

is too busy farming. But until farming becomes a business it will never occupy the place it should in the trade and the life and the overseas credit of this country. Modern business has outgrown the average farmer. In spite of that the amount of capital invested in farms and farming exceeds by several million the amount invested in any other industry. Farming is one of the big interests. It is the biggest interest we have. And why not? The ultimate source of all wealth is the land, the mine, and the sea. And we have more land than we have water available for cultivation. Our farms are greater in extent than our fisheries. And the forest of to-day becomes the farm of to-morrow. Yet we are allowing the farm to slip back from its own first place in Canadian exports and the doctors of true progress would have us believe that if we are to bulge our exports commensurate with our national importance we must do it with commodities more valuable per bulk than wheat and cattle and fruit.

Well, farming is not merely a case for exports and experts. It's a matter for business.

OF course, there are all kinds of farmers; the man who inherits a mortgage; the man who puts a few thousand dollars into a town-side farm and runs it as a side-line; the nabob who sinks a large fortune in a tract of land which he improves into a piece of landscape to entertain his friends and loses more in a year than the average farmer can make in a lifetime; the man who uses a farm as a convenient centre of operations for buying and selling stock; the man who buys a farm just to sell it again—and the man who takes a farm as payment of a mortgage. But did you ever hear of any town man investing money in a farm on the same principle that he would invest in a corner lot or a mine? Did you ever meet a man who paid as much respect to a hundred acres of land that produced wealth every year by adding to the world's eatables and wearables as he would to a corner lot downtown that runs into more money every year because a thousand people pay car fares every day to do business around that corner?

The fact is that the townman has no use for the farm as an investment. In spite of the good prices of the past fifteen years and the fat prices of war he regards the farm as a place where a man is sure to lose money unless he has the experience of a farmer in spending it. All the average townsmen knows about a farm is seeing it from a motor-car or spending a couple of weeks on a farm when he had nowhere else to go. Though in every town and city of eastern Canada there are scores and hundreds of men who were brought up on the farm and never admit it unless the talk at the club seems to gravitate towards farming. The town and the farm are divided by a great gulf. The farmer knows the town because it is his market. The townman hates the farm because he believes the farmer of to-day is a member of a great combine to hold him up for high prices, and the farmer of yesterday was a man who barely grubbed a living.

There are prairie farmers who spend their winters at the Royal Alexandra Hotel in Winnipeg. These men know more about the town than the citizen of Winnipeg knows about the prairie farm. The average Manitoba farmer could get along as well at a town business as he does on the land. He often knows as much about the wheat pit as any member of the Grain Exchange. There are farmers in Ontario who know as much about common business as they do about the farm. There are others who practise business on their farms and know exactly why an acre anywhere in the vicinity between Oakville and Niagara is worth a thousand dollars in production, and why an acre not too far from Weston, Ont., might have been worth \$500 the other day as a speculation. There are general purpose farmers born on the farm who make the farm balance itself in the ledger down to the cost of a wire nail.

But all such businesslike farmers are the notable exception. And it is the whole essence of farming as it has been and still is that they should not become the rule unless there comes a revolution in the business of farming.

Farming, however, is a business. The man who inherited a mortgage is engaged in a business demanding as much financial treatment as a trust company. But he keeps away from that side of it. He goes on rotating crops, raising cattle, improving the varieties of his wheat and the breeds of his hogs, specializing

in machinery that saves labor and costs money, and because a good percentage of his living comes directly from the land he keeps no books.

Until farms are operated on a direct profit and loss basis, farming will never be popular. Why is it that nine-tenths of our farmers had to be born on farms? Why should men drift away in thousands from the farm and spend money, educating themselves for business or professional life, or go directly into industrial life, when it's only once in a blue moon that we hear of a man born in town who becomes a farmer? The man I worked for this summer was the only farmer I ever knew at first hand who was not born on a farm. He was the son of an English Church clergyman. But he always had a desire for the adventure of farming. He is an enthusiast who makes money as a farmer, and as a rule never joins in the chorus of croaking that comes so easily from the average farm community. He operates his hundred acres, one-half of which was originally owned by a man who had eight sons. All these sons hated the farm on which they were born. They left it. One became a Christian Scientist; one went into chemistry, of which he is now professor in Toronto; the rest drifted into other businesses, some of them into real estate. The youngest, who seemed to be finally entitled to the Ontario farm, wrote to his father from out West:

"Please sell the old farm for whatever you can get. I don't want it."

