

that unless there is a profit in feeding stock by charging the food consumed at market prices, it does not pay to feed stock at all, because the food can be sold at market prices, and any alleged profits derived from feeding stock must be drawn from the farm produce account. The food must therefore be charged at market prices, and not at the cost of production.

Come now, Mr. Shaw, you who have doubled the fertility of your soil in eight years by home-made manure alone—you who have challenged us to meet you on any platform, this is our platform: we have made our speech; we pause for a reply.

(Concluded.)

### The Condition of the Farmer.

Editor Farmer's Advocate:

SIR,—In reading your January issue, I see that you have awarded two first prizes for essays on the condition of the Canadian farmer. Well, I would ask what are the two first prizes for. Is one for the most truthful and the other for the most untruthful report of the Canadian farmer's condition? If such be the conditions for which the prizes were given, I must congratulate your essayists on their very near approach to perfection. I would like to ask my brother farmers through the ADVOCATE to read the essay of Mr. Thomas Elmes over again till they commit it to memory, so that they will not forget that they are farmers about election times; for if ever those grievances are removed, you will have to do the great part of the moving, and I think the sooner we get ready to do it the better for ourselves.

I think I hear some old party man say that our manufacturers would suffer. Well, I would say to you—Friends, I think the manufacturers can look after their own business just as well as you can yours. One thing is certain, they have done it better so far. I would say—Think and study for yourself, and not be led away by catch-penny words such as "the farmers are hungry and naked," or "they are rich and clothed in fine raiment," or "it is disloyal to Britain." I would simply ask of you friends to be loyal to yourselves and your brother farmers. I would say—Friends, read again the essay of Mr. Thomas Beall. Don't get frightened at the figures, for you can probably learn something, or in other words, you may see where the untruths come in. In his figures from the Bureau of Industries as to the value of all crops grown, he adds the price of wool, eggs, cheese, creamery butter, horses, fat cattle and sheep. This is too thin. Any five-year-old boy can tell that you cannot sell a thing and have it too. If he cannot he will not do for a farmer, for if he were a farmer and a farm given to him, he would be cheated out of it in a short time. Then after adding an imaginary natural rise, he stretches his imagination to make another hundred dollars, so he gets a total of \$833, or over 18 percent. Too thin, again. Friend, would you not want a man's wages all the year, and a man to help for six months in the summer? If we count \$1.25 per day for labor, we have \$585 to deduct, leaving \$248, which will change the percent considerably, even counting things twice; but \$1.25 per day will not keep up such style as he says can be seen so often in travelling. I am sorry to say that he is correct in regard to style, but if there is any more taken off the above sum, there will not be any more percentage left than the advocates of Commercial Union claim for the best

farmers after his double figuring. Please, friends, read attentively, and I think you can see the truth through the curtain in a great many places. It is not any thicker than mosquito netting. But I must say that Mr. Beall did extra well considering the material he had to work with.

Very likely some of my brother farmers would like to know something about who I am and how I am getting along. I am a born Canadian, of English parents; they were brought up at farming in Devonshire. At three months old I was brought into the wild woods of the township of Downie, county of Perth, not far from where I now live. But few of the original settlers are the farmers of to-day; a great many sleep that sleep that knows no waking. Some of their families are on the old farms and doing well; others have spent their fathers' hard earnings in fine rigs, houses, fixtures and high living, and are gone to the towns to get a living, as they say they can live easier than by farming; and a great many more will soon have to leave the farms they are on if they don't change their mode of farming and living. But the great trouble is that those people leave the farms in such a bad condition that it takes years of careful handling and hard work to get it into such a state that anything like a good crop can be raised, except in the most favorable seasons.

