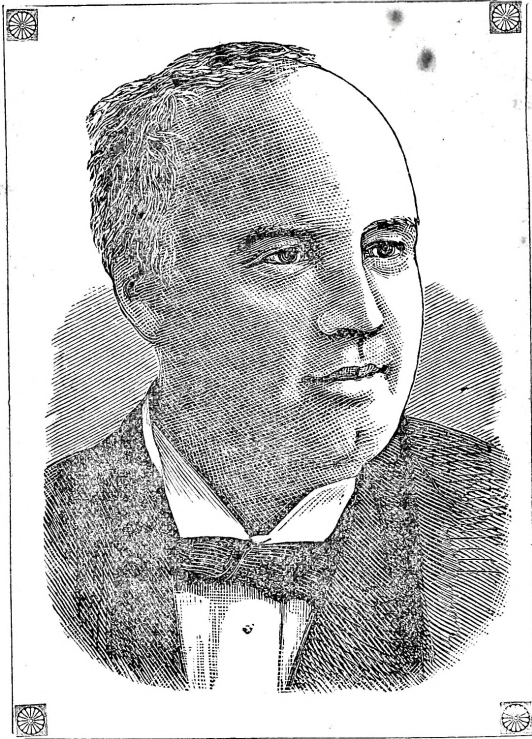


[FIFTH EDITION.

FARM LIFE IN AMERICA.

AS IT WAS—AS IT IS—AS IT SHOULD BE.

AN ADDRESS BY NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY



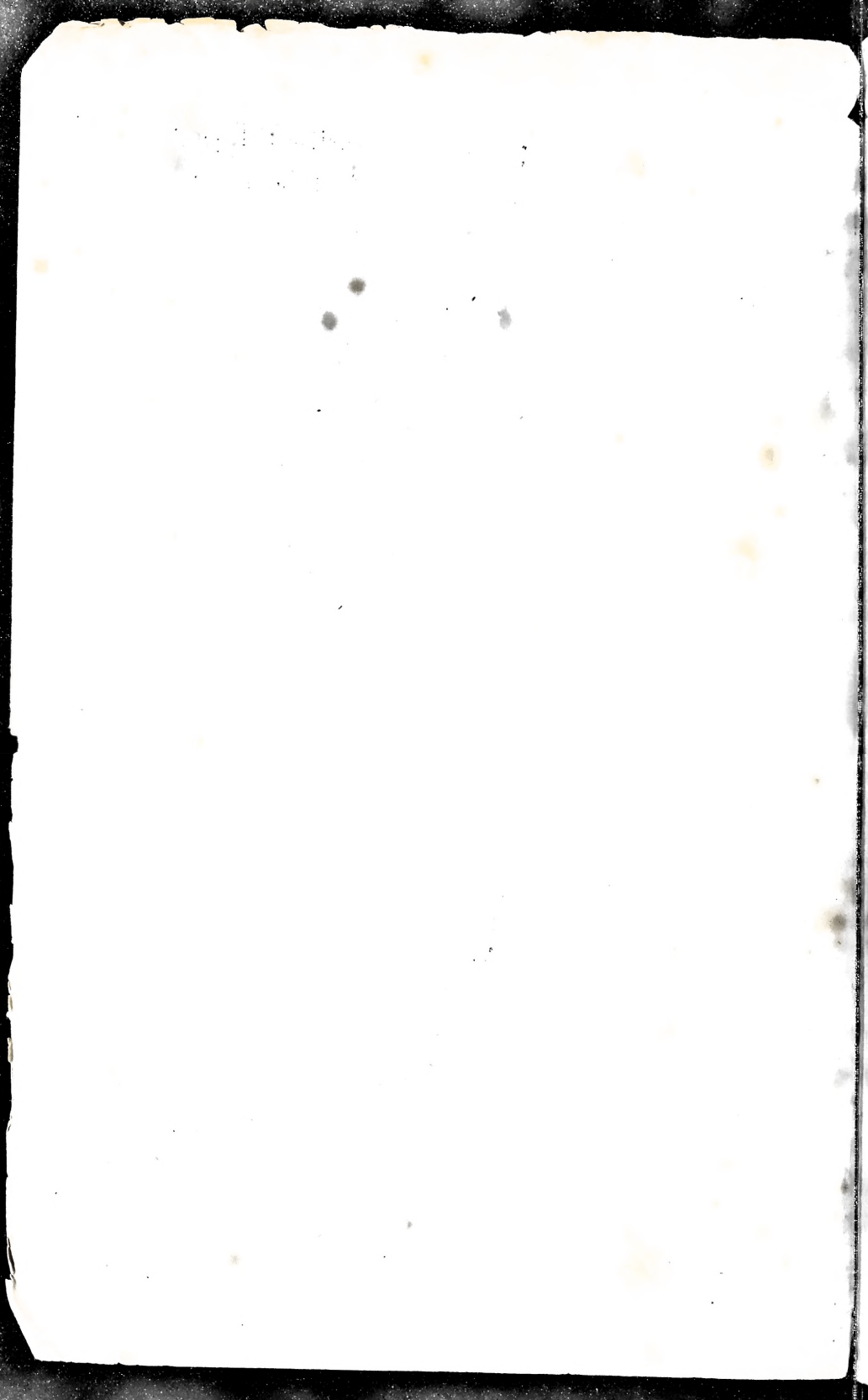
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FARM LIFE IN AMERICA.

