

is getting this increased slice, the getting of which is making the consumer squeal and agitate and wear boycott buttons? If the various investigating commissions to be appointed are able to find that out they will have accomplished something. But probably before they report the public will be immersed in agitation for some other kind of reform. That's the trouble with these questions. By the time the matter is sifted down nobody cares what the finding is.

Real Cause of High Prices

A writer in an American periodical, who is giving the public the results of his studies of the question of prices states that extravagance is the cause of the present unduly high price of foods. He concludes that so long as people demand all the conveniences and luxuries in sight they shouldn't kick when it comes to paying for them. Three things, he says, are causing food to be high in price: the trusts, the tariff and extravagance; but the greatest of these is extravagance.

Another factor that is strong in making prices high is the public's willingness to pay high prices. It is interesting to reflect that there are few commodities the selling price of which is made solely by the charges of production, such as labor, interest on capital, cost of the raw material, etc. The manufacturer prices his wares as high as he thinks the public will pay, not as low as his production cost will permit. Consequently, as the public's tastes become more and more expensive the price of commodities may be raised steadily without much resistance being offered. It has been thus, it is claimed, with food products, and in the light of facts the explanation is about as explanatory as anything yet offered on the "cost of food" problem. If we habituate ourselves to eating porterhouse and T-bone steaks all the time we soon get to believe we couldn't exist with any other kind, and then the man with the porterhouse and T-bone cuts can charge what he likes. It is the same with everything else. The average man has been so prosperous these last few years that he has lost track of the basis of value. He needs to get back to the place where he can appreciate and compare values.

Keeping up the Average

According to a reputable authority the figures showing Canada's wheat production for twenty-one years are as follows:

	Acres.	Yield of wheat, bushels.	Average yield acre.
1889.....	623,245	7,201,519	12.4
1890.....	746,058	14,665,769	19.65
1891.....	916,664	23,191,599	25.3
1892.....	875,990	14,453,835	16.5
1893.....	1,003,640	15,615,523	15.56
1894.....	1,010,186	17,172,883	17.0
1895.....	1,140,276	31,775,038	27.86
1896.....	999,598	14,371,806	14.33
1897.....	1,290,882	18,261,950	14.14
1898.....	1,785,812	30,856,223	17.2
1899.....	1,993,418	34,837,853	17.5
1900.....	1,860,260	17,053,546	9.2
1901.....	2,516,532	63,310,532	25.2
1902.....	2,665,698	67,034,117	25.1
1903.....	3,280,107	56,146,027	17.1

1904.....	3,377,784	5,037,995	16.6
1905.....	3,941,369	82,461,627	20.9
1906.....	5,062,193	110,586,824	21.6
1907.....	5,061,207	91,333,271	18.4
1908.....	6,610,300	112,434,000	16.9
1909.....	6,878,000

The statistics up to 1897 do not include the Northwest Territories, or provinces, as they are now called. No statistics were gathered there until 1898. For 1909 the average yield can safely be placed at 18 bushels, which gives a total of 123,804,000 bushels.

The average yields per acre during these 21 years demand most serious attention. The fact that 1891, 1895, 1901 and 1902 could run 25 bushels, or better, while 1889, 1896, 1897 and 1900 were below 15 bushels, can be credited largely to climatic conditions. But are there not farmers in all parts whose annual average varies but little? Favorable weather conditions give fair yields off the rich prairie soil, no matter what man has done to ensure the maximum return. But that is not farming. These men who are able to report a uniformly high yield every year are farmers who practice thorough cultivation. The land is tilled to such extent that moisture is provided for the crop, even in dry seasons; high-grade seed is placed in a well prepared seed-bed; weeds are combatted, and all reasonable care is taken to attend to details.

There is such a thing as having good crops, even when climatic conditions are unfavorable. He who always adopts such methods as will meet adverse seasons is the man who makes a profit every year.

The Englishman as Hired Man

The winter has not gone yet, nor its rude blast given place to the more gentle winds of spring, but for all that most of us are beginning to think about those things which concern us most, having our farming tools and implements ready for the first sign of spring work setting in. Not the least of the many problems which confront the average farmer is that of hired help. One hears on every side the question: "Do you know where I can get a good man?" And alas, some add a rider to the effect that they "don't want an Englishman." I could weep at times when I hear that. Alas, and alas that it should be so.