But I did not tell you yet how I have got along myself. Well, I have managed to get a living and lay past a little. Some may ask, How much? Well, no doubt a great many of you got a circular asking you quite a few questions about your condition as a farmer. I know that some of these questions are very hard to answer, there are so many points to be considered. I will give you my answer short. I have always been on the farm; I started on my own account 15 years ago, on a farm of 200 acres, 100 being my own, the other not. I farmed the two for six years, but now I work only 100 acres. The average capital employed in farming would be between \$11,000 and \$12,000. The amount of profit derived, after keeping things in repair, is about \$7,500, a great part of which I spent in permanent improvements, such as buildings, fences and draining, which have deteriorated since built say to the amount of \$500. I think you will see that my profits have not been large, but I have not exhausted my land to put money in the bank. If I had, my profits might have looked larger, but I don't think I would have been any richer than now, with more risk of being cheated in a commercial bank than in a bank of soil, to say nothing of the pleasure of looking at a nice crop on my farm. Yours respectfully,

WM. WORDEN.

St. Paul's Station P. O., Ont.

[We thank Mr. Worden for his candid letter. He speaks plainly and fearlessly, which every farmer ought to do, and his style convinces us that he is not afraid to think or act independently. With reference to his remarks about our prize essays, our defence is that we never ask prize essayists to agree with our views. We do not take such a bright view of the farmers' condition as Mr. Beall has pictured, but his essay was ably written, and he used the best available figures to show the position he had taken. If these figures are ridiculed by practical farmers, a grand point is gained, viz., the folly of spending public money in attempting to prove that our farmers are rolling in wealth.—ED.]

It is well understood that when in a liquid form, manure is more easily appropriated and effectual in its work than when used in any other way. The trouble with it is that farmers are apt to apply it too strong. It needs to be diluted with water, the proportion of dilution depending on circumstances, and governed by the judgment and experience of the farmer.

### Selection of Seed Grain to Secure Best Results with Least Exhaustion of the Soil.

BY THOS. ELMES, PRINCETON, ONT.

Grain is the foundation of all agriculture, and agriculture is that on which this world hangs for its sustenance. Although grain occupies this very important position, still we find there is next to nothing done to improve it in this country by hybridizing, importation and selection. True there has been much money spent by our Government in support of model and experimental farms, but we find nothing of much moment has yet been accomplished by them in improvement and introduction of sterling varieties of grain. A few years ago all eyes were turned to our own Model Farm at Guelph, expecting wonders to be done in this direction, but we find this branch in particular has been a failure, until the management themselves seem to be disgusted with it. The principal causes of this failure were the unfortunate situation of the experimental grounds, and too much of the Government funds expended in commercial fertilizers until the land became so rich that it was impossible to raise anything but leaves, straw and rust on the grain experimental grounds.

Now this country is gazing intently at our Ottawa Experimental Farm in hope that something substantial is now to be accomplished, with Professor Saunders at the head. Much has been done by them in collecting varieties of grain from different countries and testing them, but I fear they will fall into the same error as our Guelph Farm, and nurse the grain to death with fertilizers and Government pay. But perhaps the officers can by their skill bring something through that will be a benefit for us in the near future. We hope for the best.

I find in testing new varieties of grain (of which I have tested several hundred), it is always best to put them on rather poor soil without manure or fertilizers, and the best is sure to survive; but if nursed, the best is ruined by overgrowth, and the poorest and weakest survive, and we are sure to be misled by our experiment. Much has been done to improve the seed grain of this country by seedsmen and private individuals, but we find they have met with very little encouragement, for if they ask a reasonable remuneration for their trouble and expense, they are frowned upon and discountenanced. But let a horde of swindlers loose upon the country with Bohemian oats, double-headed Egyptian spring wheat, Red-lion fall wheat, or beardless barley, and they are received with open arms, even if they demand ten times the amount for their worthless, untried varieties that would be asked by reliable seedsmen or others who are striving to benefit the country by studious experiment and selling those that prove the best at a reasonable price. This must work its own cure; perhaps bought wit will prove to be the best.

It is granted on all hands we must continually change our seed grain, as our changeable climate soon takes out the vitality of our best grains if sown on the same soil with same surroundings. Change is the spice of life, alike to the animal and vegetable kingdoms. From experience I place very little value on changing seed from different soils, say from heavy clay to sand, or otherwise. It always requires distance and change of surroundings for the best results. Also grain for seed should never be selected from too level or low lying grounds, as these, although