

Make The Farm Attractive

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In reviewing the progress of our country for the past century we are struck by the wonderful changes that have taken place along all lines.

We see steam taking the place of horse power to be in turn replaced by electricity; we see small one story buildings replaced by magnificent structures towering to the skies;

We see immense bridges suspended in midair and on every hand we see the wonderful transformation due to the inventor and the mechanic.

As we note the difference in our country as she is to day and the United States of one hundred years ago our growth seems truly marvelous; and it seems almost impossible to make a comparison between the struggling states that then bordered the Atlantic and the glorious nation that in the language of another "sweeps so grandly from ocean to ocean across a continent." These changes have developed characteristics in the population of our country that were unknown one hundred years ago.

The people that inhabit the united states to day are in many respects widely different from the citizen of the united states a century ago;

Now while there has been growth in all occupations in our land, in none is the advancement so appoarent as in the farming industry, ninety years ago we find our farmers tilling small fields of grains which they harvested with the cradle, threshed with the flail and transported to market on the back of the faithful bay, To day how different the conditions! a single farmer may ~~till~~ cultivate great tracts of land and reap thousands of bushels of grains by means of the improved machinery that may be found on farms of every large wheat raiser, now the ease with which crops may be grown and the vast returns from the soils are not the most important features in our agricultural intrests at the present day, in spite of the improved machinery that removes the drudgery from our farm work in spite of the excellent advice that is offered

our farmers through the medium of the press in spite of the natural beauties of the farm, the golden autumn hues and the beauties of the spring time over which poets rave, there is and there has been for years a tendency on the part of the farmers son to leave the farm for the uncertainties of the city.

Now why is this?

When the American colonies became free and independent states and for long years afterward, tilling the soil was the chief occupation of the people, and unless neglect or misfortune wrenched the old homestead from the ownership of the farmer it was almost certain that the land would descend to the oldest son whose chief aim in life was to cultivate the ground as well or better than his father had done before him. Seldom do we find a young man leaving the farm of his own free will in those days unless he possess some special gift that enabled him to secure a much better position in the city than the farm could afford

him, Now if we study the average farmer boy of today we find that his ambition is not to succeed his father as a cultivator of the soil, but rather to obtain employment that will take him to the town or city and away from the farm, now why this change?

By some it is claimed that the oppressed condition of the farmers of our land causes them to leave the rural districts in search of more remunerative work in the city or town. While it is possible that some of our farmers may become dissatisfied with the returns on the farm the majority of them realize that there is little chance for an unskilled workman in the city and that the average farmer can earn more on his farm than he can obtain at daily labor in the city. Again it is argued that while the farmers are the most independent of our former Army of laborers the attractiveness of the city over the life in the country causes many men to give up part of their independence that they may enjoy greater

social advantages which the city has to offer. Assuming that the latter theory is correct let us look for a remedy.

Sixty years ago farm life possessed many attractive features over a life in the ~~country~~ ^{town} for hunting and fishing. together with the chance for adventure and the pleasure derived from the old time, social gatherings made farm life compare favorably with the city and its attractions.

now how different! The march of civilization has obliterated the husking bee and kindred institutions; the great tide of immigration has, with the aid of the breach loading shot gun, effected the disappearance of game birds. the once fertile source of farm amusement until now little is left that tends to draw the youth of our land toward a life on the farm in preference to the city with its conveniences and attractions.

The young people of the United States are fast learning to realize that there is more in life than merely keeping body and soul together. They are beginning

to think that the creator intended man for something nobler than merely prolonging life as long as possible, and if we wish to keep the bright industrious intelligent portion of our population on the farm some means must be devised to increase its attractiveness.

If we can remove from farm work the appearance of never ceasing drudgery we have accomplished much.

The farmer that reduces his working day to ten hours in the field does much to aid the good work.

Many agriculturists will tell you that it is impossible to reduce their working day to ten hours, now let us see!

By ten hours we do not mean that one third of the time shall be spent talking to neighbors or chance passers by we would have the farmer remember that were he employed in other industries he could ^{not} hold conversation with all the men that came in his way and while we would not have the farmer rude or uncivil, we would have him alive to his own interests, and he

should not use the time foolishly that should be given to cultivating the farm, and we think that with harvest time as a possible ~~exception~~, ten hours good work for each day is sufficient. This will enable the young people on the farm to spend a short time each day in recreation of some form; it may be in a game of some kind or it may be in the study of nature as afforded by the farm, or it may be in simply reading books either useful or otherwise, in any case the extra vigor one would obtain from such recreation would enable them to accomplish more during the hours of labor. It is said that the slave holder of our southern states who compelled his slaves to work the full six days of each week was not able to accomplish as much as the planter who allowed his negroes saturday afternoon to themselves. From experience I think this will apply to our farms also, and the farmer who

adopts our ten hour system will find his children and hired help taking more interest in the work.

If in addition to reducing the working day the farmer realises the attractive features of crops well tilled and the pleasing appearance of a bit of lawn dotted here and there with shade trees some of which may arch over a drive bordered by rose bushes or other perennial plants, such a man I say is of untold value to his community.

There are many persons that earn a living by tilling the soil, who are true naturalists or who at least love to look on the wild beauties of nature and who still more enjoy the sight of a cultivated field which man has helped to beautify.

Upon such an one slovenly farming has the effect that a prolonged discord has on a skilled musician; he feels an irritation every time he is compelled to look upon a field where the fence corners have grown to weeds, and no

matter how much he may enjoy the the appearance of the brown center and golden fringe of the Helianthus annuus he certainly dislikes to see it usurp the place of the corn tassel.

A feature of no less importance is the manner in which a crop is sown. The small amount of extra time that it takes to have straight rows will much more than make up for the expense in the pleasure one derives from the appearance of the field and the comments of his fellow farmers. The effect crops sown in this way have on the youth of the land is to ~~take~~ ^{form} the impression that although agriculturists are numerous the tilling of the soil is an art that will repay careful study. Outside the appearance of the crop it should be seen to that the borders of the field are not decorated with implements and machines used in cultivating and harvesting the crops. The man who will allow his machinery to stand out in solid

and weather is not worthy to be called a farmer: a place for everything and every thing in its place is a good motto which applies equally well to the farmer and the mechanic,

With all farm implements stowed away and the waste material removed from around the outbuildings there is a cosiness about a farm that is not found elsewhere;

While it is ~~poss~~ not possible to have an extensive florist establishment on the farm there are many hardy shrubs and perennial plants that would add greatly to the beauty of a farm and which would cost next to nothing, but which would help to develop a taste for the good and beautiful in the growing generation on the farm.

Under the ten hour system the social life in the country would be greatly benefited young people and old people too would see more of each other and there would be a tendency to rub off the ~~corners~~ corners until a polished society of man and woman would

would result:

Under such a system our farmers would hold out inducements to the more intelligent classes, those who have received the advantage of a liberal education, on a farm conducted under the ten hour system, the Entomologist could find ample time to study the insects of his community to the best advantage.

It would be possible for the Botanist to earn a livelihood on the farm and yet have ample opportunity to study the wonders of nature in the farm flora. The Geologist the chemist and the Mineralogist would find much to interest them on such a farm.

With such a class of cultivators poor crops would not have the depressing effect we have noticed in the past. And farming would rank among the leading Professions.