Here were eight men who broke away from one Ontario hundred



I know something about soils, and grain and fruit and cattle and hogs and machinery—and a little about religion, education and politics, but I never was cut out for a business manager.

acres to go into something else. Where is the town family of eight or even less, of whom even one boy has broken away to become a farmer?

THERE must be a reason why men who were not born on the farm seldom or never become farmers. There are two. One is the lure of the town, and the crowd. The other is the fact that farming is recognized as having too much hard horse work for all the money there is in it. The lure of the town is an old one. It has come to most countries, England, France, Germany, the United States—and Canada—have all discovered that in order to boost national business the town must be built up. Labor is found to be more productive in places where labor is most concentrated among raw materials of industry. The idea of a hundred acres for one man and his hired help has been abandoned. Men do not want land. They want wages, and the crowd. The wages of industry are bigger than those of the farm, because industries are run on business principles.

Just as I write this comes a letter from a man in Oshawa, Ont., saying, "I am now back to the land, having bought an acre and a little ranch house here a month ago to-morrow. My wife and I had planned to endeavor to make a living and a competence on a home in a garden, and after she died early in the year I determined to follow out our mutual plan. So here I am working hard with my rabbits, poultry and garden, and from present indications will be able to exist until my first crop comes in. It is delightful work, and I believe this plan of a little land for a living will help solve some serious economic problems."

That man used to be for years an editor in Toronto. His acre of land is not a farm. He does not expect

it to get him a living; only to help solve his economic problems. He would go all to pieces on a real farm, because the work of farming is altogether different from anything he ever knew. An acre is only an expanded back yard to be worked mainly by hard labor. A farm is a big thing requiring costly machinery, horses, wagons, cattle, hogs and barns. There is more difference between a farm and a frugal acre than there is between the acre and the back yard. The farm takes a man clean into another world. The change is one that no townsman will face because it is so devilishly unfamiliar.

AND one big reason why the farm does not lure men to it is because farming is not a business. Living is better, wages lower. Life is more isolated, and in most cases more strenuous. The profits of this farm in normal times do not compete with the profits from business.

And until farming becomes a business this handicap will always keep it unpopular. When farming becomes a real business it will pay dividends on capital equal to those paid in any other average business; wages to compete with the best average wages under any scale of a union; a better living to offset the comparative isolation; hours no longer than in the factory; a winter of comparative

ease to balance a summer of hard work.

The farm is too important a part of any nation's life to be kept in the category of things not run as a business. Canada will be a more prosperous country with a higher average of well-being when a return comes to the land; when back-to-the-land is not a mere exodus of townspeople to suburban acres, or of nabobs to money-losing show farms; when the farmer is no longer regarded as a Rube—who in turn looks upon the town-man as a ridiculous and parasitic greenhorn; when labor will go to the land because it pays, and when capital will hunt for investment in farm properties.

The town and the country must forget their differences and work together for the good of all. The farmer should not require to be organized as a class or a political party. His interests are everybody's. If he fails, none of us can long succeed. A nation that depletes the farms and imports food for the sake of building up big industries is on the wrong economic track. And when farming becomes a real business, no nation that is worth while will neglect its farms for the sake of building up its other industries. Farming is not an act of Providence, or a curse of inheritance. It is a manufacturing industry. It calls for as much brains and science and organizing enthusiasm as any other industry and more than most. And when brains and labor and capital turn to the land, the true source of all national wealth and individual well-being, we shall all be better off. That will not be until the man who manages a farm has been trained in business; till the education given to farmers at the agricultural colleges has for one of its biggest items farm management.