

OUR FARMERS.

Their Condition and that of the Farmers of the United States.

THE TWO POSITIONS COMPARED.

Editor of THE CITIZEN.

SIR,—The second question correspondents have asked is: Why is it that the farmers of the United States, as a body, are in less prosperous circumstances than the farmers of Ontario? I think that there can be no doubt about the implied fact. But let us examine into the truth of it before accounting for it. The materials abound for the subject has been very much discussed on the other side of the line. There is an embarrassment of riches in the quantity.

The New York TIMES, not long ago, instituted an investigation into the condition of United States farmers, and Bill Nye's comments fairly express the result. The humorist says: "The farms in our State are mortgaged for over \$700,000,000 (seven hundred million dollars). Ten of the Western States, I see by the papers, have got about three billion and a half dollars of mortgages on their farms, and that don't cover the chattel mortgages filed with town clerks on farm machinery, stock, waggons and even crops, by gosh! that ain't two inches high under the snow. That's what the prospect is for farmers now. The Government is rich, but the men that made it, the men that fought perairie fires and perairie wolves and Injuns and potato bugs and blizzards and has paid the debt and pensions and every thing else, is left high and dry this cold winter with a mortgage of \$7,500,000,000 (seven thousand five hundred million dollars) on their farms."

The New York TIMES says the farmers of the United States are staggerin under a

burden of mortgage indebtedness approximating nine thousand millions of dollars. The TIMES further says: "The greater portion of the money represented by the faces of these mortgages has not been expended in improving the farms, because the larger proportion of the farms were supplied with buildings before the mortgages were laid. The money has been spent to enable the farmers to live."

The Chicago TIMES says: "Farm mortgages are swallowing up millions of acres of land in the Southern and Western States and Territories."

Professor Henry, lecturing in Richmond, Wisconsin, said: "One of the richest prairies in the United States is that of the St. Croix Valley in Wisconsin. Of that valley he said: "To-day the richest part of it is almost without fences; the majority of the farm buildings, especially the barns, are poor, and the people complain bitterly of hard times."

Frank Wilkeson, writing in BRADSTREET'S—an American writing in an American journal of high character—says: "The apparent prosperity of Dakota is based upon the expenditure of the capital procured by mortgaging the farm lands. The farmers are spending their farms, mortgages are at 8 per cent. to 10 per cent., and the impoverished farmers have to pay an additional 10 per cent. on renewals, so that interest is really 11 or 12 per cent."

The Cleveland PLAINDEALER says: "The mortgages on farms in Ohio amount to more than 700 million dollars, and are gradually increasing, and this, too, in an old, well developed farming country."

Mr. Cleveland, in one of his latest messages to Congress, said of the farmers in the