

## Farm Management

BY PROFESSOR SPILLMAN, U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

The readers of the O. A. C. Review may be interested to know something of the work done in the office of Farm Management in the U. S. Department of Agriculture. So many of the agricultural colleges of this country go to Guelph to get teachers that, I have no doubt that a good many of your students will, in the future, be co-workers with us in the States. This is all the more reason why they would be interested in our work.

The Office of Farm Management resulted from the recognition of the fact which forced itself more and more upon us—that the farmers of this country have, in the main, worked out the principles involved in farm practice and that the better class of farmers, even sometimes without recognizing the fact, really have uncovered fundamental principles relating to the successful conduct of the farm which would be of great value to others if they could be made common property. The early work of the Office of Farm Management was therefore the study of farm practice, and this is still the leading feature of our work. We divide the country up into districts and place one man in each district, whose duty it is to ascertain what types of farming prevail, which of these types are most successful, what effect they have on the fertility of the land and on the standard of living and their relation to markets, labor supply, capital required, etc. Especial attention is paid to the crops which thrive best under different conditions in a district, and to the methods used by the most successful farmers who are

following each of the types of farming which seem to be best adapted to the region.

Most of the bulletins we have thus far published are merely descriptions of a few of the best farms we have found. These bulletins do not give a general idea of our work. It is as if we were developing a gold mine, and had not yet gone far enough to outline the pay streaks, but in our prospecting we have found a lot of fine nuggets, which have been carefully described. We are getting now nearly to the point where we are ready to show the public where the pay streaks lie. That is, we shall soon be publishing a series of bulletins that will give the results of our more general studies.

We are getting from some fifty farms a detailed account of every quarter hour's work done upon them. We are making careful surveys of these farms, and are plotting the fields, and are getting a detailed statement of their equipment and the capital involved in the various phases of this equipment, including the land, buildings, fences, implements, live stock, etc. From such data we hope to be able to work out the cost of all kinds of farm operations, the cost of producing crops, of handling live stock, and to ascertain what the profits are. Such facts will be exceedingly useful in planning the work of the farm.

Perhaps, I may in future numbers of The Review be able to give your readers some idea of some of the best farms we have discovered, and, perhaps, some more general ideas of farming in this country.