

Farrer had a high ideal and adhered to it. He had Charles Darwin's objective that unless you aim high you make no ~~work~~ ^{mark} worth while. He said he "only wanted to be able to think, when the end comes that my life has not been wasted." His objective was to produce a loaf of bread for the consumer that was more nutritious than the bread of his day.

He gave the farmer credit for taking pride in the quality of the wheat he grew and not in the number of bags stripped per acre.

This viewpoint of unselfishness extended to the turkeys he raised, to the hens he bred and the vegetables he grew. He wanted to improve the quality of the farmers' produce both of sheep and cattle likewise fruit and wheat.

We learn from Farrer's life that idealism triumphs over all obstacles.

It was not till after Farrer had passed off the scene that the quality of grain came into prominence. In his day yield per acre was the only thing considered to-day Farrer's work is still going on; the track he blazed is still opening ahead. Just as he was a pioneer in his younger days in surveying the back country and making land available for the settler, so to-day we are still forging ahead with improved varieties of wheat as well as of other crops and of livestock. In this way the settlement of drier areas is proceeding and disease resistant varieties are being bred. Though born in England he did wonderful work for Australia and we may claim him as an Australian. In fact he visualised Canberracas the future capital of this Commonwealth for when Capital Sites were being discussed he championed "Waniassa" which is in the neighbourhood of Canberra.

What constitutes greatness? There are other ways and more enduring than the path of war.

Farrer's work was done under about as unfavourable a set of conditions as a wheat farmer ever faced. Lambrigg is situated in sheep country and lightly stocked country at that.

His argument was that if varieties could be bred to succeed on ~~the~~ poor soil they would do all the better under good conditions.

After giving up surveying Farrer successively took up horsebreeding, fruit growing and rose raising, finally concentrating on wheat improvement in order to combat the rust disease which was then rampant in Australia. Drought resistance was a prominent plank in his programme for had he not seen the disastrous effects of rust in the Dubbo district?

Farrer, with his long outlook, foresaw that if Australia was to figure in the world's markets it would have to be by the quality of its grain. Australia has always been marked by the dryness and bright bloom of its grain but Farrer added to this good baking quality so that this country now produces wheat grain second to none.

The earlier years of his experimental work were spent in getting experience with the material he imported from Europe and America.

He held that you must know your wheats before you can improve them. The result was his Crossbreds began to get there. The world's wheat buyers began to look towards Australia.

Farrer made it possible for the area under wheat in N.S.W. to be quadrupled in 20 years. Not only did he make it possible for wheat to be grown in drier areas but he actually increased the yield per acre. His aims were mainly under three headings-

- (1) Moderate stooling of varieties.
- (2) Ability to thrive in dry soils.
- (3) Disease resistance and improved baking quality.

His work is estimated to have been worth millions of pounds to Australia. Farrer wheats are also widely known and used in other countries.

This is briefly and shorn of details the work that Farrer did. And he did it without personal gain. He worked for a mere pittance considering the value of the result and the nature of his University College training. The evening of his days was spent in untiring devotedness to his life work. Many summed him up as a dreamer or illusionist but if dreams come true, as his did, we change our mind and those who once poured contempt on his work are now numbered among his ardent supporters. Opposition never affects for long a well-placed confidence.