There's a reason of course. How should it be otherwise? The fault lies sometimes at the door of the Englishman, and quite as often at the door of the Canadian farmer who first takes him in hand. In these days, when we hear so much about imperialism, race kinship, and ties of blood, do we, as Canadians, fully realize our responsibility in this matter? Do we realize that when an Englishman comes to us young, eager, hopeful and strong, but often as green as the grass beneath his feet, that we are becoming trustees for the old mother beyond the seas? She has entrusted to our care some of her best, and it is for us to carry out our trust to the best of our ability. One might fill a page in the FARMER'S ADVOCATE with stories of Englishmen, and their mistakes at their new work on the farm; and again, a page could be filled with the blunders made by Canadians in dealing with this raw material. Happily, there are very many of the farmers to-day who realize their responsibility in this matter, and who turn out young Englishmen from their farms, after a year's training, as good practical common sense farmers, with a good working knowledge of their calling, and above all an intelligent understanding of some of the problems which are part of the farmers' daily life. Of course they have a deal more to learn, but it is that knowledge which only time can give.

The mistake that a number of farmers make with Englishmen is not that they do not give them chances enough to learn, but that they do not take the trouble to enter into a thorough explanation of the working of machinery, and

to initiate the "green" man into the why and wherefore of a thing. Take, for instance, a walking plow. It is one thing to put a plow in working order, hitch the horses to it, and let the Englishman go ahead. He'll go ahead until something happens, and not understanding the various parts of the plow is at a complete loss what to do. Well, perhaps some of my readers will say, let him learn the way we had to; experience is the best way. True, my friend, there is nothing like it. Experience teaches wisdom. But it is up to those who know to tell those who know not. We should be considered insane if we were to put a man in charge of an engine, and say let him learn by experience. No, he must be taught the why and wherefore of the various parts before he can be entrusted with the care of the engine as a whole. The same teaching might be applied to the plow; the need of the coulter in certain kinds of land; its effect on the work; the use of the holes on the end of the beam, for depth and width, and a dozen other little things which have to be known. In a word the why and the wherefore. And so with all other machinery. Spare half an hour or an hour some day and install yourself in the lecturer's chair in the Imperial Western Farmers' Open Air Training College, and deliver an impromptu address to the young man who wants to learn. If he is the right kind he will appreciate it. That half hour's talk and demonstration may save you some hours if that man is alone some day and something happens. He will have a knowledge of cause and effect which will enable him to fix the implement perhaps in a few minutes. Without that knowledge he would nine times out of ten, be utterly nonplussed.

Adopt the same methods in regard to your harness. Take a set and explain the various parts, the need of them and their uses. I remember a young Englishman telling me how confused he was for a long time over the lines of a team not thoroughly understanding which line went on the outside. He mentioned his difficulty one day to a farmer. "See here, said the farmer, pulling the lines from a set of harness hanging in the barn, 'this long line is always the outside line; the part that goes across to the other horse is only a check line, and merely fastened to the long outside line by a buckle. Bear that in mind and you'll never get wrong.' From that time the young man understood, because he had been given a practical explanation in a very few words.

And so brother farmer who doesn't want an Englishman, give him another trial. Perhaps you yourself have been more at fault than the green man. Show him how, for he's a man in the making. Don't laugh at him too much; it might be understood. Do your duty by him as one who is a trustee in imperial things. The effect of your painstaking effort may be more far reaching than you wot of. And so, when the spring brings with it the softer air, the new life and everything that speaks of hope, it will also bring troops of young men from the Old Land, with their knee breeches and yellow leggings and painfully new Gladstone bags, and they generally answer to the name of Mr. Verdant Green. They're good stuff. Take one under your wing and turn out a man that will be a credit to all that is best in Canadian farm life.

Sask. G. CLEMENT BENNELL.

* * *

"THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE is invaluable to the man who is engaged in practical agriculture of any description."—E. S. Atkins, Alberta.

* * *

"I have grown to appreciate THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE."—George P. Jenkins, S. Wales, England.

* * *

"I enjoy your valuable journal very much indeed. Have taken great interest in writings of Mr. Keene and if I were near him I would give him a good-hand-shake."—Joseph Pritchard, Saskatchewan.

* * *

"I consider THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE almost indispensable to the farm home or any home that desires to keep in touch with the chief of all industries, the farm."—Rev. J. Linton, Manitoba.

* * *

"As I am now a regular reader of your journal I wish to state that I like it very much."—S. D. Sumner, Alberta.