

## THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE.

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DOMINION.

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fifty principal commodities in the United States, indicates that in 1908 it would have taken \$133.60 to buy products which could have been bought for \$78.30 in 1896. Including all commodities, the low point was reached in 1897, when \$89.70 would have paid for what now costs \$122.80.

Various causes have been assigned by Americans for this advance in prices. The adoption of the gold standard has been given as the reason by those that favored that action. Protectionists have attributed it to the Dingley Bill. Others to the fact that the Republican party was in power. Still others claim that there is a scarcity of farm produce, and, therefore, prices are high.

Our contemporary cited above has never taken stock in any of these theories, for the reason that the conditions exist in America alone, while the advance in prices is general in all civilized countries of the world.

Long ago, Adam Smith, the father of political economy, drew attention to the fact that gold, representing money, was set over against all other commodities. When gold is plentiful, and therefore cheap, other commodities are dear; when gold is scarce, less of it is needed to buy other things, and prices are low. He established his contention by citing numerous known instances of a sudden and general rise in prices following a discovery of very rich gold or silver mines. There is no doubt that he gave the true reason. Keen observers have for years predicted what has come to pass if the world's production of gold kept on increasing, as it promised.

The figures in this regard are rather startling. Prior to 1700, the gold production of the entire world averaged about \$5,000,000 annually. For the next fifty years it averaged about \$10,000,000 annually. After the discovery of gold in California, in 1850, it rose from \$12,000,000 per year to \$100,000,000, in an average of forty years. In 1893 it exceeded \$150,000,000. In 1896 it was \$202,000,000; in 1907, \$110,000,000, and in 1908 it reached \$127,000,000. In the last twenty years, the output of gold in the world totalled the enormous sum of \$5,800,000,000—almost as

much as had been produced before that date since the discovery of America. What with the many sources of gold supply, this increased production is likely to continue for at least a number of years, with high prices accordingly. So far as agricultural products are concerned, a contributory influence in raising prices has probably been a world-wide increase in population and consumptive demand, outstripping production, aided though it is by machinery. The alleged failure of agricultural production to keep pace with consumption has doubtless been the more complete occupation of the best farm land, together with educational systems which have alienated the interest of so many from the land, with the result that fewer acres are producing than might be, and many others producing poorer crops.

### A Wild Scramble for Land.

An Alberta correspondent writes us that there has been in several districts there lately a wild scramble for land. The Northwest has passed through a good many of these boom periods, during which many fortunes have been lost. Big wheat crops like that of the present year are alluring to Easterners hoping for a speedier betterment of their conditions, and more particularly to the speculative American who has played the wheat game to a finish in large areas of the Western States, the dwindling yields of exhausted soils sending him on to exploit fresh fields. This inflow, coupled with the Transatlantic stream of population, stimulates rapid settlement and the demand for land. When crops are growing or being harvested, the wide sweep of the comparatively treeless West is fascinating to the eye, and to the mind the accounts of 2,000, 5,000 or 10,000 bushels of wheat in a season, but the prospector is warned that it costs something to secure these crops, and experience is dear to buy. Even where land, remote from railways, seems moderate in first cost, interest on money is high; horses, machinery, labor, insurance, transportation and other charges, ditto; food, clothing, lumber and fuel for the long and trying winter are costly, as the pioneer soon discovers to his cost, and eat into the returns from the wheat crop, after it has run the gauntlet of hail and frost. Failing to reckon properly on these contingencies entails the heavy burden of mortgages, overdue notes, and the like. It is but human nature that less is heard of those who become pinched amid these hazards. Hopeful that another year on "breaking" or a summer-fallow may bring the bumper crop and good prices, he bears with the deprivations of the settler's life and risks of which the Maritime or Ontario man, on his comfortable, twentieth-century farm, knows little or nothing. Enjoying an equable climate, abundance of choice fruits, markets close at hand, with good prices for all the varied products of his farm, good neighbors, schools, and other privileges, he should indeed be thankful. Conditions and opportunities like these have been the result of a lifetime of effort, and yet are sometimes thoughtlessly let slip for a get-rich-quick change that in the end may prove delusive. In the West every man boasts his own district the best of all, and more of the buoyant spirit, with a heartier recognition of farm opportunities unsurpassed elsewhere, is one of the needs of the conservative Easterner, whose tide has evidently turned. Farming is getting on a better plane. The era of good prices is steady. Land values are advancing. One need not look for a "wild scramble," but something healthier. To men, and particularly young men of energy and capacity, there is no more promising proposition to-day than acquiring and properly working farms, the real value and output of which owners have heretofore neglected to make good.

Thrift and industry are indispensable handmaidens of Prosperity in the field of agriculture at least. Business ability and scientific training can not wholly substitute them. Large ideas without thrift have been the ruin of many an ambitious young farmer. Large plans with thrift are essential to a broad gauge success.

