OPEN LETTERS TO A FARMER

By Rev. M. V. Kelly, C.S.B.

(Continued from last week)

V.

Ruthless Waste.

What would you think, my dear farmer friend, of a young man whose father had made great sacrifices to prepare him for a career in law or medicine, who had completed his studies successfully, taken a university degree, practised his profession for a number of years, and then deliberately gave it up to drive a street car or delivery wagon, or perhaps spend his days attending some little machine in a factory? Of course, you would say no sane man would entertain the thought. Did you ever realize that this is precisely what many a farmer has done when he decides to seek a livelihood in a city?

No other profession requires so many years to fit oneself for success therein as are required to be a successful farmer. Your own observations have taught you that from among the boys who show some skill in different farm operations at the age of eight or nine, few could be entrusted with the management of a farm at twenty-one, and many not at twenty-five. Every competent farmer has had a three-fold training—of a mechanic, a business man and a professional man. To acquire all three is the task of years; many never acquire them. You have seen the case of one who has had the skill of an expert in any of the hundred little trades, the ever-varying occupations day after day on a farm require familiarity with, and who failed through lack of managing capacity or of a practical knowledge of the science of agriculture. The average boy or young man would learn a foreign language in less time than he would learn all that is necessary to handle a horse properly. While any one obliged to live a certain term among foreigners will learn their language, many a one has lived and died on a farm without daring to call himself a horseman. This is only one example. To grow up on a farm means to be learning something new or acquiring further skill in some occupation or other, almost daily. Now, you have acquired these and gone through long years of drill; what use can you make of it all when you take up your residence in the city? Simply a case of throwing it all away to begin with something else, an absolute waste of what years were required to garner. The capitalist who spends the accumulations of a life time on the erection of a factory and then, instead of developing a business, allows the plant to fall to pieces with rust and ruin, is not more foolish in his wastefulness.

The Only Education.

I should like to have another word with you on your complaint that farm life entails too much hard work. Even though we had only this world to think of, a life of work would be, perhaps, the greatest blessing which could come our way. There is no true greatness which is not associated with earnest, unremitting toil, and, generally, the greatness is in proportion to the assiduity of the toil. Whether we consider paupers' sons of the sons of royalty, the men of character, of weight, of capability, owe their achievements to their faithfulness to work. The one who is truly to be pitied is he who has never learned to work, who has never known the fascination of being absorbed in his daily pursuits. For him whose life has been one of constant occupation, no other pastime can be a substitute. Give him in advanced years wealth and opportunities of leisure, surround him with honor and friends, and condemn him to idleness, will his life know any happiness? Your first and last anxiety is the future welfare of your children. No matter what you do for them, no matter how much you try to give them, from this world's point of view is there anything else will so contribute to their happiness, to a persevering satisfaction amid life's uncertain terms, as an early training in habits of industry and endurance of toil? The father who contemplates moving a young family to the city must face the responsibility of acquiring this formation.

The acquaintances you will make in the city give ample evidences of this. Only a small proportion of the young people who grow up there are trained in the best habits of work. Rich men's sons are generally a failure, chiefly because, having never known what it was to work hard as boys, they object to carrying burdens in later life. Ambition is an impossibility to him who is trying to escape labor. Only a few working men's children in cities spend their days in assiduous toil or get to look upon work rather than play as the rule of life. Their plans for a future are based chiefly on avoiding occupations at all heavy or fatiguing. For this very reason, the city boy, if he is not disposed to look for a clerkship, or for a position with starvation wages in the civil service, would be found a few years later at some other calling which in their daily occupation, call for a minimum expenditure of strength. From the beginning, their efforts lack vigor, they grow up unused to the idea of throwing real energy into their undertakings; they never accomplish anything worth while. Are these the careers you would open up to your children and grandchildren?

(To be continued)

Instructinos Obeyed.

The managing editor of a small city newspaper wheeled his chair around and pressed a button on his desk. The subordinate wanted entered.

'Here,'" said the editor, "are a number of directions from outsiders telling us how to run our paper. See that every one is carried out."

And the office boy, gathering them in a large basket, did so.

This is the way they grow them in British Columbia. The picture shows an average-sized man and woman standing before a gigantic hollow-trunked cedar, the interior of which is large enough to hold a full-size touring car.

—AND THE WORST IS YET TO COME

Say It Aloud.

Do you talk to yourself It may be assumed that your reply is in the negative. Self-talkers are often regarded as a trifle queer.

Yet if you call to mind all your acquaintances who have this habit, are not the majority, if not all, of them men and women of considerable mental gifts?

One of the greatest commercial magnates in this country talks to himself. It would be palpably ridiculous to hint that he must be "queer." He's to much of a force!

Great preachers, statesmen, and writers are nearly all self-talkers. Go to the universities and get to know the leading professors—men of immense learning and intellectual power—nine out of ten of them talk to themselves as they walk about!

The truth is that there is no finer exercise for the brain, and no better way of solving hard problems. Self-talking is at once a clarifier and a safety valve.

Strong, intense, silent, mental concentration is really good; it strains the brain. Arguments crowd upon one another, and those that are rejected are not really jettisoned. The mind retains them.

But self-talking pulls them out, as it were, and throws them away. The next time you have a knotty problem to solve, try talking it over with yourself, aloud, and you will be astonished at the result.

One well-known author has admitted to the writer that he thrashes out all the complications of his plots in that way. His friends admit that he is clever, but they also think he's "queer"—a little bit "touched!" He's not. All that he does is to use a method which, as he knows from experience, helps him.

Self-talking is never a sign of idiocy. One of the first symptoms of mental affliction is silence—a withdrawal into one's self. Is Edison a fool? No! Yet he talks to himself! Try it yourself and see how it helps you.

