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OUR FARMER STATESMAN.

WASHINGTON, D. C., July 3, 1893.—One of the most interesting characters in President Cleveland's cabinet is the Hon. Julius Sterling Morton, the new secretary of agriculture. He has come to Washington with a brain well sharpened by its contract with the business of the west. He brings new light into the agricultural department, and he promises to turn some of Uncle Jerry Rusk's institutions upside down. I spent an evening this week with him in his bachelor quarters at the Cochran hotel. He is, you know, a widower, and he lives very quietly, though he is not averse to society, and is one of the most companionable of men. Let me tell you how he looks. Gov. Morton is about five feet seven inches high, and he weighs just about 150 pounds. His shoulders are broad and his limbs are clean cut. He does not look to be more than fifty years of age, but he is over sixty and is still in his prime. He has a light complexion, light gray hair and a gray mustache, with the shadow of a gray goatee shining out from under it. He has a high forehead, a strong nose and pleasant mouth. He dresses more like a New York club man than the typical farmer statesman, and he would not be out of place in any crowd of gentlemen in New York or Chicago. When I called upon him he was dressed in a well-cut business suit of light gray, and a pair of fashionable yellow shoes shone out below his well-creased pantaloons. A diamond as large as the end of my thumb sparkled in a ring on one of the fingers of his left hand and a costly scarf pin had a place in his neck tie. The contrast between him and Uncle Jerry Rusk, whom I saw just before he left Washington, was striking, and as I said "Good day" I thought his appearance gave the lie to the statement that "there is no money in farming in Nebraska," and I asked:

"Mr. Secretary, is it true that the farmers are ruined in the west and the days of money making for them have gone forever?"

THE FARMERS PROSPEROUS AND NOT POOR.

"I think not," replied the secretary of agriculture, with a smile. "Of all classes in the United States today it seems to me that the farmers have the best outlook. They are not half so badly off as they have been painted, and many of them are making money. Of course there are failures, but of all the busi-

nesses of the United States farming is the least liable to fail, and there are more successes in it than in almost any other business. Take the dry goods business; 97 per cent of the men who go into it become bankrupt, and the proportion of failures in all mercantile pursuits is very large. As to farming, I know hundreds of instances of success right around me in Nebraska. One of my neighbors came out west with only seventy-five cents. He bought his land on time, and he now owns 1,800 acres. He is the president of a bank and is rich, and all of his possessions came out of the soil. Around him you will find many poor farmers. They came to the same place with more money and better prospects, but they were shiftless. They have not stuck to their work. They have left their farms to sell patent rights and have been inveigled into schemes to make money fast without work. No business can succeed without thrift, energy and brains. Pure muscle will not make a good farmer or a good farm. The land has got to be manured with the brains of the owner in order to make it pay. The average farmer is better off now than he has ever been and I believe he will continue to improve."

OUR FUTURE NABOBS.

"Why do you think so?" I asked. "It is the only logical conclusion," was the reply. "The government lands are nearly all taken up. Slovenly farming is wearing out some of the best farms of the country, and the limit of cultivable lands has been nearly reached. We double our population every twenty-five years. In a quarter of a century we will have 130,000,000 to feed instead of 65,000,000, and their food is all to come from the soil of the farmer. The result is that lands must rise and farm products will increase in price. The law of supply and demand makes it certain that farm property will be the most valuable of all property in the future, and the farmers will be the nabobs."

MONEY IN NEW ENGLAND FARMS.

"Will we have large farms or small farms in the future, Mr. Secretary," I asked.

"I think the tendency is toward small farms. Our farms will be more like those of France. The land will be better tilled and the deserted farms will be brought up. Take the abandoned farms of New England. I believe that the next great emigration of our farmers

will be to the New England states. Land has dropped down in certain parts of these states so that you can buy tracts which were once cultivated for from five to seven dollars per acre. These lands have been abandoned by their owners going to the west. They have lain idle for years and nature has been refertilizing them. They are now covered with undergrowth and they will have to be cleared again. But, well farmed, they will produce profitably, and within the past few years capitalists and others have been buying them. I know a number of rich men who have large tracts in New England. Austin Corbin recently bought 3,000 acres, and Morison, the famous bridge builder, has just purchased a large tract. "Yes," concluded the secretary emphatically, "I look for the resurrection of New England and it will again blossom as the rose."

NO DEAD LANDS.

"How about the lands of the south? I suppose many of them have been killed by bad farming."

"No; they are not killed," replied Secretary Morton, and proper fertilization and work will again bring them into bearing. Speaking about killing the soil makes me think of an old Missourian who came up into Nebraska to buy some land. He looked about with doubting eyes on the different farms of my neighborhood until some of the agents wondered whether he knew anything about land, and they asked him whether he had ever farmed. He replied, 'Yes, I have aggravated the soil for nigh onto thirty years.' This is the trouble with the south, the soil has been badly aggravated, though it has not been killed."

"Do you think the south will ever equal the north as an agricultural country?"

"I doubt it," was the reply. "Climatic influences are such that the people of the south will not work like we do in the north. They can get along with less work and they will do it. Immigration won't change this, and the Yankees who go down there lose their grit in five years and are as slow as their southern neighbors. Climate has a great deal to do with the making of men and beasts. Sometimes I think it has everything to do. Take the cattle of Texas; I was down there not long ago, and I saw those great Texas steers, all skin, bones and horns. They are so gaunt that you can scrape their bones and put all the meat into their horns.