### Sandy Fraser Sees Chicago.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

I will no' hae tauld ye as yet o' the experience I'll be gettin' the past simmer through followin' yer airt-repeated advice tae farmers tae tak' a holiday. I'm no' that crazy after wark but that I could agree wi' a' ye said along this line, an' as there is na muckle use in payin' for guid advice an' no' takin' it, I juist packed ma valise, gave the auld wumman her orders for the next three weeks, an' took the cars for Chicago, where I hae a nephew wha has bin invitin' me to drop in an' see him for a couple or three year back.

They say a change is aye as guid as a rest, but I canna' be sure that I was muckle rested after twenty-four hours on the train, cooped up in a wee bit o' a seat, an' breathin' coal dust till I was black in the face. Hooever, I was unco' interested in the mony things tae be seen along the way, mair especially the farms an' the farm-houses o' the rural population, baith here an' in the land across the line. I'm no sure whether there are mair guid farmers or bad in the country, but aye thing I ken, an' that is ye can tell them apart wi'oot takin' the second look. A poor farmer is aye consistent, for his crops and his cattle, his home an' his barns, a' tell the same story, an' it's a story wi' a moral for the mon wha can read it.

But it was no' to talk o' farms an' farmin' that I started out. Gin it's a change we're gaein' tae hae, let us hae it, says I. Yon Chicago is an unco' gran' city, let me tell ye, gin ye've never been there. Wi' its universities an' museums an' amusement parks an' big hotels an' small whiskey-shops, they can suit the taste o' ane an' all. Gin it's a "life in the crowded city" ye're aifter, ye can get it there, no mistak'. Gae doon toon ony time frae sax in the mornin' till midnight, an' ye'll see things doin'. The streets are na' big enough for a' that want tae travel them, so they have built a road up on posts for the cars tae rin on, an' noo they are thinkin' o' buildin' anither ane underground. It's no' a vera safe place for a mon wi'oot ony insurance on his life tae be. Gin ye try tae dodge a street car, ye're pretty sure tae be rin over by an automobile or some other outlandish contrivance for gettin' aboot, that the streets are filled wi'. They were killin', on an average, three people ilka twa weeks while I was there wi' their automobiles, but I can'oot wi'oot a scratch, na doot because o' my bein' naturally canny an' sober goin'.

Bein' a farmer, an' interested in farm animals o' a' kinds, I took the first opportunity, as ye may guess, tae gang doon tae the stock-yards. Mon' but it's great tae see them thousands o' coos an' pigs an' sheep herded intae their wee pens, waitin' for their judgment day. An' its ao lang in comin', I tell ye. The coos an' steers are driven intae a narrow passageway wi' a mon standin' above it wi' a lang-handled hammer in his hand. This hammer is what he will be usin' tae pit the bossies tae sleep wi', an' when he has crackit half a dozen or so atween the eyes, he pulls a lever, an' the floor they were stantin' on turns over an' dumps them intae anither apartment, for the next step in the process of beef-makin'. Frae here they are taken on tae a revolving table or floor wi' aboot twenty men stantin' on it, an' each mon has tae do his wee part on the dressin' o' the carcass as it passes his division. By the time it gets tae the last mon it is ready tae gang tae the cold-storage room, where they pit the beef tae cool aff, aifter bein' sae rushed like.

The process wi' the pigs is a wee bit different. They drive them intae a pen above which is a wheel wi' chains fastened tae it. A mon stans' in the pen an' fastens aye o' these chains tae the hin' leg o' a pig. As the wheel turns aboot, the pig is lifted up, an' the chain slides onto a track and taks' the pig, squealin' an' yellin', tae where a mon stands' wi' a knife, ready to gie him the first taste o' what he must gang through. The next step is the hot water bath, oot o' which he comes consederable the worse o' wear. Frae this, on he gaes, frae bad tae worse, till he is ready for the pork barrel.

Twa things aboot these Chicago packing-houses that mak' an impression on a mon frae the farm is that they dae things mighty quick, an' they're unco' partecular tae hae everything clean, an' ye can judge by what they let ye see. I hae aften thoct, in watchin' the operation o' butcherin' that has tae be carried on ilka year on the majority o' oor farms, that we should hae some regular ordained butcher wha kenne'd his business tae dae oor killin' for us, an' no' hae aen that dinna' ken ony mair aboot stickin' a pig or knockin' doon a coo than they ken o' slaetin' houn in Africa, tryin' their hand at it. It wad save a lot o' misery for the poor brutes we hae tae kill, an' wad help tae keep us farmers frae becomin' sae hard hearted we canna' feel for onythin' but ourselves. As tae the bein' clean oot o' it, I'm thinkin' the Chicago chaps hae the best o' us aye. Mon, I saw a wumman in the meat packin' department where girls dae a'