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Dispensed by BILL SMILEY of the Wartons Bunch

Isn't it odd how important the farmer becomes, every three or four years? Most of the time, everyone is content to let him go right ahead and batter his brains out on the stony bosom of Mother Nature.

In normal times, a lot of people, if they give the farmer a thought at all, think of him as a sort of ornery customer, always grouching about the weather, always wanting subsidies for his produce, always talking hard times, but, in reality, salting money away by the bagful.

But let somebody call an election, and suddenly the farmer comes into his own. It is generally agreed that he is a noble son of the soil, the salt of the earth, the backbone of the country, and the hope of the future.

It is common knowledge at election time that the farmer has had lean years, that his income has been meagre, that he has been shamefully neglected. Everybody vies in promising him; a fair share of the nation's income; a square deal; a better living; greater recognition; and anything else that doesn't cost much.

Let's get to the bottom of this. Is the farmer really one of Nature's noblemen, as the politicians assert at election time? Or is he the dour spreader of gloom, the chronic malcontent, as pictured between elections?

Of course, he is neither. Farmers are people, like everybody else. And like all people, they are of all types. A millionaire in a penthouse can be just as much of a grouch as a farmer on a stony back concession. A dumb farmer is just as likely to make a mess of things as a dumb businessman. An intelligent farmer is just as bright as an intelligent executive, and probably a lot more versatile.

People are all mixed up about farmers. There is a tendency, for instance, to think of the farmer as a man of few words. This is a hallucination. Today's farmer may be strong, but he is far from silent. Get a group of farmers going and you can scarcely get them stopped talking. I've met farmers who would talk you into a state of mild shock if you gave them an opening.

Another illusion about the farmer is that he is cautious. The fact is that the farmer is the only big-time gambler left in our economic system. And he's the only gambler who keeps coming back to the table when he knows the dice are loaded. Think not? Show me a professional gambler who'd take the odds the farmer accepts when he plants his wheat or sows his corn in beef cattle.

Then there is the silly idea, so often heard, that the farmer is slow to change, resists new ideas. On the contrary, he is a natural-born target for anything new in the line of machinery, seed, feed, or fertilizer. He can't resist having a go at it.

Still another misconception about the farmer; everybody says, and nobody says it louder than the farmer himself, that he has a hard life. Well, that's not true. It might have been fifty years ago, but not today. What they really mean is that he works hard. And he does.

But the city fellow works hard too, whether he's a pipefitter, a lawyer, a newspaperman or a girdle salesman. The difference is that all the city fellow gets out of all the work is a bald head, ulcers, jowls and a baggy belly while the farmer winds up with muscles, a hearty appetite, a ruddy complexion and a paunch as sound and solid as a bas drum.

Nope, the farmer may not be quite as terrific as the politicians tell him he is, every few years. But neither is he to be pitied, between elections, as a down-trodden misanthrope. He's a pretty tough character, and a pretty shrewd one, and he has to be.

The farmer can take a serious reverse with stoic courage. He can weather the bad years and spread himself a bit in the good ones. He has a great deal more security than the city worker. He is his own master.

And unlike the city worker, when he has slugged it out for forty years, he doesn't have to go and live with an only daughter-in-law, or move into the old people's home. The farmer sells the farm, buys a little house in town, and starts kicking about the taxes. Who wouldn't be a happy, healthy farmer, if he had it all to do over again?

Barber Shop Singing, Movie Highlight Week At The Manor

On Monday, May 25th, in a very enjoyable atmosphere of fun and informality, the residents heard a program of barber shop singing presented for them by sixteen members of the Oakville Chapter of the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop quartette singing in America. These sixteen gentlemen had brought with them Mrs. Isobel Tate whose lovely voice added much to the enjoyment of the program. The evening's entertainment was sponsored by the Kiwanis Club of Oakville, with Mr. Keith Warren, chairman of the Senior Citizens' Committee of the club, acting as convener. The Barber Shoppers wore their striking costumes of pink shirts, dark trousers, and green boaters with red satin bands.

After greetings to the residents had been extended by Mr. Warren the singers took over and presented a very gay and tuneful program. They were led in very capable fashion by their leader, Mr. Bob Mitchell. Their first song, "Hello to Everybody," was followed by the theme song of all barber-shop singers, The Old Songs. The singers then proceeded to sing a program of old songs, songs that appealed to their audience very much. Among others, the songs When You and I were Young, Maggie, The Oceana Roll and Sweet and Low were sung. Four of the group formed a quartette to sing "Yona from Arizona" and the County Fair. Then with the quartette singing Lida Rose, Mrs. Tate sang as a counter melody Dream of Love from the Broadway show, The Music Man. This was followed by the song I Believe sung by Mrs. Tate and the entire group. Mrs. Tate's lovely voice won great admiration in these selections as did the singing of the group and the quartette also in all their selections. A final barber shop chorus Keep America Singing, brought the vocal part of the entertainment to a close. Under Mr. Warren's directions the barber shoppers then proceeded to act as a refreshment committee and served ice cream and cookies, donated by the Kiwanis Club, and soft drinks to the audience. Altogether it was a delightfully amusing and heart-lifting evening and the residents appreciate the efforts of Mr. Warren, the Kiwanis Club of Oakville and the Oakville Chapter of Barber-shop singers in planning and carrying out such an enjoyable program.

HALTON COUNTY WEED CONTROL NEWS
by V. E. McArthur
County Weed Inspector

CROP SPRAYING

Too often a farmer will say "What's the use of bothering to spray crops, it's just one more job to do and besides it costs me money." Crop spraying with selective chemicals is comparatively new to many farmers, however a survey last year revealed there are at least eighty owners of weed sprayers in Halton County.

Over a period of years the Ontario Department of Agriculture have carried on an extensive research program in chemical weed control. In examining some of the results we may form our own conclusions as to whether the time and money needed for crop spraying operations is worthwhile. Here are a few quotations from the Field Crops Bulletin of the Ontario Department of Agriculture in regard to weed competition in field crops.

1. "The water required to produce half a ton of lambs-quarter is sufficient to produce a 50 per cent quarter crop of corn, wheat, barley or oats."

2. "The nitrogen and phosphorus consumed by half a ton of

lambs-quarters could have produced 24 bushels of oats, or 10 bushels of barley, or 12 bushels of wheat, or 16 bushels of corn."

3. "A 20 per cent infestation of 'wild mustard' can reduce wheat yields by 15 per cent, oat yields by 14 per cent, and barley by 11 per cent. When the mustard crop runs between 40 and 60 per cent the reduction of barley yields is 69 per cent."

From these facts we must conclude that average weed infestations in our crops will reduce yields approximately 30 per cent. The cost of spraying is not high but varies according to the type and amount of chemical necessary to give good results. Custom operators in this county have secured good control of broad leaved weeds in oats at a cost to the farmers of approximately \$1.50 per acre. Farmers using their own equipment will find that the price of the chemical for the same control will not run more than 10 cents per ounce of active acid used. For example 6 oz. 2.4D active acid per acre applied to oats, at the 6 inch to shot blade stage of growth will give excellent control of most broad leaved weeds at a cost of not more than 60 cents per acre.

Further information on chemical weed control can be secured from the Ont. Dept. of Agriculture office in Milton or the County Weed Inspector.

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Household Hint
by Anne Allan:
Use silver polish to remove stubborn stains from iron soleplate. Never scrape or use harsh abrasives.

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