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FARM AND DAIRY

& RURAL HOME



We Welcome Practical, Progressive Ideas

Trade increases the wealth and glory of a country, but its real strength and stamina are to be looked for among the cultivators of the land.—Lord Chatham.



The Recognized Exponent of Dairying in Canada

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FOR WEEK ENDING JANUARY 21, 1915

No. 3

Present Day Agriculture and Its Problems

No. 2

An Address at the E.O.D.A. Convention, by J. B. Reynolds, O.A.C.,
Guelph, Farmer and College Professor

TO return now to those questions and answers already referred to, let us examine the replies to this question: What features of farm life would induce you to live on the farm instead of in the city? The replies may be summarized in part as follows: Love of the open air, 13; independence, 10; health, 8; love of nature, 4; free life, 3; happiness, 3; aptitude or liking for farming, 11; dislike of business life and city life, 6; opportunities offered by the new agriculture, 2; because it is the coming occupation, 1; because it is profitable, 1; opportunity to make a good living, 1; expectation of plentiful returns (with expectation underlined), 2; because city people work for the money, country people for the work, 1; a great field for service, 2.

I would have you observe the significance of these replies. They are especially significant when we remember that 112 out of 150 of these young men replied that they intended to farm immediately after leaving college or later, when they had gained some capital. Only four replies emphasize the profitableness of farming. Evidently the expectations of the majority in this regard are moderate. What, then, are the attractions which farm life offers to them? These attractions are mainly sentimental—sentimental in the best sense of the word—happiness, love of the free life, love of nature, faith in present-day developments in agriculture, the serviceableness of agriculture. Surely we all fervently hope that their fine idealism will not be shattered by encountering too stern realities.

Disabilities of Agriculture

There are thousands in Canada like those boys, cherishing sentiments and tastes favorable to country life, but repelled from it by practical difficulties and disabilities. So that the question resolves itself, in the last analysis, into an economic one. If they can be assured of a modest income, of freedom not from hard work but from slavery, of reasonable opportunity for cultivating their minds and their social instincts—all right and worthy demands upon life—these boys would be satisfied to follow farming. I wish now to examine the economic question in detail.

Let us take a particular instance of a 100-acre farm, fairly productive, well equipped and well managed. We shall not give it any special advantages of situation, nor suppose that it is run on the intensive plan, nor that it is stocked with a pure-bred herd of cattle. A general farm will serve our purpose with a herd of graded cows, but of superior cows, because it is run by a capable farmer. The farm equipment is good

for the same reason. What will be the capital investment on such a farm?

100 acres of land, including 3 acres of orchard	\$4,000
2 houses	3,000
Barn, stables, implement shed, poultry houses	2,000
Water works	300
15 cows at \$80.00	1,200
10 horses at \$150.00	1,500
Brood sows	300
Poultry	200
Implements	100
	600
	\$12,000

What charges, now, may we expect such a farm and equipment to be capable of supporting? Or to put it in another way, what prospects does it offer to a young man who has \$12,000 to in-

The Men of the Future

John Addington Symonds

These things shall be a loftier race
Than e'er the world hath known shall rise
With flames of freedom in their souls
And light of knowledge in their eyes.

They shall be gentle, brave and strong,
To spill no drop of blood, but dare
All that may plant man's lordship firm,
On earth, and fire, and sea, and air.

Nation and nation, land with land,
Unarmed shall live as comrades free;
In every heart and brain shall thrub
The pulse of one fraternity.

vest, or a fair proportion of it, and is about to choose between farming and some other occupation? We shall take it for granted that he is a young man with a liking for farming, has had some farming experience, has gained some knowledge of scientific agriculture. Suppose that he is offered a position as district representative for the Department of Agriculture, or a position on the staff of a farm journal at a salary of \$1,000 or \$1,200 a year. How many of you—you who are successful farmers and know what profits you are making—how many of you would advise him to invest his money and his life in a \$12,000 farm equipment? From this point of view, let us see what charges such a farm should support.

A YEAR'S EXPENSES

Wages, married man, per year	\$ 450
Threshing, also filling and occasional labor	150
Feed (concentrates for milking cows)	300
Taxes	50
Seed (oats, corn, turnips, garden seed)	65
General expenses (blacksmith, vet., etc.)	50
Insurance	10
Depreciation on buildings and implements, \$5,500 at 5 per cent	275
Interest, \$12,000 at 5 per cent	600
Proprietor's labor income	1,000
Total	\$4,000

Here we have a gross expenditure of \$30 an acre for a building farm of 100 acres. From the

point of view of the Guelph farmer referred to previously, who stated his gross income at \$8 an acre, this is pretty high. But I maintain that if present-day agriculture justifies what has been done for it in scientific investigation, and what is being said for it by the advocates of farming as a desirable occupation, then such a farm should return an income to balance that expenditure of \$30 an acre. To put it this way: Suppose a successful business man or manufacturer or professional man should come to you—a successful farmer—with the preceding statement of charges. He tells you that his son wants to buy a farm and follow farming as a livelihood.

I know of just such an instance at the present moment. A young man whose father is in business in a large and successful way, has bought a farm and is going to work it. Well, this father hands you the statement and asks you if it is reasonable to expect that a 100-acre farm, well managed, will support a charge of \$3,000 a year. What would be your reply? Some of you, I am satisfied, perhaps most of you, would reply, "No, it will not stand such an expenditure or anything like it." But if you reply thus, and your inquirer is convinced to your view of the case, I imagine he will say, "Well, farming may do for some, but for me and mine, we will have none of it." And from the point of view of a successful business man accepting such an opinion from a successful farmer, he would, in my judgment, be quite right in his conclusion.

An Examination of Charges

Perhaps we can arrive at a clearer estimate of this question if we examine some of the items in the preceding table of charges. First, there is the wages on \$400 for a married man. That wage is, I admit, higher than is generally paid to farm help. It includes, of course, a house free of rent, but I would have it include no other perquisites. What the farm produces the hired man may buy for his house at cost price, or wholesale price, or market price, whatever may be agreed upon; but he must pay for what he gets. On that understanding \$400 a year and a free house is not too much to hold a capable man against the attraction of higher wages paid in town or city, but the big cash wage with no perquisites looks more attractive to a man than a lower wage with an indefinite amount in perquisites. It amounts to the same thing to the farmer, and is more satisfactory.

The next questionable item is the sum of \$300 for concentrates, cotton seed meal, distillers' grains, etc. The amount, of course, may be questioned, but the principle of selling oats or barley, if you have them to sell and buying a foder richer in protein to feed to dairy cows, need not be argued at a dairymen's convention. Then there is the item of \$280 for depreciation in buildings and implements. As a matter of fact, these things do depreciate, and part of the \$280 is spent each year in repairing them. The bal-