As it was—as it is—as it should be.

I am not an old and experienced farmer, nor a tiller of the soil, nor one of the hard-handed sons of labor. I imagine, however, that I know something about cultivating the soil, and getting happiness out of the ground.

I know enough to know that agriculture is the basis of all wealth, prosperity, and luxury. I know that in a country where the tillers of the fields are free, everybody is free and ought to be prosperous. Happy is that country where those who cultivate the land own it. Patriotism is born in the woods and fields—by lakes and streams—by crags and plains.

The old way of farming was a great mistake. Everything was done the wrong way. It was all work and waste, weariness and want. They used to fence 160 acres of land with a couple of dogs. Everything was left to the protection of the blessed trinity of chance, accident, and mistake.

When I was a farmer they used to haul wheat two hundred miles in waggons and sell it for thirty-five cents a bushel. They would bring home about three hundred feet of lumber, two bunches of shingles, a barrel of salt, and a cooking stove that never would draw and never did bake.

In those blessed days the people lived on corn and bacon. Cooking was an unknown art. Eating was a necessity, not a pleasure. It was hard work for the cook to keep on good terms, even with hunger.

We had poor houses. The rain held the roofs in perfect contempt, and the snow drifted joyfully on the floors and beds. They had no barns. The horses were kept in pens surrounded with straw. Long before Spring the sides would be eaten away and nothing but the roofs would be left. Food is fuel. When the cattle were exposed to all the blasts of Winter, it took all the corn and oats that could be stuffed into them to prevent actual starvation.

In those times most farmers thought the best place for the pig pen was immediately in front of the house. There is nothing like sociability.

Women were supposed to know the art of making fires without fuel. The wood pile consisted, as a general thing, of one log upon which an axe or two had been worn out in vain. There was nothing to kindle a fire with. Pickets were pulled from the garden fence, flap boards taken from the house, and every stray plank was seized upon as firewood. Everything was done in the hardest way. Nothing was kept in order.

Nothing was preserved. The waggons stood in the sun and rain, and the ploughs rusted in the fields. There was no leisure, no feeling that the work was done. It was all labor and weariness and vexation of spirit. The crops were destroyed by wandering herds, or they were put in too late, or too early, or they were blown down or caught by frost, or devoured by bugs, or stung by flies, or eaten by worms, or carried away by birds, or dug up by goppers, or washed away by floods, or dried up by the sun, or rotted in the stacks, or heated in the crib, or they all ran to vines, or tops, or straw, smut or cobs. And when in spite of all these accidents that lie in wait between the plough and the reaper, they did succeed in raising a good crop and a high price was offered, then the roads would be impassable. And when the roads got good, then the prices went down. Everything worked together for evil.

Nearly every farmer's boy took an oath that he would never cultivate the soil. The moment they arrived at the age of twenty-one, they left the desolate and dreary farms and rushed to the towns and cities. They wanted to be book-keepers, doctors, merchants, railroad men, insurance agents, lawyers, even preachers, anything to avoid the drudgery of the farm. Nearly every boy acquainted with the three R's imagined that he had altogether more education than ought to be wasted in raising potatoes and corn. They made haste to get into some other business. Those who stayed upon the farm envied those who went away.

A few years ago the times were prosperous, and the young men went to the cities to enjoy the fortunes that were waiting for them. They wanted to engage in something that promised quick returns. They built railways, established banks and insurance companies. They speculated in stocks in Wall street, and gathered in grain at Chicago. They became rich. They lived in palaces. They rode in carriages. They pitied their poor brothers on the farms, and the poor brothers envied them.