Safety First.

"Great Snakes!" surprisedly ejaculated Cousin Lank, from over beyond Mount Pizby, as they were going homeward from the crossroads store along in the shank of the evening and paused at a burst of sound. "What's that queer noise?"

"Aw, that's just Oliver Unken out on the hillside, some'rs over yonder, learning to play the occordion," replied Gap Johnson, of Rumpus Ridge. "You can hear him right smart of a ways on a still night like this."

"What's his idy of practicing all by himself in the dark?"

"He moves around just about so often, and fellers going along the road yur can't tell whur to shoot at him."

Misjudged Him.

"Are you married?" asked Colonel White of a negro applicant for a job.

"Nawsuh, boss," was the reply. "I makes mah own livin'."

A Washing Ceremony.

Since the deaths of the Russian Czar Nicholas II. and the old Austrian Emperor Francis Joseph, Spain is the only remaining European country where the Sovereign observes the ancient religious ceremony of "washing" the feet of twelve old men on Maundy Thursday.

In Madrid the ceremony, as performed by King Alfonso, consists in his kneeling on a cushion before each of the old men, who are seated with feet bare.

A Court dignitary holds a gold dish before the feet of each man in turn, while the King sprinkles a few drops of the scented water over each foot, and then touches each lightly with a cloth handed to him by one of the Bishops present.

We Bet on Her.

Father—"Are you going to divorce your husband, Mabel?"

Daughter—"No, I think we'll fight it out."

"Twinkle, Twinkle! . . ."

Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder what you are:
Up above the world so high
Like a diamond in the sky.

The centenary of the death of Jane Taylor, authoress of "Twinkle, twinkle little star," was observed recently at Ongar Congregational Church, where from 1811 to 1829 her father was minister.

A memorial tablet in the church was decorated and wreaths placed on the grave. In his sermon the Rev. R. Newland said that 120 volumes of art, poetry, theology, philosophy, and biography had been written by the Taylor family.

Joe's Ultimatum.

Joe wore the expression of a man with a grievance as he leaned against the window of the village store where he had long been employed—so much so that Harry stopped to inquire the cause.

"Hello, Joe, ain't you working?" asked he.

"No, I ain't, and I ain't goin' to work any more till the boss takes back what he said."

"What did he say?"

"He said he didn't want me any longer," declared Joe.

The AUTOMOBILE

When you come to a beauty spot that has been wrecked by an earlier picnic party, don't complain. See that you don't leave a similar sight for the motor tourist who follows you.

A wildflower on the bush is worth ten in the tonneau, withered and trampled. Leave the flowers where you can enjoy them most. If motorists are to strip Canada of her foliage motoring will be stripped of one of its fundamental assets.

Debris is dangerous. The careless smoker plus the littered picnic spot result in the forest fires that wreck the countryside, literally and figuratively. Bare hills encourage swollen streams and floods. Floods ruin the roads and lay waste the valleys.

Nine-tenths of wildflower picking along the roadway is simply a barbaric desire to prove man's supremacy of nature's handiwork. This is demonstrated by the fact that few wildflowers ever live to grace vases in the homes of those who pick them. Somewhere along the road other tourists will be annoyed by the sight of withered flowers strewn about where they have been thrown away by those who think that the countryside's beauty is unlimited.

There are many roadways that will never be attractive again, and the number of beauty spots in Canada is decreasing. The tourist always selects the cream of countryside beauty and if each motor party leaves behind it a trail of ruin it will not be long before old-timers will be talking of the countryside that used to be.

MENACE TO COUNTRYSIDE.

This is what will happen if tourists fail to appreciate the fact that the problem is a matter of personal duty. It requires only a few broken bottles, some tin cans, a defunct tire and a few discarded newspapers to make an ideal spot the last word in unsightliness. Just one tourist party can put out of business a spot that might otherwise be of unending delight to hundreds of other people, who take pride in the country and who know that if they do not preserve it no one else can do it for them.

When you are tempted to wreck some ideal location you have selected for your evening rest or your noonday tour luncheon, just keep in mind the fact that you'll probably come back again some day and taste of your own selfishness. The country is not so large that a million and a half tourists can wreck each beauty spot they chance upon and never return to it again.

Natural Resources Bulletin.

The Natural Resources Intelligence Service of the Department of the Interior at Ottawa says:

One of the most attractive exhibits in the forest products display at the British Empire Exhibition to the business man is a roll of newsprint eighteen feet in length. This paper was made at one of the Northern Ontario mills, and is but a portion of the product of a machine which turns out 800 feet of paper of this width per minute, or a daily output of 200,000 pounds.

When consideration is given to the fact that but one newsprint-making machine is working at this capacity, the output of the many mills with many machines will be appreciated.

The woods to provide the raw material for this industry is taken from our forests. It is therefore self-evident that they deserve all the care we can give them, particularly from fire.

Slightly Inebriated.

Irish barrister (addressing the Bench)—"Your honor, I shall first prove to the jury that the prisoner could not have committed the crime with which he is charged. If that does not convince the jury, I shall show that he was insane when he committed it. If that fails, I shall prove an alibi."

Have Lived on Water So Long.

"No, I can't see why prohibitionists should make good sailors."

"Because they've lived on water so long."

Wistful Doubting.

Ah! to be as sure
Of sunshine again
As plump robins
Singing through the rain.

Ah! to be as sure
That my way is right
As the small gray moles
Digging without sight.

—Marion M. Boyd.

Shallow waters make most din.

One hates to think of H.R.H. the Duke of York as being an ordinary "housebreaker," but what can one do in the face of such evidence as this? The fact is, the old Docklands Settlement building he is starting to demolish is to be replaced by a fine new one.

IN RABBITBORO