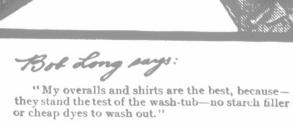


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What the Hired Man Thinks.

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE"

on "Wages and Farm Returns" in the issue of the 14th inst., in which you raise the issue that farmers cannot pay wages to compete with city business, but are paying a fair wage in comparison with what they make. In support of this you quote figures from information sent out by the Census and Statistics Office, and while it has been truly said that figures may be made to prove anything, I propose to deal with the point on the basis of these figures as seen from the hired man's point of view, a point of view which man's point of view, a point of view which has not been much aired; although every page you pick up now is full of the farmers' views on the subject, coupled with advice to the farmer from all sorts and conditions of men as to what he should do (advice which the farmer doesn't want, he being well able to run his own business).

I do not propose to deal with the question of Farm Returns as I do not feel that I am qualified to do so, but I would point I am qualified to do so, but I would point out that your statement that the average labor income shown in the returns is what the farmer and his wife and children got does not appear to be correct. In the report it is shown that of each farm only one person was taken as the operator and all family help was allowed for at the and all family help was allowed for at the rate which would have been paid if such help had been hired. Then, again, no account was taken of anything supplied to the house from the farm, an item of some value in view of the price of milk eggs, vegetables and such like farm products. Of course, \$500 does not look much as wages for the manager of a business with thousands invested, but, when you add to that the fact that the outlay for house rent and a good part of the food is already provided for, I doubt if the manager of any other business of the same capitalization will show a much better return. Then, again, the wages of most managers depend, in a large degree, on the results they obtain—if the results are small the wages are small. results are small the wages are smalland the farmer is the same; if he cannot get better results his pay is small. Again 5 per cent, on investment is allowed and, while I do not follow trade returns sufficiently close to know whether this com-pares favorably with the interest on capital in other business concerns, the

rate does not strike me as being very low—I can only get 3 per cent. from the bank for what cash I invest with them.

But the part of your article I wanted to deal with was the question of wages and farm conditions from the point of view of the hired man—I have had 10 years experience to guide me-and first I propose to deal with the figures given in your own article of the above date, and then with the work expected in return for such wages and the general conditions under which such work is done. It is usual to take ladies first and, while the ladies are well able to look out for their own interests, I would point out that the average wage of \$364 per year shows approximately \$1 per day, not a very big payment when we remember that

"A man works from sun to sun, But a woman's work is never done."

and this is more particularly true on the farm where, even if there is no milking, etc., to do outside, a woman has nearly as much housework, cooking, etc., to do on Sunday as on any other day.

For men the average monthly wage is given as \$610.60 for a man hired by the year. Now, if we take off 52 days for Sundays and 8 days for the legal holidays (which holidays many hired men never get) we have 305 working days, and the pay, therefore, works out at \$2 per day. This is not much (in fact, it is not as much as the poorest laborer can easily command at any other occupation, however unskilled he may be), but let us see what are the usual conditions prevailing on a farm where these are the average

wages.
Without taking notice of any extra hours during seeding, having and harvest, the hired man, generally speaking, is supposed to put in 10 hours' work in the field and do chores, and it is these chores that prevent any satisfactory comparison being made between farm hours and those prevailing in other trades. In passing I may say I once saw the word "chores" defined as a term invented in America to enable the

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