LEAKS IN FARMING.

By A. W. Peart.

Read at the Halton Farmers' Institute, Oakville, March 3rd, 1886.

At the outset, I wish to repudiate any intention on my part of acting as an instructor. On the contrary, the remarks which follow are applicable to myself of all others. It may be thought that a paper of this nature scarcely lies within the domain of our Institutes. With all due respect, I consider that the subject is worthy of our serious attention. The general aim of the other papers you have discussed lies in the direction of greater excellence and better financial results in farming. This paper has the same object in view, only the subject is treated in a negative instead of a positive way. I shall endeavor to point out a few of the financial dangers to which we, as farmers, are exposed, causes at work unfriendly to our success. There are so many different departments in farming, so complex and varied its operations, under the control of such diverse innumerable laws, some of which are under our command, some again that are not, that it would be a mental and physical impossibility to provide against every channel of loss. Still there are some leaks, for which we ourselves are only to blame, and it is to a few of these I wish to direct attention. I shall treat the subject from a purely economic or financial standpoint. With its other bearings I have at present nothing at to do. In order to simplify I have arranged it under sections, the first of which is,

(1) INATTENTION TO OUR OWN BUSINESS.

Through the keen competition that exists in every line of industry, no man can expect to succeed if he fritters away his time on matters that have no connection with his business. If you profess to be a farmer, be a farmer, first, last and above all things, and give farming the best of your thoughts and your time. Do not leave the management to incapable, though perhaps well meaning heads, nor the work entirely to your help. In Canada, at least, at the present time, farmers cannot afford to do this, and should they persist in it, sooner or later they will be awakened by the rude shock of a financial crisis in their affairs.

(2) LACK OF SYSTEM.

The more perfect the parts of a machine, both in themselves, and in their relation to each other, as a whole, the more effective the work, both in point of time a quality; and the more system, skill, order, good management we bring into farming, the greater the profit. What we want is energy, well-directed, not brute force, to use our brains as well as muscle. Some of us appear to be guided by rules as yet unknown: whatever work we start to do, we plunge blindly on, towards its end, without taking the trouble, to think what are the best means to do it. Rather than examine for ourselves whether it will pay to do a certain thing, reducing it to facts and figures, and allowing for risks, we take somebody's word for it and go ahead. Now, unless our venture is based on long and well-tried experience, the result will be a financial disappointment. Everything is in disorder around us, nothing is done regularly, no stated hours of work, of rest, of anything. We commence to do a thing, get half way through it, and, without any sufficient reason, leave it, and half do something else, and so on day after day and year after year. Whether our work is done in season or out of season it is all the same to us. But it is not "all the same;" for every violation of the law of order we suffer a loss. To get our work done we hire more help than would be necessary under good management. What does this mean? Say we hire three men to do two men's work at $250.00 each per annum, without board. By this leak alone we lose $250.00 in one year. Again, we sometimes err in the opposite direction, and and try to make two men do three men's work. What follows? Nothing is done well, our hoe crops and summer fallows do not get half the cultivation they should, and, instead of an average crop, we scarcely get half a one. We have followed the "penny wise, pound foolish" course, and have lost on these two items alone. A is a good ploughman, B is a good a ploughman as A, but better with the hoe, keep A at the plough and B at the hoe, and you save time, and consequently money. Reverse them and you lose, and so on through the whole list of bad systems.

3. EXTRAVAGANCE.

Under this section I group more particularly outlays of money, that are totally unnecessary from on economic standpoint, and consequently disastrous. And I believe that few, if any of us, are exempt from losses of this nature. Still, it is better to have a standard to guide us, lofty though it may be, than none at all: so then when we do depart from it, we do so with our eyes open. How many of us keep more horses than we have any business with? A great many. We would sell one of them could we get our price, but we don't get it, and hold month after month. What does this mean? It means that every horse we keep over and above the number necessary to do our work is a loss. Each horse represents so much capital lying idle, in addition to consuming capital in the shape of food and care, or, in other words, accomplishing the feat of what is popularly known as "eating his head off." Take a matured animal under the above conditions and if his food, shelter and care are worth $75.00 per annual. We have lost exactly $75.00, besides carrying the risk of disease or accident, and leaving interest on his value out of the question. Now, in regard to implements or machinery, some of us have a weakness for buying articles, though we do not require them, simply because they are cheap. It seems too bad to let the chance go, etc. It appears to me this is very bad reasoning. I think we may lay it down as a safe rule to follow that, "an article we do not require is dear at any price." What happens? We take the article home, we have no place for it, we don't use it. These facts in themselves warrant its early decay. We are out of pocket its price, and as the years roll around, its interest and compound interest, and so on, and even in the event of making use of it at some future time, we would have saved money by buying a new implement, machine, or whatever it might be, when we had need of it. Our expenditure may be divided into two classes: productive and improductive. An example of the former would be money invested in some article necessary to do our business, as a plough or waggon; of the latter, any of the luxuries of life, things unnecessary to prepare us for work, or to carry on any of the operations of the farm, as expensive house, costly dress or furniture, carriages, tea, tobacco, liquors, and dozens of others we could do without. Financially considered, expenditures of the latter are so much money sunk. So that it is well to look sharply after unnecessary expenses, otherwise at the end of the year we may find the balance on the wrong side of our accounts.

