

Does Farming Pay?

The article on "A Farmer's Balance Sheet for 1898," which appeared in the *Review of Reviews* for last March, shows the net profits on 6,000 acres of Iowa grain-farming to have been \$50,855.22.

Ruben and Lucien Bradley were born and reared on a Michigan farm. This farm had been cut from the woods by the father, and endless toil had been expended in bringing it to a fair state of productiveness. But, even when the boys became of age, it produced only a scant living for the family.

The problem of a livelihood and a vocation forced itself upon Reuben and Lucien. They were strong, steady and industrious.

They had graduated from the village school. The father was not able to set them up in business. They knew it and did not complain. He had done the best he could. Reuben was tired of the country. He went to town and apprenticed himself to a harness-maker. Against the advice of his young friends, Lucien bought sixty acres of land and ran in debt for it.

In a year Reuben was earning a dollar a day. After the day's work he wore a white shirt and collar and pointed shoes because other people did, not because they were more comfortable. He had no debts. Lucien had fair crops, but they yielded little more than enough to pay the interest on the mortgage. He wore a ragged shirt and patched breeches and cowhide boots. People said that Reuben was making a gentleman of himself and learning a trade in the bargain.

In two years Reuben had completed his apprenticeship. He is now earning ten dollars a week. He boarded in a house that had a fancy verandah and green blinds. His clothing improved. Lucien was still ragged; but he paid his interest and \$300 on his principal. People said that Reuben was bound to come to the front.

Reuben became foreman of the shop at \$50 a month. He bought a house and lot on the instalment plan and paid for it within five years. The country people called upon him and ate dinner when they went to town. Lucien paid off the mortgage and owned the farm. People said that Reuben and Lucien were good citizens.

In ten years more Reuben was still foreman of the shop. He received the same wages. He lived in the same house. He wore the same cut of shirt and same kind of pointed shoes. He smoked Havana cigars. Lucien built a new house and barn. He had a good carriage and a driving horse. He smoked a pipe. The neighbors saw that every year he made some improvement on the farm. The barn was full of tools. He wore a white shirt when he went to town and he had a pair of button shoes. People said that Lucien was becoming a prominent man; and his word was good at the bank.

Reuben began to complain that harness-making was too confining. His health was breaking down. The proprietor of the shop was selfish and would not die and leave the business to him. Harness-making was not what it used to be. Lucien bought more land. He went fishing when he wanted to. Reuben came out now and then to spend a Sunday. The birds seemed to sing more sweetly than ever before, and the grass was sweeter. Lucien endorsed Reuben's note.

Lucien has pigs, cows and sheep and chickens and turkeys and horses. He raises potatoes and beans and corn and wheat and garden stuff and fruits. He buys his groceries, tobacco and clothes. Reuben buys everything.

At the close of the year Lucien puts \$100 to \$300 in the bank; or he takes a trip to Boston. Reuben does well if he comes out even. Lucien does not fret. Reuben grumbles.

The moral is that the \$200-a-year income farm is a more important factor in the national welfare than the \$50,000 income farm is. The one is in the reach of any industrious and intelligent man. The other is in the reach of the few. The one is safe and steady. The other is speculative and

uncertain. We need the moderate and modest farm to make citizens. We use the other to make money. The large money making farm is a useful object-lesson. It shows that business and executive ability can make money from the land as well as from a salt mine or a bicycle factory. But it is a fallacy to hold it up as the ideal in American farming.

CORRESPONDENCE

Commercial Fertilizers

Information Wanted About What to Use

To the Editor of FARMING:

Seeing a good many articles in FARMING about artificial manure, and never seeing any used on grain crops, I would like to give some a fair trial. I have a piece of land that I want to seed down the coming spring. It is not poor nor yet is it as rich as I would like. It is clean and free from all foul seeds. It is now well fall plowed. I intend to sow it thin with spring wheat so that the grass seeds will get a fair show. I have no manure suitable to put on it, therefore I would like to try some artificial. The soil is a clay loam and has been timbered with pine and hardwood. A good deal of limestone was once in it. As to the kind of manure and quantity to use I would like to have your opinion and that of others.

VERITAS.

Questions like the above are usually answered in our Questions and Answers column, but as our correspondent desires information from any of our readers who know anything about or have used commercial fertilizers, we insert the letter here and will be pleased to publish information in regard to it.—EDITOR.

The Dominion Live Stock Commissioner

To the Editor of FARMING:

Referring to the recent appointment of a Live Stock Commissioner for the Dominion, I do not hesitate to say that the Minister of Agriculture did a very wise thing in making the appointment. Those who know something of what has been accomplished during the last few years in connection with the Department of Agriculture in Toronto and the Live Stock Associations of Ontario, are in a position to judge of the extent and importance of the field which opens before the new Dominion Live Stock Commissioner. I cannot think of any more important work for the Department of Agriculture than the promotion of interprovincial trade in cattle, sheep, hogs, and horses; the regulation of railroad and steamship rates, etc., for the benefit of the live stock industry; and the opening up of markets for our animals at home and abroad.

The work is important; and there is no doubt that F. W. Hodson is one of the best men that could have been chosen for the position. He possesses many qualifications. He has had ample experience as a stock raiser, agricultural editor, and secretary of the Live Stock Associations of Ontario. He is a worker, a most persistent and untiring worker. He is an excellent organizer and a good executive officer; and he has the valuable art of managing men so as to secure their assistance in carrying out his plans. In a word, I think I may say that he knows what to do and how to do it; and I congratulate the Dominion on securing Mr. Hodson for what many consider one of the most important positions in the country.

Yours,

JAMES MILLS.

Agricultural College,
Guelph, October 30th, 1899.