But time has brought its revenge. The farmers have seen the railroad president a bankrupt, and the railroads in the hands of a receiver. They have seen the bank president abscond, and the insurance company a wrecked and ruined fraud. The only solvent people, as a class, the only independent people, are the tillers of the soil.

Farming must be made more attractive. The comforts of the town must be added to the beauty of the fields. The sociability of the city must be rendered possible in the country.

Farming has been made repulsive. The farmers have been unsociable and their homes have been lonely. They have been wasteful and careless. They have not been proud of their business.

In the first place farming ought to be reasonably profitable. The farmers have not attended to their own interests. They have been robbed and plundered in a hundred ways.

No farmer can afford to raise corn and oats and hay to sell. He should sell horses, not oats; sheep, cattle, and pork, not corn. He should make every profit possible out of what he produces. So long as the farmers of Illinois ship their corn and oats, so long will they be poor,—just so long will their farms be mortgaged to the insurance companies and banks of the east,—just so long will they do the work and others reap the benefit,—just so long will they be poor and the money

lenders grow rich,—just so long will cunning avarice grasp and hold the net profits of honest toil. When the farmers of the West ship beef and pork instead of grain,—when we cease paying tribute to others, ours will be the most prosperous country in the world.

Another thing—It is just as cheap to raise a good as a poor breed of cattle. Scrubs will eat just as much as thoroughbreds. If you are not able to buy Durhams and Alderneys, you can raise the corn breed. By "corn breed" I mean the cattle that have, for several generations, had enough to eat, and have been treated with kindness. Every farmer who will treat his cattle kindly, and feed them all they want, will, in a few years, have blooded stock on his farm. All blooded stock has been produced in this way. You can raise good cattle just as you can raise good people. If you wish to raise a good boy you must give him plenty to eat, and treat him with kindness. In this way, and in this way only can good cattle or good people be produced.

Another thing—You must beautify your homes. When I was a farmer it was not fashionable to set out trees, or to plant vines.

When you visited the farm you were not welcomed with flowers and greeted by trees loaded with fruit. Yellow dogs came bounding over the tumbled fence like wild beasts. There is no sense—there is no profit in such a life. It is not living. The farmers ought to beautify their homes. There should be trees and grass and running vines. Everything should be kept in order—gates should be on their hinges, and about all these should be the pleasant air of thrift. In every house there should be a bath-room. The bath is a civilizer, a refiner, a beautifier. When you come from the fields tired, covered with dust, nothing is so refreshing. Above all things keep clean. It is not necessary to be a pig in order to raise one. In the cool of the evening, after a day in the fields put on clean clothes, take a seat under the trees 'mid the perfumes of flowers, surrounded by your family, and you will know what it is to enjoy life like a gentleman.

In no part of the globe will farming pay better than in Illinois. You are in the best portion of the earth. From the Atlantic to the Pacific there is no such country as yours. The east is hard and stony; the soil is stingy. The far west is a desert parched and barren, dreary and desolate as perdition would be with the fires out. It is better to dig wheat and corn from the soil than gold. Only a few days ago I was where they wrench the precious metals from the miserly clutch of the rocks. When I saw the mountains treeless, shrubless, flowerless, without even a spire of grass, it seemed to me that gold had the same effect upon the country that holds it, as upon the man who lives and labours only for that. It affects the land as it does the man. It leaves the heart barren without a flower of kindness—without a blossom of pity.

The farmer in Illinois has the best soil—the greatest return for the least labor—more leisure—more time for enjoyment than any other farmer in the world. His hard work ceases with autumn. He has the long winter in which to become acquainted with his family—with his neighbours—in which to read and keep abreast with the advanced thought of his day. He has the time and means for self culture. He has more time than the mechanic, the merchant, or the professional man. If the farmer is not well informed it is his own fault. Books

are cheap, and every farmer can have enough to give him the outline of every science, and an idea of all that has been accomplished by man.

In many respects the farmer has the advantage of the mechanic. In our time we have plenty of mechanics but no tradesmen. In the sub-division of labor we have a thousand men working upon different parts of the same thing, each taught in one particular branch, and in only one. We have, say, in a shoe factory, hundreds of men, but not one shoemaker. It takes them all, assisted by a great number of machines, to make a shoe. Each does a particular part, and not one of them knows the entire trade. The result is that when the factory shuts these men are out of employment. Out of employment means out of bread—out of bread means famine and horror. The mechanic of to-day has but little independence. His prosperity often depends on the good will of one man. He is liable to be discharged for a look, for a word. He lays by but little for his declining years. He is, at the best, the slave of capital.

