

NEXT WEEK—A SPECIAL FOR THE YOUNG FARMER AND HIS SISTER.

THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER.

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Better Tenants as a Guide Post to "\$500 More a Year."

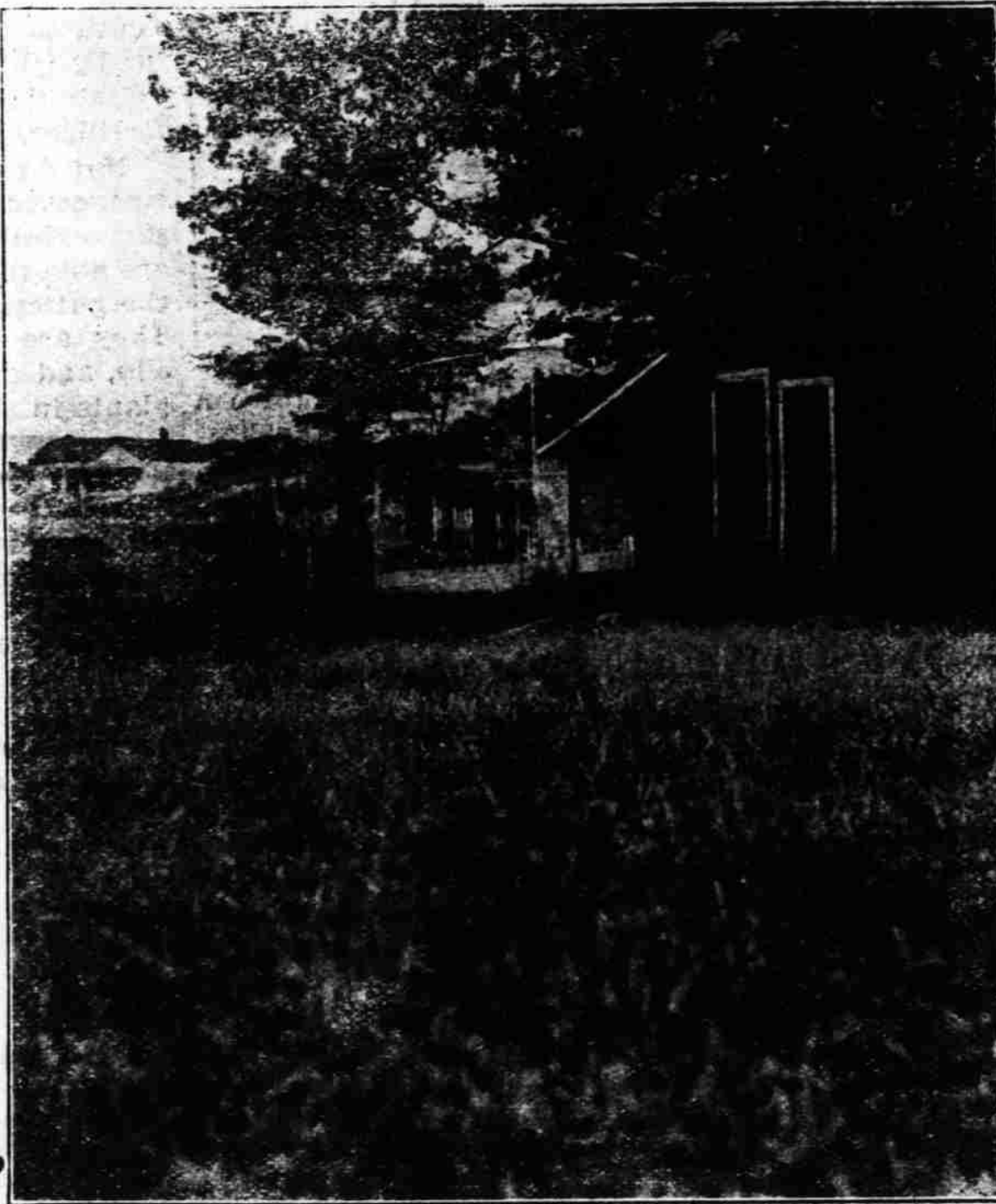
AMONG THE FEATURES of the tenant problem to which too little attention have been given is that of the houses in which the tenants are expected to live. Many farmers do not seem to realize that the man who is content to live in a ramshackle, dilapidated, unsanitary cabin is not likely to be a man who will take pride in doing his work well; or that the man who is compelled to live in such a house must, in the very nature of things, partake of his surroundings, and either grow discontented and sullen, or slipshod and lazy. Many of the tenant houses in the South are a disgrace both to the men who own them and to the folks who live in them.

Hand-in-hand with longer leases and closer co-operation between land owners and tenants must go the building of better houses for the tenants to live in. There is a certain class of people who are willing to live in any sort of an old house, amid ugliness and squalor and dirt and disease; but these people are not going to make intelligent laborers or to care very much whether the farm on which they work is richer or poorer at the year's end than at the beginning. Their one idea will be to get as much as possible with the minimum of labor and to get to some other place as soon as possible.

Possibly the man who depends on tenants to get his work done could not afford to build good houses just as an inducement for better tenants; but it is certain that when the land owner finds a man

who does good work and who has energy, ambition and character he makes a great mistake if he is not willing to go to some trouble and expense to provide him an attractive and comfortable place in which to live—to give him room enough inside the house to live in "in decency and order," to sow some grass and plant some trees outside, and to see that there is a convenient supply of pure water and no unsanitary surroundings. The man who will do this will be amply repaid in the better class of tenants he will secure, and the greater interest and pride they will take in their work. Men are not going to leave such homes as this to go to the ordinary neglected and disreputable-looking tenant-house, unless there is some good reason for it. This is especially true of the white tenant farmers of the South—most of them need only a little encouragement and incentive to become earnest and efficient workers;—and we believe it is true of the better class of negroes as well.

So whenever any man who has tenants finds one who shows a disposition to make things neat and bright about his home, our advice would be to co-operate with him in this good work just as far as may be practicable. For, let us repeat, the home surroundings have a decided influence upon any man's work, and it is expecting a great deal to expect a man who lives in cramped, unattractive, unwholesome quarters to develop much sturdiness of character or much efficiency as a worker.



The buildings in the foreground are part of an up-to-date poultry plant; but in the background may be seen a tenant house of the type that should be more common in the South.

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