

## AGRICULTURE.

The most important science to the human family is that of farming. Yet the science of it is applied in practice less than in any other department of our activities. There are numerous examples throughout the world of this lack of application. Yet, strange to say, few have taken a lesson from it.

Erosion and destruction of soil has made desert places of the most fertile agricultural areas. As far back as we know anything about the history of our kind agriculture has been the mainstay of civilization. And it always will be. Historians of the dim past tell us the story of the fertility of the regions in which such great cities as Babylon and Nineveh existed. The valleys of the Euphrates and the Tigris were the garden spots of the world. Today they are deserts of waste sand. The land of Canaan, the Promised Land, flowing with milk and honey. What is it today, a vast expanse of sand heaps over which a few wandering Arabs tend their goats. The garden spot of yesterday is the desert of today. It was tilled to death- to extinction.

Along the valley of the Nile, where we reckon history's beginning, the fields are still fertile because nature has continued to take care of it, not withstanding the extravagance of man. The overflows come down the great river to day as they did forty centuries ago and replinish the soil. A valley averaging four miles in width is still protected by the lavish hand of nature. Research has discovered that the great Gobi desert in upper China was at one time in the dim past a fertile agricultural country. Today it is a sand bed. The same condition is taking place in all those places of the world where the nation has <sup>not</sup> required that the timber be replanted as raised; where the soil is not protected against erosion. The more enlightened nations of the world are requiring protection of the soil and the timber, the streams and the fish.

History makes clear by every process of thought and fact that the wealth of a nation and the CHARACTER OF ITS PEOPLE, the character and the permanency of its institutions are all dependent upon the industry of tilling the soil. The armies and the navies of a nation, the great institutions of learning and of science, will <sup>not</sup> prevent the disintegration of a nation that does not protect its agriculture. The farm is the anchor which holds a nation's civilization through the storms and the tempests of earth's confusion.

The nearest approach to complete happiness of which human nature is capable is living upon a farm, far removed from the hectic, artificial conditions of the cities and towns. One's own farm where one may get directly from his own soil what one needs in the way of sustenance. A garden and flocks, a healthy and industrious family; what can contribute to real happiness and contentment to the same extent? What is there in the cities and towns to compensate one for the business strains? A show, a confusion of busy bodies; bright lights and glittering cars; a nervous tension and an anxious brain. Does such compensate to the same extent as the natural independence and the tranquility of the farm home? The foolish move to towns and live in squalid quarters, amidst the dirty and the filthy; living an artificial life, dependent upon the genius of the head of the family to provide for the delinquency and waste of the family itself. On the farm every member of the family is in a position to cooperate to some extent. When the child leaves the mother's arms it contributes in some slight measure to the family's problems. In the towns and the cities each of these members are deprived of such privilege. Wrong ideals are implanted by artificial surroundings; envy and jealousy are nurtured in embittered hearts. Idleness that makes for criminal ways. Such are the ways of the town. A farming community requires the minimum of government because its hands and minds are employed and not idle.