

THERE IS ALWAYS SUNSHINE ON THE FARM

(By One Who Remains An Optimist)

AS a farm worker and farmer for over 45 years, I am amazed and saddened that so many farmers go out of their way to decry the ancient, honourable and pleasurable occupation of farming. In farmyard language they "foul their own nest," driving farm labour and even their own sons and daughters away from the land. An article in a recent issue of *The Listener* would lead people to imagine that a piece of land, stocked with cows and pigs is the dreariest place on earth, all darkness and drudgery, mud and muck, without a ray of hope this side of the grave.

I would like to say that a piece of land is the grandest place on earth, for a family, for sunshine, happiness, health, peace, and all the good things that make life worth living. The city man lives in purgatory, compared with the farmer who sees his farm in its proper light.

I admit, of course, that the secret of happiness lies in the mind of the farmer himself. Does he see mud, or does he see stars?

Text For Farmers

The farmer should go down the road to his kirk every Sunday and have preached to him for a whole year a sermon on the text: "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind."

The farm is the first place on God's earth for raising a family. In fact, I cannot see how any man can be a good farmer without his being his own manpower committee, able to add to his number healthy boys and girls whose roots are in the soil, and who will love the land if they are taught how.

Should a man growl when he can have ham and eggs for breakfast, lamb and green peas for dinner, strawberries and cream for tea—all conjured up out of his own labour and the good brown earth? It's a life fit for the gods, and any man who says otherwise is just plain stupid.

Spiritual Oxygen

When a farmer gets up early for his cows, if his mind is on his job, should he be filled with jealousy of the wharf-labourer, who is probably breathing a gas-laden atmosphere? He is inhaling the greatest force known for health, optimism and strength—pure, spiritual oxygen, uncontaminated by the foul vapours of the city. Soon he sees the sun coming over the hill, and the glad

eye of "Strawberry" or "Prettypaid," both determined to respond to the extra feed committed to their care by an owner who knows that half the breed goes down the throat, and that 10,000 gallons of milk in a season are not produced by sitting on the sale-yard fence.

Why does the farmer continue to look upon his farm as a place where he thinks he is condemned by his fellow citizens to drag out a miserable existence? In no place under Heaven is a man so free!

Free to enjoy good health!
Free to expand his mind!
Free to build a home!



".... a piece of land is the grandest place on earth for all the good things that make life worth living"

Free to raise the finest livestock on the farm—healthy boys and girls!

And yet, by the reports of conferences and articles in the newspapers, he is made to see only mud and mortgages when he might see prosperity and pleasure.

Bacon And Eggs

Consider the menu I spoke of earlier. Man's needs are physical, mental, and spiritual. Well, from a physical point of view, that menu will take some beating. The latest findings of science tell us that when hens are fed pellets of grain for 20 minutes twice a day, and have free range on to fresh young pasture, they obtain the greatest "push for production" known—"Carotene," which charges the yolk with the sixteen elements of which man's body is composed. No patent medicine or loaded costs here! Eggs and health right from the grass to the farmer's breakfast table! And the same is true of bacon. The pig will not only pay the rent, but will pay all labour costs on the dairy farm, no matter how many cows are kept, and the rashers

on the family table will cost a shilling a pound less than they cost the city worker.

But lamb and green peas for dinner? How does he get them? As easily as falling off a log. A few cull lambs among the cows do the trick—spreading the benefit to cows, lambs, and to the owner's gastronomical requirements.

I wonder why so many farmers have no gardens, and buy dried, shrivelled peas; or worse still canned peas, loaded with transportation costs, when with a small plough and a good-sized garden his children taught at school could keep the family in fresh green peas, sown in rotation, and picked fresh with the bloom on, every day he fancies and needs them.

Things Remembered

When the milking is over, and the gum boots are thrown in the shed, is it any trouble to pick a meat-dish of strawberries, or even ask the children to do it for mother? They would jump at the job—I know mine did; and as I remember the days of so-called struggle on the farm, I don't remember the "mud and mortgages," but I remember that we had gooseberries to start with, then strawberries, big luscious fellows 16 and 20 to a pound, drowned in thick Jersey cream. Then we passed on to loganberries and raspberries. We had beautiful new potatoes, juicy tomatoes, plenty for everybody, all at no cost except intelligence, recreational labour, and land.

The farm should be a place of pleasure and plenty. Tennis is a great game on the farm, immediately after milking. Let the farmer start a strawberry garden and a tennis court on his farm for the young folk, and see whether his sons will want to serve petrol in the local garage, or his daughter punch a typewriter in a city office.

There is no place in industry where a farmer can see written so clearly as on his own farm the fundamental law of life—what we sow we reap. The working of that law begins in the farmer's mind. If he sees mud and mortgages, dirt and drudgery, it is because his mind dwells on these things. If he sees strawberries and cream, tennis and contentment, he will reap his reward abundantly, but a lot of growlers will lose their jobs.

DON'T THINK ABOUT the WAR!

Get A Hobby

Don't concentrate your thoughts upon war subjects. You'll find it worrying and bad for the nerves. Make use of your spare time by concentrating on something useful.

WRITING AS A HOBBY.

During the last war many people learned to write short stories, etc. To-day a number of them are world-famed authors. If you have a "gift" for writing, develop it into a profitable spare time hobby during these anxious days.

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