

etc., the feeling has grown strong within me that it is one matter to hold down an office chair in a city or town at a nice sure salary, and from these pleasant surroundings issue pathetic appeals to the farmers to raise more stuff, and an entirely different matter to get out on the farms of our country, face the real difficulties of production, and make both ends meet at the end of the year. One would think to read these stirring appeals that all the farmer had to do was to press an additional button and additional acres would spring into fruitful and greatly increased production, with no extra work or care, or rather with the loosing of the great reserves of energy which these plutocrats of the soil have been restraining because of the endless wealth which their use would bring. And yet these white-shirted, easy-taking officials and writers must know that the great majority of farmers all over Canada are working a third more hours per day, and doing with one-half the comforts and privileges of life enjoyed by these newspaper patriots, and still, in most cases, barely making a living—why? Because they are and always have been considered the legitimate prey of legislators, business men, professional men, and all classes of non-producers.

Now, I contend that the farmer is producing about all he can, while he has to face the following conditions:

TAXATION.—The system of taxation in the country is most unjust to the farmer. Because the land can be seen and not hidden, and can be given a certain value. The taxation of land has been for all time the principal means of raising revenue. Because he cannot help himself and conceal his wealth the farmer has to bear this burden, while men enjoying from ten to one hundred times his income, or those who have their wealth tied up in securities and stocks, the value of which could not be easily reached by assessment, are practically exempt. A still more unjust principle, to my mind, in this conviction is the increase of assessment, and consequently taxes following permanent improvements made by the farmer. If a farmer exhibits enterprise enough to improve his farm, or increase and improve his stock, his assessment is straightway raised.

If improvements were encouraged by bonuses from the Government instead of being discouraged by increased taxes, it would give an impetus to good farming and to the country's prosperity that would surprise our one-sided legislators in this respect, and it seems to me a very fair way of helping greater production. Let me suggest that for one year at least the Government give a bonus on all increase of acreage under cultivation or reduce taxation on cultivated farms by one-half.

BANKS.—Though personally, I have never had to depend on a bank to raise money, yet I presume a great many farmers use banks in financing their operations, a most expensive way of raising money, but I suppose a necessary evil. Now, in spite of the fact that the banks of our country, either directly or indirectly, fatten off the farmers in the present crisis instead of loosening up and making it easier for farmers to raise money in order to expand operations and plan for a greater production next year, they are refusing loans on good security, and imposing restrictions hitherto unknown. These organizations, which have it in their power to aid in the most essential and material manner, agricultural and industrial extension all over Canada, are allowed to practically work their own laws, and, pursuing a dog-in-the-manger policy of unbusinesslike restriction, are a positive hindrance to the country in a time when the free circulation of money or its equivalent in paper is most needed for national development. I believe we have a banking commission, (which, like all the other big commissions, I suppose is well under the control of the organizations it is supposed to control or supervise), I would suggest that the Government direct this commission to look into the matter with a view to making the banks loan money to farmers, at least during the war and for two or three years after its close, at a low rate of interest when it is applied to extension of operations. These bank presidents and higher officials are all shouting patriotic rot. Let them for the present curtail their salaries and banking expenses, and cut down the large dividends they are paying to their shareholders, and apply the saving to help the farmers as above suggested, and the world will think more of their patriotism.

Three weeks ago I was surprised to find that I could not make a draft on a large and reputable firm in England for a shipment of apples sent across; but I was still more astonished and surprised at the narrowness and lack of business method shown when my local branch told me they had orders not to cash my cheque of some seventeen hundred dollars from this same large firm in England until the cheque had been sent across and honored, a delay of some three weeks in use of the money.

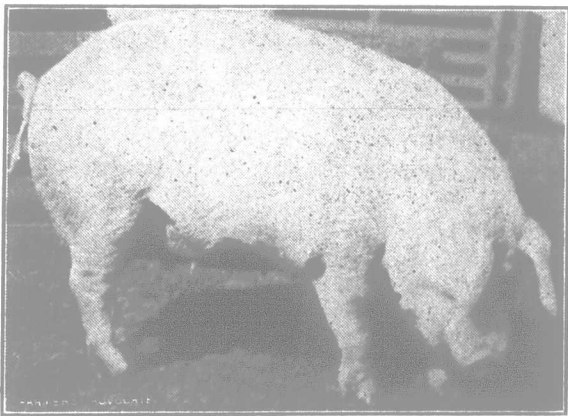
THE GOVERNMENTS.—This rather expensive body of men serves the big interests, and in conjunction with these uses every opportunity to

squeeze the class, which because of its ignorant and disorganized character, is most easily squeezed—i. e., the tiller of the soil—is really the key by which conditions could be made much easier for the class which puts them in power. It could, as I have suggested, compel the banks to deal more leniently with the farmers.

One of the difficulties of the dairymen and stock raisers of the Maritime Provinces in the way of production is the high price of feeds from Ontario and the West. Since it is generally conceded that freight rates are excessive, the Government might instil sufficient moral backbone into that doubtfully efficient body, the Railway Commission, to cause them to use their power toward a reduction of freight rates on feeds during the war. It might lower the dividends a little, but it would encourage production. Again, since the fruit men of these provinces have had hard years for three years past, and since they use large quantities of fertilizers, the railway companies could be induced to carry this commodity also at cost—thus helping production. The carriage of seed and seed grain implements, etc., could be lessened in cost, and thus aid the farmers.

We hear a great deal about the number of unemployed at the present time. Let me suggest that the Government take control for a time of these much-talked-of abandoned farms and speculator-held lands, put them in charge of competent foremen, and compel these idle ones to till these farms under the foremen. Another difficulty all over Canada, and which I am afraid will be more keenly felt during the next ten years, is the scarcity of farm help. Beside free transportation of a culled and selected class of immigrants, let the Government, aided by the railways, pay the transportation of the unemployed to the farms all over Canada.