It is a thousand times better to be a whole farmer than part of a mechanic. It is better to till the ground and work for yourself than to be hired by corporations. Every man should endeavour to belong to himself.

About seven hundred years ago, Kheyam, a Persian, said: "Why should a man who possesses a piece of bread securing life for two days and who has a cup of water—why should such a man be commanded by another, and why should such a man serve another?"

Young men should not be satisfied with a salary. Do not mortgage the possibilities of your future. Have the courage to take life as it comes, feast or famine. Think of hunting a gold mine for a dollar a day, and think of finding one for another man. How would you feel then.

We are lacking in true courage. when for fear of the future, we take the crusts and scraps and niggardly salaries of the present. Man needs more manliness, more real independence. We must take care of ourselves, this we can do by labor, and in this way we can preserve our independence. We should try and choose that business or profession the pursuit of which gives us the most happiness. Happiness is wealth. We can be happy without being rich—without holding office—without being famous. I am not sure that we can be happy with wealth—with office—with fame.

There is a quiet about the life of a farmer, and the hope of a serene old age, that no other business or profession can promise. A professional man is doomed sometimes to feel that his powers are waning. He is doomed to see younger and stronger men pass him in the race of life. He looks forward to an old age of intellectual mediocrity. He will be the last where once he was the first. But the farmer goes, as it were, into partnership with nature—he lives with trees and flowers—he breathes the sweet air of the fields. There is no constant and frightful strain upon his mind. His nights are filled with sleep and rest. He watches his flocks and herds as they feed upon the green and sunny slopes. He hears the pleasant rain falling upon the waving corn, and the trees he planted in his youth rustle above him as he plants others for the children yet to be.

Our country is filled with the idle and unemployed, and the great question asking for an answer is: what shall be done with these men? what must these men do? To this there is but one answer: They must cultivate the soil. Farming must be rendered more attractive. Those who work the land must have an honest pride in their business. They must educate their children to cultivate the soil. They must make farming easier so that their children will not hate it—so that they will not hate it themselves. The boys must not be taught that tilling the ground is a curse and almost a disgrace. They must not suppose that education is thrown away upon them unless they become ministers, merchants, doctors, lawyers, or statesmen. It must be understood that education can be used to advantage on a farm. We must get rid of the idea that a little learning unfits one for work. There is no real conflict between Latin and labor. There are hundreds of graduates of Yale and Harvard and other colleges, who are agents for sewing machines, solicitors' clerks, copyists, in short, performing a hundred varieties of menial service. They seem willing to do anything that is not regarded as work—anything that can be done in a town, in the house, in an office, but they avoid farming as they would leprosy. Nearly every young man educated in this way is simply ruined. Such an education ought to be called ignorance. It is a thousand times better to have common sense without education, than education without the sense. Boys and girls should be educated to help themselves. They should be taught that it is disgraceful to be idle and dishonorable to be useless.

I say again, if you want more men and women on the farms, something must be done to make farm life pleasant. One great difficulty is that the farm is lonely. People write about the pleasures of solitude, but they are found only in books. He who lives long alone becomes insane. A hermit is a madman. Without friends and wife and child, there is nothing left worth living for. The unsocial are the enemies of joy. They are filled with egotism and envy, with vanity and hatred. People who live much alone become narrow and suspicious. They are apt to be the property of one idea. They begin to think there is no use in anything. They look upon the happiness of others as a kind of folly. They hate joyous folks, because, way down in their hearts they envy them.

In our country, farm life is too lonely. The farms are large and neighbours are too far apart. In these days when the roads are filled with "tramps," the wives and children need protection. When the farmer leaves home and goes to some distant field to work, a shadow of fear is upon his breast, and a like shadow rests upon all at home.

In the early settlement of our country the pioneer was forced to take his family, his axe, his dog and his gun, and go into the far wide forest and build his cabin miles and miles from any neighbour. He saw the smoke from his hearth go up alone in all the wide and lonely sky.

But this necessity has passed away, and now, instead of living so far apart upon the lonely farms, you should live in villages. With the improved machinery which you have—with your generous soil—with your markets and means of transport you can now afford to live together.