(4) EXPOSURE OF STOCK.

We are glad to be able to say that this subject is beginning to receive the attention it deserves. Roomy, comfortable bank-barns are springing up all around us, structures unequalled by those of any other country in the world, the comfort and warmth of which put to shame even that of many dwelling houses. And, in general terms, we believe that their cost is money well invested. Apart from the excellence and humanity of such buildings, the great saving of food, the comfort and concenience in taking care of the stock, and the satisfactory result in their growth and thriving condition fully warrants the outlay. The saving of food we consider to be two-fold: direct and indirect; direct since much less is required to keep up the temperature of the animal when comfortably housed, and not exposed to the cutting, icy blasts of our fierce winter winds and storms. And, if ocmbustion is not kept at a normal pitch, the other principles of food having some fibre or flesh for their object, lose in result. Indirectly food is saved, since we construct our feed boxes on the principle of economy in feed, and waste is thereby reduced to minimum.

(5) EXPOSURE OF MACHINERY.

A very frequent cause of loss lies in the neglect to care for farming implements and machinery. Instead of having a place for things under cover, the mower, plough, waggon, or whatever it may be, is oftener exposed to the weather. What is the result? Rain, dew, moisture, deposited in any form rusts and eats away the iron or steel, and your machine is injured more than by fair wear and tear of the whole season's work. In a few years it gives way, and the same old story. Thousands of dollars are lost annually by our farmers through lack of care in this respect, and I dare venture to say, that the saving effected by proper care, in five years on a farm of average size, would more than build ample implement buildings, and keep them in repair through succeeding years.

(6) MANURIAL WASTE.

I believe there are but few farmers who do not lose in this direction. We pile up the stable manure in a large heap in the barn yard. What is the result? After heavy rains we find the liquid essence of the manure making its way to the nearest creek, or otherwise diffusing itself in the adjacent soil, or leaching away in the ground where we have not the slightest benefit from it. Now, here is a decided loss, and the question arises, how shall we remedy it? At least three different plans have been suggested, and each finds its advocates; 1st, a large tank conveniently situated to catch the liquid; 2nd, a saucer shaped court or yard, 3rd, a suitable building to cover the manure. Now without comment as to which of the above modes would be most suitable to our individual needs, I merely touch on the question of ploughing manure under *versus* top-dressing. Here we have a choice between two evils, viz: losing its essence by leaching away in the subsoil, or losing by evaporation in the form of ammonia, and, in my opinion the latter of the two evils is the least.

(7) CARELESSNESS.

Some of us are very easy going. Let the things go as they may the sun never seems to set upon our equanimity. But our complacency is purchased at a dear price. A "stitch in time saves nine." Keep your eye on your farm appliances, and if anything wants repairing or strengthening, do it. If a bolt breaks in your binder or reaper, or a nut loosens, see to it at once. A few minutes now may save you many dollars. Have a place for everything, and when you finish using an article put it in its place, then you will know where it is when you want it again.

When your crops are ripe harvest them as quickly as you can. Do not allow them to stand and the grain to waste. It don't pay. Do not allow your roots to freeze, thereby depreciating their value and hastening decay. Do not leave unused wells open, or machinery exposed where stock runs. You may lose a valuable horse or cow. See to your bridges, and the floors of your buildings that there are no holes in them. A broken leg may result from carelessness. Be on your guard against fire. We cannot be too careful in this matter. We cannot afford to lose our buildings and their valuable contents, and it is our duty to carefully guard against causes under our control. And so on with hundreds of other matters. It would be too much to ask of any one man perfect care even in things we can regulate, but I believe it is our duty to crush out negligence "in so far as in us lies."

(8) MISTAKEN ECONOMY.

