituted, and we shall spare no effort to make our publication rank with the best in the nation. Consider our present appearance and compare it with the ordinary journal of this type, and we think you will pardon our pride, if we say that we believe we have a good start.

DEVELOPING FARM TRAFFIC.

THE EUROPEAN WAR will not interfere with the various plans for securing better markets for farm produce. On the contrary, it will emphasize the necessity for giving to the farmers better returns for all they raise and securing from the farmers, at the least possible cost of transportation and exchange, the supplies of food intended for the table of the consumer.

It will not be possible to abolish the middlemen, because there are services to be rendered which the farmers cannot render, and which the city consumer cannot perform for himself.

It is possible for the farmers in a given neighborhood to arrange to make weekly or semi-weekly deliveries of fresh fruit and vegetables. But this covers only a small part of the field.

This plan can be extended by the country merchants, securing from the farmer certain quantities of his produce for weekly or semi-weekly deliveries which the merchant will make to the householders in the small towns.

Thus do the waves of commerce expand, reaching larger fields in their sweep. There are consumers beyond the reach of the country merchant, in the larger cities and towns of America. The parcel post should enlarge this field, and the activity of the Postoffice Department has developed among the express companies renewed determination to retain a large part of this transportation business, through better service and lower rates.

Another modern means of transportation is the motor car and the motor truck. It is going to have a more marked effect upon farm business and farm life than most of us now imagine. The farmer's automobile is going to save time for the farmer, and expense. More and more it must be taken into consideration by men who are striving to make farming profitable.

The motor truck, as it is now called, is to become a feeder of the railroad. In America the railroads require the shipper to bring his freight to the station, and the station is usually several miles and frequently many miles away from the farm.

Electric lines through the more thickly populated sections of the country have gone nearer to the farmer's gate than the steam roads, nearer to his garden and to his barn; but not near enough.

The Motor truck will become a necessary annex to every electric line, and ought to be

the chief aid of the railroad agent in developing his traffic.

If the railroads of the country would get down to business, if they would realize that facilities develop traffic, they would co-operate with the farmer more directly and thoroughly and efficiently, they would find their freight receipts jumping.

The electric lines especially should give attention to this method of freight development. The managers of these lines seem to be content with doing a passenger traffic. The traffic of the steam lines is one-third passenger and two-thirds freight. The undeveloped traffic of the regions reached by the electric lines is greater than the existing traffic. It can be developed by sending motor trucks through every neighborhood to gather up the freight, which the farmer has not time to deliver, even to the electric cars.

This service will develop not only outward-bound freight, but inward bound. The farmer can give his orders to the truckman and get his goods delivered much more promptly and satisfactorily.

All of these agencies make for farm profit; but that is what we need. The farmer cannot profit without all dependent on him—local bankers, local merchants, local agents of express companies and railroads—profiting by his prosperity.

WAR REVERSES SOCIAL PROGRESS.

IN ENGLAND the effect of war upon social progress is most pronounced, says the Portland Evening Telegram, in a recent editorial, which proceeds to state:

"It is reported that English farmers have petitioned the government for the privilege of employing child labor in farm work during the fall and winter months. The labor laws of England do not permit this in the sense of employment that is considered as gainful occupation. The argument in support of this petition is one of emergency. The younger men in farm work are called upon to enlist; and the farmers in their patriotism urge them to respond. But next year they will need the fruits of the field as well as fighting men, and they see no way to be assured of these save by permission to employ young boys, which the law forbids. It is also intimated that English manufacturers will ask for the same privilege, which is likely to be the fact.

"One cannot deny the force of the emergency, nor the necessity for meeting it in any way that it can be met. So far as the boy work on the farm is concerned, it would not be altogether bad, provided the boy was not driven beyond his strength and to his detriment; and provided further that child labor once re-established does not persist after the emergency has passed. We can rest assured that it will manifest that tendency, and particularly so in the factories and workshops.

"It has been said that war is the negation of progress. The exigencies which war has created in British agriculture and industry only emphasize the truth of that statement."

MODERN SHELLS.

WITH MODERN powder, a bullet will travel 2,000 yards—over one mile—before it will drop a distance equal to the height of an ordinary man. Thus it is possible for infantry companies to sweep everything before them within one mile if a solid front attack is ordered.

During the Civil War, when Gettysburg was fought, and during the Napoleonic wars ended by Waterloo, such a thing as rapid-fire artillery was not known. Today rapid-fire artillery can be sighted and made effective at a distance of five miles. The shells are incomparably more effective than those of the old artillery.

Experience shows that silage is not a safe horse feed. While it is used to some extent, yet the feeder must be very careful in the examination of silage that is fed to the horses.

One of the most important factors in diversified farming is dairying.