

THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER.

Title Registered
in U. S. Patent
Office.

A Farm and Home Weekly for the Carolinas, Virginia, Tennessee, and Georgia.

CONSOLIDATED, 1909, WITH "MODERN FARMING."

Vol. XXIV. No. 42.

RALEIGH, N. C., NOVEMBER 25, 1909.

Weekly: \$1 a Year.

The Harvest of Worthy Living: A Thanksgiving Thought

ONCE AGAIN the Thanksgiving season is here, and it is fitting that the farmer, who of all men seems to have his blessings most directly from the Almighty hand, should put himself in harmony with the spirit of the season.

"Thou hast anointed me with the oil of gladness above my fellows"—so indeed may the average farmer say in our Progressive Farmer territory, for nowhere else in the South this year have crops generally been so good as with us, and in the few sections where crops have been poor, the high prices which have prevailed for several years and especially this year, have sufficed to put almost every one in good financial condition.

From a temporal standpoint, therefore, our 1909 Thanksgiving Day finds us with abundant cause for gratitude to the Giver of all good gifts; and this Thanksgiving, as all other Thanksgivings, finds us rich beyond our dreaming, in wealth that is worth more than crops or land or money—wealth which alas! many of us never even think of.

There is the beauty of nature, the glory of the changing seasons; our world made beautiful through this autumn time and throughout the year with magnificence such as no artist has ever been able to put on canvas, and only the tonic of good health and right living needed at any time to make mere existence a joy.

There is again a wealth of friendship, a wealth which all of us may have for the asking and yet in which most of us are content to be paupers where we might be kings. Let us thank God at this Thanksgiving time for the privilege of friendship, and resolve that this shall mean more to us during the coming year.

"To make on the whole a family happier by his presence"—this, too, is one of our privileges expressed in Stevenson's fine phrase, and a privilege which most of us neglect; for it is in the home that the fruitage and sweetness of life must be found, the fruitage of which, for most of us, the daily work is but the budding and the leafage. If every reader of The Progressive Farmer should only realize at this Thanksgiving time his privilege of adding joyousness to the home, and then resolve to exercise this privilege to the uttermost this coming year, the world itself would not be made over, but for hundreds and thousands of these men and their families it would be a new world indeed.

To ignore the unpleasant things and emphasize the pleasant things; to encourage the worthy in every member of the family and bring sympathy rather than abuse for the unworthy, and to resolve that the home circle shall be a center of good cheer and inspiration—this will make every day a thanksgiving day, and bring to us the perfect sweetness and fruitage of worthy living. Let us aim, with Henry van Dyke, "to be governed by our admirations rather than by our disgusts;" indeed the joyousness of Thanksgiving comes largely from the fact that we then put the emphasis on our blessings rather than on our unpleasantnesses. And to keep the Thanksgiving spirit we must have the temper of the man who thinks of the good rather than of the bad, and is glad that thorns have roses rather than miserable because roses have thorns.

To shift the emphasis from the unpleasant things to the pleasant things and from our own little narrow interests to the larger interests of the family and the race—this after all is the greatest secret of the happiness that endures. A man who finds happiness only in his own successes and his own pleas-

ures may at any time become a bankrupt and a pauper, but the man whose interest is in promoting the larger happiness of his fellows has fallen heir to the joyousness of the whole world, a treasure that never fails, whatever may happen to him individually.

"To make the smile on other lips our own,
To live upon the light in others' eyes"—

this is to multiply our own personal pleasures just in proportion to the largeness of the interest that we feel in others and to find the springs of Thanksgiving that never run dry.

Our life, indeed, cannot become a source of thanksgiving to us, it is all a meaningless misfit, until we have found its deepest meaning and the ultimate purpose of existence: a purpose beyond ourselves and our personal fortunes, it being nothing less than the help that we can give in carrying the whole race forward toward the perfect day,—a help given in large measure by our greatest men, but a help which is also distinct and definite on the part of every man whose life counts for good among his family and his friends. As Dr. Chas. D. McIver used to say, "The generations of men are but the relays in the onward march of civilization," and we are all of us soldiers in the ranks of an army as old as time itself, whose goal is "that far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves."

Any man who is doing any work by which the world is made better, happier and more fruitful, is fulfilling the supreme purpose of his existence, and should have the joy of knowing that he is in harmony with the spirit of the ages and the Ruler of the Universe. To-day there is no more significant phase of human progress than the progress that is making in agriculture, and the wide-awake farmer who is improving his methods and playing his part in the great agricultural revolution now going on, has special cause for Thanksgiving this year in the thought that he is doing his part in carrying forward the master-purpose of all time.

We cannot refrain from quoting here again—and it is singular, now we think of it, how closely our thought has followed it—that beautiful expression of Phillips Brooks'—

"And so let us thank God on Thanksgiving Day. Nature is beautiful and fellow men are dear, and duty is close beside us, and He is over us and in us. What more do we want except to be more thankful and more faithful, less complaining of our trials and our times, and more worthy of the tasks and privileges He has given us?"

At this Thanksgiving Day, therefore, we have thought it fitting to turn aside from the more material things and inquire if the members of The Progressive Farmer Family, along with their harvests of corn and cotton, are really reaping the true harvest of life itself? And the thoughts in what we have said we shall do well to carry with us: to shift the emphasis from the unpleasant things to the pleasant and joyous things—the beauty of nature, the beauty of friendship, the undeveloped wealth of home life, and to shift the emphasis from our own little personal interests to the larger interests of others, throwing our lives into great movements that are helping the world forward and thereby achieving the supreme purpose of our existence.

It is in these things that we shall find the Thanksgiving that lasts not one day in the year, but every day.