Economy we believe to be the key-note to success in farming, or in fact anything else. Liberal economy. I am convinced, is the happy medium we should strive to attain, free from extravagance on the one hand, and parsimoniousness on the other. Sometimes we refuse to spend even a cent on an object, or in a cause, that would without doubt be a financial benefit to us. This is false economy. We propose to build a barn or a house. Instead of beginning the time or trifling expense, let us spend a few days or even a week, in going around and examining carefully other barns and houses of an approved style. It will give us new ideas, by which, we may see fit to correct our own. I think it is a mistake to fall into the habit of always staying at home. We are apt to grow narrow in our sympathies and set in our ideas, and view changes, even if they would benefit us, with suspicion and refuse to adopt them. There are times during the year when we could leave the farm without much sacrifice to our work. Let us go, we need not spend money extravagently, but let us spend enough to make our trip pleasant and comfortable, so we will be in shape to absorb ideas. Let us see and store away all we can, ask questions that will interest us of those in a position to know. Look out for improvements in the way of doing and making things. In short travel intelligently, and your outlay will be a better investment than a first mortgage. And so on in other matters, a thoughtful, liberal economy should be one of the efforts of our lives.

PUBLIC EXTRAVAGANCE.

I wish to say a few words on this subject in so far as it relates to farmers. It is an admitted fact that our public business, both in Local and Federal affairs, costs too much money. Now, Canada is essentially an an agricultural country, and about three-quarters of the wealth of the Dominion lies in the agricultural industry, so that farmers compared with other classes have by far the greatest interests at stake. Now, who foots the bill that our public business costs? While other classes, nominally, are taxed to the last analysis, the farmers foot most of the bill. Now, in homely language, I think those who pay should say. Who, then, should be our legislators? Farmers, in the main, but not, of course, excluding a fair representation of other classes. In practical business ability and sound judgment our farmers stand second to none in the community. Under the existing order of things, we are over-legislated and legislated against, our rights and interests are sacrificed, and we are handicapped by heavy financial burdens. In order to lessen these evils we must organize, unite in a common aim, for only by union can we make our strength felt. Every other class under the sun unite to promote their interests and guard their rights and privileges. So should we. I do not want to be misunderstood in this matter. I believe that every class should be represented in our Parliaments according to the extent of its interests and public obligations, and I am opposed to any class usurping the rights, or trampling upon the privileges of any other class. All I claim is, that a large proportion of our representatives should be farmers. Then we shall take that place in the public economy of Canada, which our wealth and intelligence demand. In conclusion I have tried to point out a few of the leading modes of losing money on a farm. But I have by no means exhausted them. On the contrary, a thousand and one other leaks will occur to those present. The subject is so broad, its details are so enormous, that, in such a limited time, it is impossible to do it the justice it merits, and give it a general treatment. However, as farmers, I think it would well repay us to give these matters our earnest consideration, fully convinced, that success on our part, can only be purchased at the price of untiring vigilance.

Dancing vs. Kissing.

It may be asserted, in a general way, that wherever in the United States you do not find dancing you find kissing. In communities where dancing was disapproved I have seen "string games" called for and carried into practice at entertainments held in school houses and even at church sociables. In such places church members—and, for aught I know, deacons—take part in the amusement; and I have seen it develop a friskiness, so to speak, in grizzled men, which made them, one would say, anything but seductive or beguiling to the young and fair. Among those of earlier years kissing becomes in such communities a systematic pursuit like hunting or fishing. Young girls whose parents object to it are neglected or disliked; a young man in such a village told a friend of mine, with some indignation, that she was the only girl in town whom he had not kissed. It is of no use to object to it as immoral, where the church members are committed to it. Perhaps it cannot be called immoral; but when society has reached a certain stage of refinement these games vanish. The symbol of that increased refinement is usually dancing. Dancing, whatever its drawbacks, serves partically as the antidote to kissing games; where one begins the other dies out. They do not seem to flourish side by side; at any rate, people rarely go back from dancing to kissing. Granting, for the sake of argument, that it is necessary to have some amusement, the choice lies, in our villages and their scattered families, between these two forms of relaxation. Which is the better of the two?—Harper's Bazar.

The little village of Fingal has been furnished food for gossip by an event that occurred at an "experience" meeting there the other night. One of the brethren seemed particularly happy and related his experience at length. On the conclusion of his address, his wife took a hand in the proceedings, and informed the congregation that there was no religion about her husband who, she said, went to the church for the purpose of meeting three lady members, the names of whom were mentioned.

Prohibition vs. Taxation.

One of the largest and most significant public meetings anywhere in this country in many months was held in Detroit on Monday evening. It was an anti-prohibition meeting, the object being to overcome or offset the influences exerted to secure the adoption of a prohibition amendment at the April election. The auditorium of the largest theater in the city was packed to overflowing.