It is not necessary in this age of the world for the farmer to rise in the middle of the night and begin his work. This getting up so early in the morning is a relic of barbarism. It has made hundreds and thousands of young men curse the business. There is no need of getting up at three or four o'clock in the winter morning. The farmer who persists in doing it and persists in dragging his wife and children from their beds, ought to be visited by a missionary. It is time enough to rise after the sun has set the example. For what purpose do you get up? To feed the cattle? Why not feed them more the night before? It is a waste of life. In the old times they used to get up about three in the morning and go to work long before the sun had risen "with healing upon his wings," and as a just punishment they all had the ague; and they ought to have it now. The man who cannot get a living upon Illinois soil without rising before daylight ought to starve. Eight hours a day is enough for any farmer to work except in harvest time. When you rise at four and work till dark what is life worth. Of what use is all the machinery unless it tends to give the farmer a little more leisure? What is harvesting now compared with what it was in the old time? Think of the days of reaping, of cradling, of raking and binding and mowing. Think of threshing with the flail, and winnowing with the wind! and now think of the reapers and mowers, the binders and threshing machines, the ploughs and cultivators, upon which the farmer rides protected from the sun. If, with all these advantages, you cannot get a living without rising in the middle of the night, go into some other business. You should not rob your families of sleep. Sleep is the best medicine in the world. It is the best doctor on the earth. There is no such thing as health without plenty of sleep. Sleep until you are thoroughly rested and restored. When you work, *work*; and when you get through, take a good, long, and refreshing rest.

You should live in villages so that you can have the benefits of social life. You can have a reading room—you can take the best papers and magazines—you can have plenty of books, and each one can have the benefit of them all. Some of the young men and women can cultivate music. You can have social gatherings—you can learn from each other—you can discuss all topics of interest, and in this way you can make farming a delightful business. You must keep up with the age. The way to make farming respectable is for farmers to become intelligent. They must live intelligent and happy lives. They must know something of what is going on in the world. They must not be satisfied with knowing something of the affairs of a neighbourhood and nothing about the rest of the earth. The business must be made attractive, and it never can be until the farmer has prosperity, intelligence, and leisure.

Another thing—I am a believer in fashion. It is the duty of every woman to make herself as beautiful and attractive as she possibly can.

"Handsome is as handsome does," but she is much handsomer if well dressed. Every man should look his **very** best. I am a believer in good clothes. The time never ought to come in this country when you can tell a farmer's wife or daughter simply by the garments she wears. I say to every girl and woman, no matter what the material of your dress may be, no matter how cheap and coarse it is, cut it and make it in the fashion. I believe in jewellery. Some people look upon it as

barbaric, but in my judgment, wearing jewellery is the first evidence the barbarian gives of a wish to be civilized. To adorn ourselves seems to be a part of our nature, and the desire seems to be everywhere, and in everything. I have sometimes thought that the desire for beauty covers the earth with flowers. It is this desire that paints the wings of the moths, tints the chamber of the shell, and gives the bird its plumage and its song. Oh, daughters and wives, if you would be loved, adorn yourselves—if you would be adored, be beautiful.

There is another fault common with the farmers of our country—they want too much land. You cannot, at present, when taxes are high, afford to own land that you do not cultivate. Sell it and let others make farms and homes. In this way what you keep will be enhanced in value. Farmers ought to own the land they cultivate, and cultivate what they own. Renters can hardly be called farmers. There can be no such thing in the highest sense as a home unless you own it. There must be an incentive to plant trees, to beautify the grounds, to preserve and improve. It elevates a man to own a home. It gives a certain independence, a force of character that is obtained in no other way. A man without a home feels like a passenger. There is in such a man a little of the vagrant. Home makes patriots. He who has sat by his own fireside with wife and children will defend it. When he hears the word country pronounced he thinks of his home.

Few men have been patriotic enough to shoulder a musket in defence of a boarding house.

The prosperity and glory of our country depend upon the number of our people who are the owners of homes. Around the fireside cluster the private and the public virtues of our race. Raise your sons to be independant through labour—to pursue some business for themselves and upon their own account—to be self reliant—to act upon their own responsibility and to take the consequences like men. Teach them above all things to be good true and tender husbands—winners of love and builders of homes.

