

FARM AND DAIRY

AND RURAL HOME
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Average Income of U. S. Farmers

A recent bulletin issued by the United States Department of Agriculture serves to throw some light on why boys in that country at least leave the farm. There are nearly six and one-half millions of farms in the United States, with an average of 136 acres in each. The average gross income from these farms in 1913 was \$890.55. The cost of running the average United States farm in 1913 was \$340.15. Of this \$102.43 was paid out for labor. Thus for the farmer's own labor and return on investment there remained \$640.40 a farm. Deducting the interest on investment at five per cent., only \$318.22 was left as a labor income. When we consider the high proportion of tenants in many states of the United States and the great proportion of the remaining farms that are mortgaged for greater or lesser amounts, we are safe in saying that the average amount of money that the farmer and his family received for both labor and investment was not much over \$400.

These figures afford much food for thought. They show that the average United States farmer in the last analysis is little better off than his hired man. Is it any wonder that United States cities are growing while the country population is standing still or actually decreasing? When the farm boy hears of bricklayers in New York getting six dollars a day and working only eight hours, of carpenters and stone masons and painters on almost as high a scale of wages, is it any wonder that he gets dissatisfied when his father, with the assistance of all the members of the family, cannot make much over one dollar a day?

What the Figures Show

A further analysis of the figures given in reference to the average income of United States farmers serves to controvert many popular economic ideas. We in Canada have been told that the future wellbeing of the agricultural industry depends on the development of a home market.

We have built up a tariff wall for the protection of native industries in order that we may have a market right at our door. If this reasoning is correct the largest incomes from United States farms should be looked for in the thickly settled manufacturing districts. What the figures actually show are that in New England, the greatest manufacturing district of the United States, the average income per farm was only \$836, while in the Western States, far removed from their market, the average income was \$1,195, and in the North Central West, where much of the farm products must be shipped hundreds or thousands of miles, the average income was \$1,029. These figures would seem to disprove the generally accepted theory as to the value of an immediately adjoining home market for home produce.

Land Values and Labor Income

Nor is it safe to infer from these figures that the farmers of the Central and Western States have a greater labor income than have those of the New England states. Dr. Spillman, of the United States Department of Agriculture, estimates that the labor income of the farmers is fairly uniform over the entire United States, it being no greater in the rich corn belt states, where the gross income is so large than it is in the New England states, where the gross income reaches the minimum. The difference is made up on interest on investment. The superior productivity of the soils of the west has been capitalized in higher land values. In fact, so high has this capitalization become that young men starting into farming find it impossible to buy land. Hence they become tenants. Men who own their farms find that they can rent them to advantage and live on the rental value. Hence the richest states contain a proportion of tenant farmers running as high as sixty-seven per cent. of the whole; and these tenant farmers have an average labor income of between \$300 and \$400.

These deductions, if they are correct, and we believe they are, would seem to indicate that increasing land values, far from representing an increasingly prosperous farm population, indicate a tendency toward an increasing percentage of tenant farmers and a stable labor income, which is very near the point of mere subsistence. We may well ask ourselves if we in Canada cannot learn something from our older neighbors to the south, and also if protective tariffs are of as much benefit to us as we have commonly supposed.

Easy Money and Honest

Charles F. Whitley preaches a doctrine, the application of which means easy money and honest money for dairy farmers. At the recent conventions of the Eastern and Western Ontario Dairymen, Mr. Whitley estimated that an increase of fifteen hundred pounds of milk a year in the production of each cow in the Dominion of Canada would mean \$43,000,000 additional revenue

Broad fields of Plenty, and a cot
Where at the eventide
Rest, Home, and Love await—
Staunch guardians of the country's
peace

And long prosperity—
These are the fruits, O, sons of men,
Who first subdued the harvest field
And gave unto a hungering world
The priceless boon of Bread.

—Grace Marian Smith

to dairy farmers. These are stupendous figures. They are so big that we really do not grasp their meaning. We pass them over without recognizing their application to us as individuals. And yet to attain to that \$43,000,000 total requires the cooperation of every one of us.

Around Peterboro, Ont., there are a number of farmers who have done more than their share to produce that \$43,000,000. In the three years that they have been following Mr. Whitley's cow testing methods, all of the farmers who have gone in for testing have increased the average production of their herds over 2,000 pounds. If all farmers in Ontario did as well in the next three years the additional revenue would be \$63,750,000.

But here again the figures are too big. Let us see what they mean to each individual dairyman. Two thousand pounds of milk are easily worth twenty-five dollars without taking into consideration the additional value from skim milk or whey. In a herd of 10 cows this increase would represent two hundred and fifty dollars of almost found money. None of us are so rich, but that we would regard an addition of two hundred and fifty dollars to our income with considerable satisfaction. This sum is a good return for a few minutes' work night and morning as is required in cow testing. Farm and Dairy would like to see everyone of Our Folks doing their share to add that fifteen hundred additional pounds of milk to the average production of their herd. Why not make a start this spring?

Community Seed Growing

Most farmers are conservative. Perhaps it is just as well that they don't rush pell-mell into every new thing that comes along. It isn't safe. Occasionally, however, there are ideas advanced that none of us can afford to neglect. The "seed centre" plan which the Canadian Seed Growers' Association is now advocating, is one of these; its success in practice is assured. Briefly, the plan is this: That the farmers of a district select some one crop for which the soil and climate of the locality are especially adapted, get seed of the best variety of that crop, and then specialize in the production of high-grade seed, each farmer producing seed of one variety of the one crop.

Community breeding of seed has all of the advantages of community breeding of live stock. Perhaps the advantage that will appeal most strongly is that it enables the farmers of a community to market their seed to better advantage where each one is growing the same variety of oats or of potatoes, than where each farmer has his own variety with eighteen or twenty different varieties in a single community. Likewise, the production of seed grain of the right kind brings better returns in dollars and cents than the growing of grain that does not command a premium as seed.

The Canadian Seed Growers' Association is willing to assist any community that wishes to start as a seed growing centre. Members of Farmers' Clubs might profitably discuss the advisability of organizing to take advantage of this seed centre plan. Even if the seed centre were not formed, would not a local seed centre be advisable? Why should not one farmer who has a particularly clean farm or who is known as a splendid grain grower, produce the seed for all the rest of the community? We can not afford to let this seed centre idea slip through our hands as so many other good ideas have done in the past. Its application means money for the grower and better crops for the buyers of seed grain.

Why Co

The proposition for the year in the boys from the tion in the the advantag in the count has been given P. P. Claxton United States Whether its should be the do not know do essentially

"ADVER SOW

"You Can't You Sow the give it the

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then he deemed der. The first contract was ried a spark of into one of the inesses in the \$89 expended tained approxi business. He an expenditure \$8,000 worth of ceeded to adver The most str advertising is talks right at hands out str the average mo His copy, more He tells exactly and the whee implement he learned the vis from his factory for instance, is of the pieces of the man who i in his hands ri me right away, cal appeal to re Stockman. I've al to offer eve know what kind great paper. T up-to-date, wid kind I like to d Such business two fundamen able product an is indeed a stirr firms here in Ca Human world over, and methods which American farmer and thus build u Company can be Dominion. Our ready for such, the wealthy dair by FARM AND D "A Paper Far