

Farm Management.

The successful man in life is always the one who thinks before he acts; the one who uses intelligent forethought or speculative energy. Very few men gain wealth by chance, if they do it generally goes as easily as it came. To gain or retain wealth requires management. In no occupation of life do we find good management more necessary than on the farm; if any one must use speculative energy in order to be successful it is surely the farmer. But how few farmers, do we find scattered over our agricultural districts, who really manage a farm properly. To be sure they work, and very hard too, but they do not do the right thing at the right time or in the right place; thus there is power wasted, energy lost, and no returns to bear expenses.

The business of farming, rationally carried on, is one of the most complicated and difficult of all occupations; there are

2.

various things to be looked after. The farmer must not only know what his farm will produce best, but he must know whether or not there is a demand for the products he wishes to produce; he must watch the fluctuation in prices of farm products and sell the right thing at the right time.

The farmer cannot make such fine adjustments in his labors as can the mechanic in regulating his machine. The mechanic knows the amount of energy in a pound of coal and can adjust his engine and arrange his belting so as to transmit this power to the desired place with the greatest efficiency possible; he guards against all possible places of friction by seeing that all bearings are kept well oiled. The farmer cannot bring all his work under one roof and make mathematical calculations showing how much energy must go here and how much there in order to produce the greatest results, but he must contend with nature's forces; he must "make hay while the sun shines", clean his stables and do his mending on rainy

days.

Although farming seems to be subjected to greater disadvantages than other occupations, still there is great skill acquired and many lessons learned on a farm, and with these lessons learned and skill acquired one is ready to manage his work to the best advantage, and thus overcome obstacles that before seemed impediments to his progress.

Visit any farming community, where nature has bestowed upon all farms equal fertility; where rain and sunshine treat all alike, and where all seem industrious, yet you will observe some farmers growing wealthy while others are barely making a living. Why is it we find such difference? It is because some farmers know how to manage their affairs so as to bring the greatest results, while others do not have this skill in good management.

We might prepare orations and write essays telling of the great benefits to be derived from good management without giving any of the principles underlying good farming; without showing the ways

by which better management can be attained. It is much easier to say what the results will be than to show in what good management consists in order to bring these good results.

We can honestly say that an education is one of the fundamental requisites to good farm management. True we do not need to study languages or to get a high classical education in order to manage a farm properly, but we must have a real knowledge; a knowledge of the laws of nature—for no one can farm at all without taking advantage of the operations of her natural laws—; we must have a clear knowledge of the elementary principles of mechanics, of the laws of motion, of friction etc, for since farm machinery has become so abundant, it is necessary that the farmer should understand the principles they work on, and know how to manipulate them so as to get all out of them possible.

Let us note some of the ways in which good management brings wealth to the farmer. There are hundreds of ways in which it does. Of course no one system of farm-

ing is applicable to every situation, but there are many principles which are general, for instance all farms, wherever located, will in time wear out if no means are taken to replenish the waste material taken away by the crops, by applied fertilizers or by a system of rotation in crops. To do this properly requires skill and knowledge; one must know what elements are required in his soil and then bring about means to replenish the deficiency. The farmer who can thus manage will make farming pay.

There are many small things about a farm which if managed rightly increase a farmers wealth considerably. There is much to be learned in adjusting machinery so as to make it as light on the team as possible; one can sometimes by a five minutes adjustment of a plow or mower, or reaper make it run one horse lighter. It often happens that a farmer has a large horse and a small horse in the same team, the small horse exerting all its energy and strength in doing as much work as the large one, when a simple adjustment of the double-tree giving the

6.
small horse the advantage of the longer end would divide the work in proportion to their strength and thus probably save a horse from being ruined.

Many farmers do not know the advantage of keeping their tools sharp. They seem to think that they haven't time to sharpen them, but must hurry on with the work with dull tools. A badly ground mower knife exhausts the team, wears out the machine and worries the patience of the driver much faster than one well ground; nor is the work so good. Dull plows, dull mower knives, and wagons not oiled are hard on teams and no farmer can afford to tolerate them.

The care of tools is also an important factor in farm management. The well to do farmer always takes good care of his tools; he does not leave his mowing machine and sulky-rake standing in the open field from one harvest season to the other, for the iron to corrode and the wood to rot; neither does he leave his wagons, plows, harrows and other farm implements exposed to the shrinking effect of the sun and the swelling effects of the moist or rainy weather; he

has a tool house for small tools and sheds for the large ones. Every thing is kept in order and when the season ^{comes} for these implements to be used again he loses no time, and wastes no money by having to take them to the shop for repairs before they are in a condition ready for service. All these things in themselves seem small, but when we come to count the loss for repairs and the brute strength wasted in trying to move stubborn wheels and levers, it amounts to considerable, and much money can be saved by thus giving attention to the small things.

The farmer to be successful must know when to plant his crops; the best method for doing so, and must also know how to tend them after they are planted. All this requires skill and the best of management, and the farmer who does not understand these principles will never make a success at farming.

Another very important matter in farm management is the way in which crops are marketed. There are two principle ways in which farmers dispose of their

crops. Some haul their corn, wheat, hay etc, directly to the market and sell it; others make arrangements to feed it on the place. Let us see in which way the farmer of good management would dispose of his. He knows that in order to keep up the fertility of his farm he must not drain it of all its valuable elements without returning something; he knows that it costs something to haul his grain three or four miles to market and he also knows that by feeding it he can get a higher price than if he sold it directly to the market dealers, consequently he chooses the latter method and receives for his labor and good management twice as much for his crop as his neighbor who sold directly to the market dealers. This is illustrated very plainly by two farmers living on adjacent farms. One sold his corn directly to the market dealers for 22 ¢ per. bu.; the other fed his to hogs on the place. After the hogs were sold, by calculation it was found that the man, who fed his corn, received 18 ¢ per. bu. more than the man who hauled his to market. Thus the one man by good management was ahead 18 ¢ per. bu., all

9.

the manure and the expenses of hauling his corn two or three miles to market.

So we see that everything the farmer undertakes requires management. This is a work, not like that of the mere operative with just intelligence enough to follow some laid down course, but he must use those higher powers, executive and speculative; he must plan and lay out his work, and then see that it is properly executed. Then and not until then will the farmer be prosperous.

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