A great many farmers seem to think they are the only laborers in the world. This is a very foolish thing. Farmers cannot get along without the mechanic. You are not independant of the man of genius. Your prosperity depends upon the inventor. The world advances by the assistance of all laborers; and all labour is under obligation to the inventions of genius. The inventor does as much for agriculture as he who tills the soil. All laboring men should be brothers. You are in partnership with the mechanics who make your reapers and your plough. The laboring people should unite and should protect themselves against all idlers. You can divide mankind into two classes, the laborers and the idlers, the supporters and the supported, the honest and the dishonest. Every man is dishonest if he lives upon the unpaid labor of others, no matter if he occupies a throne. All laborers should be brothers. And I want every farmer to consider every man who labors either with hand or brain as his brother. Until genius and labor formed a partnership there was no such thing as prosperity among men. Every agricultural implement has elevated the work of the farmer, and his vocation grows grander with every invention. In the olden time the agriculturalist was ignorant; he knew nothing of machinery, he was the slave of super-

stition. He was always trying to appease some imaginary power by fasting and prayer. He supposed that some being actuated by malice, sent the untimely frost, or swept away with the wild wind his rough abode. To him the seasons were mysterious. The thunder told him of an enraged god—the barren fields of the vengeance of heaven. The tiller of the soil lived in perpetual and abject fear. He knew nothing of mechanics, nothing of order, nothing of law, nothing of cause and effect. He was a superstitious savage. He invented prayers instead of ploughs, creeds instead of reapers. He was unable to devote all his time to the gods, so he hired others to assist him, and for their influence with the gentlemen supposed to control the weather, he gave one tenth of all he could produce.

The farmer has been elevated through science and he should not forget the debt he owes to the mechanic, to the inventor, to the thinker. He should remember that all laborers belong to the same grand family—that they are the *real* kings and queens, the only true nobility.

Another idea entertained by many farmers is that they are oppressed in some way by every other kind of business, especially by railroads. The railroads are your friends. They are your partners. They can prosper only where the country through which they run prosper. We must have railroads. What can we do without them? When we had no railroads, we drew as I said before, our grain two hundred miles to market.

In those days farmers did not stop at hotels. They slept under their wagons—took with them their food—fried their own bacon, made their coffee, and eat their meals in snow and rain. Those were the days they received ten cents a bushel for corn—when they sold four bushels of potatoes for a quarter dollar—thirty three dozen eggs for a dollar, and a hundred pounds of pork for a dollar and a half.

What has made the difference?

The railroads came to your doors and they brought with them the markets of the world. They brought New York, and Liverpool and London into Illinois, and the state has been clothed with prosperity as with a mantle. It is the interest of the farmer to protect every great interest in the state. You should feel proud that Illinois has more railways than any other state in this union. Her main tracks and side tracks would furnish iron enough to belt the globe. In Illinois there are ten thousand miles of railways. In these iron highways more than three hundred million dollars have been invested—a sum equal to ten times the original cost of all the land in the state! To make war upon the railroads is a short sighted and suicidal policy. If we wish to prosper we must act together, and we must see to it that every form of labor is protected.

There has been a long depression in all business. The farmers have suffered least of all. Your land is just as rich and productive as ever. Prices have been reasonable. The towns and cities have suffered. Stocks and bonds have shrunk from par to worthless paper. Princes have become paupers; and bankers, merchants, and millionaires have passed into bankruptcy. The period of depression is passing away and we are entering into better times.

A great many people say that a scarcity of money is our only diffi-

culty. In my opinion we have money enough, but we lack confidence in each other and in the future.

There has been so much dishonesty, and so many failures that the people are afraid to trust anybody. There is plenty of money, but there seems to be a scarcity of business. If you were to go to the owner of a ferry, and, upon seeing his boat lying high and dry on the shore should say, "There is a superabundance of ferry boat", he would probably reply. "No, but there is a scarcity of water". So with us there is not a scarcity of money, but there is a scarcity of business. And this scarcity springs from lack of confidence in one another. So many presidents of savings banks, even those belonging to the Young Men's Christian Association, run off with the funds; so many railroad and insurance companies are in the hands of the receivers; there is so much bankruptcy on every hand, that all capital is held in the nervous clutch of fear. Slowly but surely we are coming back to honest methods in business. Confidence will return, and then enterprise will unlock the safe and money will again circulate as of yore; the dollars will leave their hiding place, and everyone will be seeking investment.