While the above suggestions would go far, without any great sacrifice on the part of interested bodies, to aid the farmers to greater production, the real key to the situation is the passing of legislation whereby the farmer may raise money at a low rate of interest during the present crisis, and this is in the hands of the Government. One condition that is making times harder for the farmer this fall than ever before, is that while almost everything the farmer has



Chester White Sow.

Champion at London, 1914, for W. E. Wright & Son, Glanworth, Ont.

to purchase has appreciated in price, his products are no higher than they would have been had there been no war, at least that is the condition in Nova Scotia. The farmer in most cases cannot produce more unless he receives aid from outside his own resources.

Annapolis Co., N. S. R. J. MESSENGER.

Skilful Handling of Tools a Necessity.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

The skilful handling of tools is as much a part of the equipment of the successful farmer to-day as a knowledge of animal husbandry and of agronomy. The man who goes at farming now with a fair chance to win must know how to prevent loss in any direction. Even when one raises excellent crops, he will fail in his business if he does not know how to care for his animals and to dispose of them at a profit. I know some farmers who are working hard, early and late, and taking good care of their crops and stock, but are letting their buildings, gates and fences fall into decay, and thus becoming a source of serious loss to the capital invested in the enterprise. A farm with dilapidated buildings and fences is burdened with a heavy handicap in the market when it is put up for sale. One can reasonably look for a reduction in price from one-fourth to one-third, according to the repairs to be made. A farm in excellent condition, buildings well roofed, and attractively painted, gates and fences sound and neatly arranged, the whole place having an appearance of order and of a refined taste, is always in a ready market. People

looking for farms have their eyes on such places, and are glad to buy them at a premium above the market price. So the man who allows his place to get ragged and unkempt is making a leak through which much of the profit of his labor is wasting.

It is not always easy to employ a mechanic to do the repairing on the farm, and even if it is, many times it is not profitable to pay high wages in that direction. The farm labor problem is acute enough at the best, and how to solve it these days so as to be ahead of the game at the end of the year is trying the wit of land owners as never before. The man who knows how to use tools, and has the skilful eye and hand to do his own repairing neatly and quickly, has an immense advantage over the one who must hire everything done or else botch the work with his own unskilful efforts. One of my neighbor farmers is able not only to do his own building and repairing as competently as a carpenter, but to go into his shop in the winter time and make elegant pieces of furniture and finish them in a style to grace any parlor. He has never served an apprenticeship under any mechanic, but has been a close observer, has always had an abundance of the best tools to work with, and has made it a point to do well whatever he undertakes. He does his own plumbing, and as neatly and sanitarily as any plumber.

On my farm I have a blacksmith shop, as well as a carpenter shop, and we not only repair our wagons and machinery, but in a pinch we do our own horseshoeing. I have shod many horses during my life, and now at the age of 69 I can do practically as well as an expert shoeing smith. This shop saves us many hours that would be wasted in running to the town blacksmith and waiting for him to repair a plow, mower or some other implement. And, of course, there is a saving in money, too.

It may not be advisable for every farmer to have a blacksmith shop, but a roomy, comfortable workshop, well stocked with tools for all sorts of work, is not merely a luxury or an extra convenience, but a necessity. It means a number of things that contribute to the success of farm management. It means, for one thing, bringing the boys up to know the use of tools. Most boys like to handle good tools, and they like to make things. A dull saw and a broken chisel are not inviting to a boy who wants to do a nice job in fixing a sleigh or repairing a broken place in a wagon. The boy should be given tools to work with, and taught how to keep them in first-class order, so that he will come to have a conscience against tolerating a dull hatchet, or a rusty saw, or a plane that is seldom in condition to be used. This alone will constitute a kind of culture to the boy in sound taste and accuracy in workmanship. It will serve as a defence against that demon that possesses so many boys just merging into manhood, the demon of slovenliness in thought and manners and work.

Such a shop will mean this, too: When any repairing is to be done, a handle put to a shovel or a hoe, or a new singletree made to take the place of one just broken, or a new gate made, it can be done quickly. Enough tools that are always ready for business mean a decided saving in time, as well as money, and a better quality of work can always be done. Not to have a quarter-inch bit, or a half-inch chisel, when no other size will exactly answer the purpose, is to be compelled to quit, or else mar the job or hire some one to do the job who has the necessary tools.

One thing more, and that is concerning the care of tools. This is quite as important as having them. To have a place for them and to keep them there, to protect them from rust and from careless users, to see that they are in condition to give the best service, all this is essential to the efficient ownership of a fine kit of tools. One should have a case with a door to it, and it should be set over the work bench, and it should be so arranged that the saws have their place in it, and every bit and chisel and file and plane its place. Such a case, if the door is kept shut, will keep the tools dry and clean, and will prevent them from damage by being thrown together carelessly on the work bench. It can be made at a small expense out of thin matched boards that can be obtained in large store boxes. Less than a dollar ought to cover the cost of the material and the painting. If it is fitly constructed and the tools are always put away in it with a businesslike punctuality, the convenience of this sort of a tool case and the downright satisfaction are very great. The tools are protected, they are where they can always be found, and the habit of taking care of them in this way is immensely preferable to the one of throwing them down anywhere they happen to be used, or piling them up on the floor or work bench.

Johnson Co., Ill. W. H. UNDERWOOD.

This is the month to rush the plowing until it is finished. If there is some heavy land on the farm and the plowing has been completed, riding up may be practiced to advantage. It hastens drying in the spring.