



Labor as it Looks to the Farmer

T has been repeatedly shown that a farmer, after providing land, teams and tools, cannot work land enough with his own hands to produce a net labor income equal to that of the softcoal miner, who furnishes nothing.

Cost-accounting methods indicate that the net labor income from the one-man farm is always to be expressed in three figures. and generally round six hundred dollars. Over against this is to be counted the fact that masons and plumbers get a dollar an hour. Carpenters are on strike for the same wage, and the press carries the item that coal miners are now demanding eight dollars for a sixhour day. In one way or another these discrepancies must be lessened, either by a modified union wage or by increased cost of food.

Under present conditions farm wages are "sky high" and still going up. Three, four and five dollars a day and board ! And why not when masons are getting eight dollars, and the only qualification is the possession of a union card! But if these prices are to prevail on the land, what about the cost of food? If the farmer pays these wages, then food will of necessity go up because of the increased cost of production. If he refuses to hire and "gets along" with what he can do himself, then will he produce less, and food will go up in price from sheer scarcity. In this connection it must not be

forgotten that of the entire cost of food about two-thirds is labor. If the higher-priced labor were

correspondingly more efficient, the matter would not be quite so bad, but in general the contrary is true, and this, too, will increase the cost of food. Whether or not the farmer is correct in his general notions about labor, in one respect he is dead right: namely, that entirely independent of the wage question the world will get what it honestly earns and no more, and that real income from human labor will be expressed not in dollars and wages but in food and other goods and in proportion to the energy that is intelligently and skillfully expended. Whatever the wages, the final re-wards of labor will be realized only in such concrete commodities as food, clothing and shelter, actually produced. For all this the farmer has good grounds in his everyday experience.

Loyalty to Results

"Make hay while the sun shines" is a homely old adage, but it expresses not only the farmer's lexperience.with work but the very heart of the labor question as well.

The farmer is working with the forces of Nature, and if he sleeps or "lays off" when the sun shines, then his horses and cows will have no hay for the winter. When the spring opens there are but a few days in which to prepare the land and plant the early crops: A strike or a lock-out then, even



Sandy (to Doctor who has left the room for a minute): "Here's your cigar, destor; I was jist keepin' her goin' till ye wad come back."