The farmers should vote for such men as are able and willing to guard and advance the interest of labor. We should know better than to vote for men who deliberately put a tariff on Canada lumber. People who live on the prairies ought to vote for cheap lumber. We should protect ourselves. We ought to have intelligence enough to know what we want and how to get it. The real laboring men can succeed if they are united. By laboring men I do not mean only the farmers. I mean all who contribute in some way to the general welfare. They should forget prejudices and party names, and remember only the best interests of the people.

Where industry creates, and justice protects, prosperity dwells.

Let me tell you something more about Illinois. We have fifty six thousand square miles of land—nearly thirty six million acres. Upon these plains we can raise enough to support twenty million people. Beneath these prairies were hidden millions of ages ago, by that old miser the sun, thirty six thousand square miles of coal. The aggregate thickness of these veins is at least fifteen feet. Think of a column of coal one mile square and one hundred miles high! All this came from the sun. What a sunbeam such a column would be! Think of the engines and machines this coal will run and turn and whirl! Think of all this force, willed and left to us by the dead morning of the world! Think of the firesides of the future around which will sit the fathers, mothers and children of the years to be! Think of the sweet and happy faces, the loving and tender eyes that will glow and gleam in the sacred light of all these flames!

We have the best country in the world, and Illinois is the best state in that country. Is there any reason that our farmers should not be prosperous and happy men! They have every advantage and within their reach are all the comforts and conveniences of life.

Do not get the land fever and think you must buy all that joins you. Get out of debt as soon as you possibly can. A mortgage casts a shadow on the sunniest field. There is no business under the sun that can pay ten per cent.

One dollar loaned for one hundred years at six per cent., with the interest collected yearly and added to the principal, will amount to three hundred and forty dollars. At eight per cent. it amounts to two thousand two hundred and three dollars. At twelve per cent. it amounts to eighty four thousand and seventy five dollars, or more than four thousand times as much.

One dollar at compound interest, at twenty four per cent. for one hundred years, would produce a sum equal to our national debt.

Interest eats night and day, and the more it eats the hungrier it grows. The farmer in debt, lying awake at night, can, if he listens, hear it gnaw, but if he owes nothing he can hear his corn grow. Get out of debt as soon as you possibly can. You have supported idle avarice long enough.

Above all let every farmer treat his wife and children with infinite kindness. Give your sons and daughters every advantage within your power. In the air of kindness they will grow about you like flowers. They will fill your homes with sunshine and all your years with joy. Don't try to rule by force. A blow from a parent leaves a scar upon the soul. I should feel ashamed to die surrounded by children I had whipped. Think of feeling upon your dying lips the kiss of the child you had struck.

See to it that your wife has every convenience. Make her life worth living. Never allow her to become a servant. Wives, weary and worn, mothers, wrinkled and bent before their time, fill homes with grief and shame. If you are not able to hire help for your wives, help them yourselves. See that they have the best utensils to work with. Women cannot create things by magic. Have plenty of wood and coal—Good cellars and plenty in them. Have cisterns so that you can have plenty of rain water for washing. Do not rely on a barrel and a board. When the rain comes the board will be lost or the hoops will be off the barrel.

Farmers should live like princes. Eat the best things you raise and sell the rest. Have good things to cook and good things to cook with. Of all people in our country you should live the best. Throw your miserable little stoves out of the window. Get ranges and have them so built that your wife need not burn her face off to get you a breakfast. Do not make her cook in a kitchen hot as the orthodox perdition. The beef, not the cook, should be roasted. It is just as easy to have things convenient and right as to have them any other way.

Cooking is one of the fine arts. Give your wives and daughters things to cook, and things to cook with, and they will soon become most excellent cooks. Good cooking is the basis of civilization. The man whose arteries and veins are filled with rich blood made of good and well cooked food, has pluck, courage endurance, and noble impulses. The inventor of a good soup did more for his race than the makers of any creed. The doctrines of total depravity and endless punishment were born of bad cooking and dyspepsia. Remember that your wife should have the things to cook with.

In the good old days there would be eleven children in the family and only one skillet. Everything was broken, or cracked, or loaned, or lost.

There ought to be a law making it a crime punishable with imprison-

ment, to fry beefsteak. Broil it; it is just as easy, and when broiled it is delicious. Fried beefsteak is not fit for a wild beast. You can broil even on a stove. For broiling, coal, even soft coal, is better than wood.