Such an announcement as is made above, if unqualified, might lead some to suppose that the audience was composed largely of saloon-keepers, ward politicans, and the elements of society which are a menace to its peace. But it was nothing of the kind. Prominent among the 3,500 persons assembled were 500 well-dressed women of high social standing. Among the men who made up the larger part of the audience were hundreds of solid citizens, judges, merchants, lawyers, physicians, railroad and vessel owners, and taken altogether, the gathering was representative of the intelligence and wealth of the city. It included also many who are prominent in charitable and religious work of every kind.

The line of discussion, participated in by some of the ablest men in the city, was to show that taxation and regulation of the traffic were more effective in reducing its evils than prohibition, and the subject was, perhaps, more exhaustively canvassed than at any other public meeting ever held. The desire of the speakers, and of the listeners, was to put down the traffic as far as possible, not to promote or perpetuate it. The reign of free whiskey under prohibition for twenty years in the State was effectively presented, the great reduction in the number of saloons and amount of drunkenness under high license in recent years was clearly proven; the incidental advantages of the large revenues derived were pointed out; and the charge that a tax is a license, and therefore "a compact with the devil," was returned by admirable reasoning and the citation of the highest judicial authorities in the land. We would be glad, indeed, were it possible, to afford space for the reproduction of the arguments at length, for they are worthy of general and careful reading as the best presentation of that side of the case ever made, but must confine ourselves to the publication of the compact resume of what these arguments, in his own mind and that of his hearers, established, made by D. Bethune Duffield, who delivered the principal address. It is as follows:—

First—That prohibition is not prohibitive, and in the nature of things cannot be prohibitive.

Second—that there is a better and more effective way of dealing with the liquor traffic, and that is by taxation and regulation, for the reason that:—

It reduces the number of dealers.

It puts annually into the county treasuries of the State over one million of dollars.

It gives the quiet Sabbaths and holidays.

It enforces penalties in advance without the cost of prosecution or risk of collection.

It is prohibitory wherever the people desire it to be.

It regulates where prohibition would result only in free whiskey.

It is not a license, but it is better than a license.

It burdens and deprives the trade of its profits.

It is supported by the best men and the best minds of the East. It is progressive, while prohibition would be retrogressive.

It is protective of the laborer and his wages, and what is better, of his family and children.

It has been approved by the people of this State for over twelve years past, and there is no good reason why it should now be abandoned.

These are the sober conclusions not only of one of the ablest and most respected jurists of Michigan, but also of the great and representative gathering which listened to and applauded his arguments to the echo. They are worthy of the attentive and unbiased consideration of all good citizens in this and other States.—Cleveland Leader.

EDMUNSTON, N.B., March 24.—The Grand Jury to day found a true bill of indictment against the Hon. John Costigan for personal bribery, and a summons was ordered to issue against him for trial at the next court, which will be held on the 28th of June. A bill was also found against his chief canvasser, Victoria Albert, for bribery. On Albert's application, his trial was postponed to the next court also.

An interesting law suit from Sheffield was conducted at the Division Court at Rockton last month. The plaintiff was Mr. John Hammond, who sued for alleged damages, supposed to have been caused by a dog owned by the late John Coverdale, jun. It was thought the dog in question either scared or hit a horse led behind Mr. H.'s vehicle, thereby causing the horse to jump into the back part of the democrat, wrecking it considerably. The defendants were Mrs. Coverdale and Mr. John Coverdale, sen. The defendants would not admit the damage to have been done by their dog and asked for proof, which was not satisfactorily given, the case being largely dependent upon the admitted willingness of the defendants to pay the damage, providing it was done by their dog. Mr. Teetzel argued the case for the plaintiff and Mr. Carscallen for the defendants. Judgment was given in favor of the defendants. The large number of witnesses on each side made it a very expensive dog.

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HARDWARE,

Have on hand a large assortment of the following goods:

cme and other Skates, Axes and Handles, Cross Cut Saws and Handles, Buck Saws, Cow Chains, Sleigh Shoe Steel, Bar, Hoop & Band Iron Bolts, all kinds, Blasting Powder, Sporting Goods, Halters, Lanterns, Snow Shovels, Cutlery, all kinds, Machine and Harne Oils, Artists' Canvas Brus and Canvas, Varnishes, Paints, Oils & Glass, Water Lime, Plaster Paris, Tarred Felt, Building Paper, &c.

CALL AND SEE STOCK BEFORE PURCHASING.

COMMERCIAL HOTEL BLOCK, MAIN STREET, MILTON