There is no reason why farmers should not have fresh meat all the year round. There is certainly no sense in stuffing yourself full of salt meat every morning, and making a well or cistern of your stomach for the rest of the day. Every farmer should have an ice house. Upon or near every farm is some stream from which plenty of ice can be obtained, and the long summer day made delightful. Dr. Draper, one of the world's greatest scientists, says that ice water is healthy, and has done away with many of the low forms of fever in great cities. Ice has become one of the necessities of civilized life, and without it there is very little comfort. Make your homes pleasant. Have your houses warm and comfortable for the winter. Do not build a story and a half house. The half story is simply an oven in which, during the summer, you will bake every night, and feel in the morning as though only the rind of yourself was left.

Decorate your rooms, even if you do so with cheap engravings. The cheapest are far better than none. Have books—have papers, and read them. You have more leisure than the dwellers in cities. Beautify your grounds with plants and flowers and vines. Have good gardens, remember that everything of beauty tends to the elevation of man. Every little morning glory, whose purple bosom is thrilled with the amorous kisses of the sun, tends to put a blossom in your heart. Do not judge of the value of everything by the market reports. Every flower about a house certifies to the refinement of somebody. Every vine climbing and blossoming, tells of love and joy.

Make your houses comfortable. Do not huddle together in a little room round a red hot stove with every window fastened down. Do not live in this poisoned atmosphere, and then, when one of your children dies, put a notice in the papers commencing with "Whereas, it has pleased divine Providence——" Have plenty of air, and plenty of warmth. Comfort is health. Do not imagine anything is unhealthy simply because it is pleasant. That is an old and foolish idea.

There is no reason why farmers should not be the kindest and most cultivated of men. There is nothing in ploughing the fields to make men cross, cruel, and crabbed. To look upon the sunny slopes covered with daisies does not tend to make men unjust. Whoever labors for the happiness of those he loves, elevates himself, no matter whether he works in the dark and dreary shops, or in the perfumed fields. To work for others is, in reality, the only way in which a man can work for himself. Selfishness is ignorance. Speculators cannot make unless somebody loses. In the realms of speculation, every success has at least one victim. The harvest reaped by farmers benefits all and injures none. For him to succeed it is not necessary that some one should fail. The same is true of all producers—all laborers.

I can imagine no condition that carries with it such a promise of joy as that of the farmer in the early winter. He has his cellar filled—he has made every preparation for the days of snow and storm—he looks forward to three months of ease and rest; to three months of fireside

content; three months with wife and children; three months of long delightful evenings; three months of home; three months of solid comfort.

When the life of the farmer is such as I have described, the cities and towns will not be filled with want—the streets will not be crowded with wrecked rogues, broken bankers, and bankrupt speculators. The fields will be tilled, and country villages, almost hidden by trees and vines and flowers, filled with industrious and happy people will nestle in every vale and gleam like gems on every plain.

The idea must be done away with that there is something intellectually degrading in cultivating the soil. Nothing can be nobler than to be useful. Idleness should not be respectable.

If farmers will cultivate well, and without waste; if they will so build that their houses will be warm in winter and cool in summer; if they will plant trees and beautify their homes; if they will occupy their leisure in reading, in thinking, in improving their minds, and in devising ways and means to make their business profitable and pleasant; if they will live nearer together and cultivate sociability; if they will come together often; if they will have reading rooms and cultivate music; if they will have bath rooms, ice houses and good gardens; if their wives can have an easy time; if their sons and daughters can have an opportunity to keep in line with the thoughts and discoveries of the world; if the nights can be taken for sleep and the evenings for enjoyment: everybody will be in love with the fields. Happiness should be object of life, and if life on the farm can be made really happy, the children will grow up in love with the meadows, the streams, the woods, and the old home. Around the farm will cling and cluster the happy memories of the delightful years.

Remember I pray you, that you are in partnership with all labor—that you should join hands with all the sons and daughters of toil, and that all who work belong to the same noble family. For my part I envy the man who has lived on the same broad acres from his boyhood, who cultivates the fields where in youth he played, and lives where his father lived and died.

I can imagine no sweeter way to end one's life than in the quiet of the country, out of the mad race for money, place and power—far from the demands of business—out of the dusty highway where fools struggle and strive for the hollow praise of other fools.

Surrounded by pleasant fields and faithful friends, by those I have loved, I hope to end my days. And this I hope may be the lot of all who hear my voice.

I hope that you, in the country, in houses covered with vines and clothed with flowers, looking from the open window upon rustling fields of corn and wheat, over which will run the sunshine and the shadow, surrounded by those whose lives you have filled with joy, will pass away serenely as the autumn dies.

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