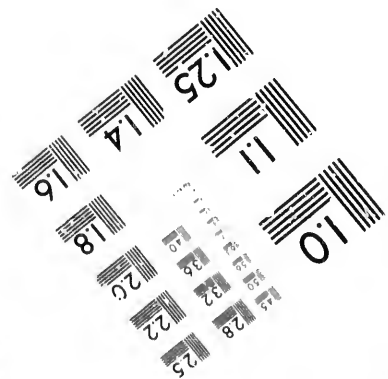
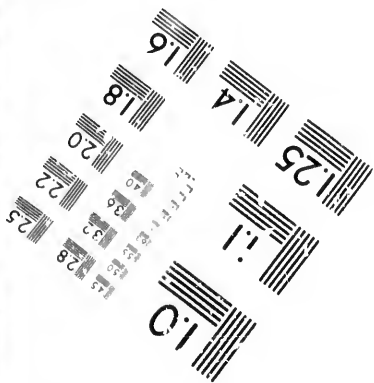
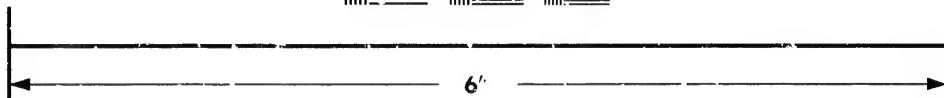
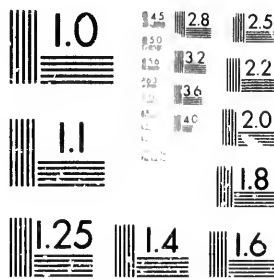


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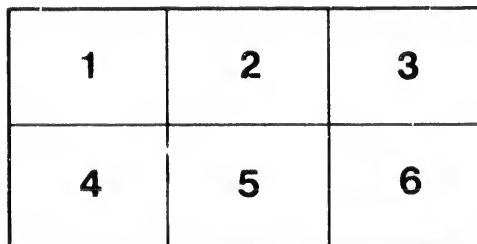
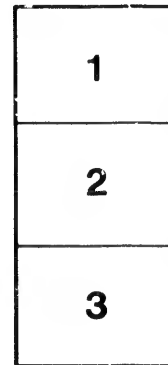
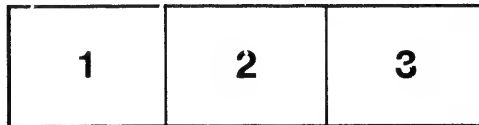
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## DOES IT PAY A CITIZEN TO TURN FARMER ?

*(Reprinted from the Mirror.)*

**N**O! certainly not! WHY? Well, that must be qualified before answering. Does it pay a man brought up in the bush all his life to turn citizen, and to start watch-making, upholstering, cabinet-making, type-setting, tailoring, shoemaking, or any other of the skilled trades? Do you for a moment think it would pay him? Oh, but a citizen knows all about flowers, lettuce, and onions, and lots of things about farming, and why should not the farmer know all about city life? So he does. He knows how to monkey around with a monkey wrench and a glue pot. But if a farmer comes to the city with \$200, starts a business and employs labor, his \$200 will disappear in no time. The more labor he employs the sooner will his capital go. Shakespeare tells us not to fly from the ills we have to those we know not of. If every man expects an extreme change to pay, some are certain to be disappointed. If you have played the fiddle eight hours a day for twenty years, you will easily beat a man just beginning, and it will take him a long time to catch up to you to make it pay.

By the way, do you know why it is called a monkey wrench? No. Well, the man who invented it was called Monck, and folks change it to monkey as it is more easily pronounced. Anything for ease in this life. Did you ever notice a boy selling newspapers on the street, how his voice goes up and down like a song? Well, that's for ease. One long pitch is a very hard strain on the throat; therefore they sing it out. We are all on the search for ease. The gaols are full of folks that went in search of ease. A man willing to lay one dollar on the top of another, diligently plodding along, is seldom in gaol. Ninety out of a hundred are trying to make a dollar

more easily than by digging in a ditch for it, still, you must not think people are naturally bad, as some think. You offer a man that makes a living by thieving \$9 a week, a tolerably decent job, and see if he will not accept it. Of course, we are all naturally discontented, This is a good job. If we were all contented, we would be dressed in bear skins, and living in mud huts instead of brick houses, with organs.

Well, why do *you* stay at farming, if it does not pay you? Ah, now you've struck it. I am not so very anxious about the paying part of it, and that's the secret. But here is where I am *enjoying* it. I have no rent, firing, water or food to buy. An occasional dollar buys what I would call unnecessaries. I rise when I like and lie down when I like. I work when I like, and if I sell my surplus produce, it is because I do not want it. My good lady goes wandering round her garden, weeding and planting, or sits in the rocker in the porch reading her book. Animal and vegetable are year after year producing so many fold after their kind. I have all the land I want. I can get more if I want it for fifty cents or a dollar an acre. Among good intellectual neighbors, who have their organs, pianos, guitars, and banjos, their books, magazines, and newspapers, who can play and talk, and who have sense enough to be good listeners in their turn, I enjoy life. I do not see the sense of breaking up home, selling off, and going thousands of miles away from friends, amongst Poles, Hungarians, Esquimaux, Finns, or honest Injuns. Did you ever think of the seriousness of the thing? Let us hear what you would do with your wife and children at a wayside station twenty, thirty, or even fifty miles away from your land—land that you have bought on paper but have never seen? How do you find your land? Who goes to show you? How much will you have to pay to have it just shown to you, and how much to get your family on to it? When you get there, what then? Why, when you see your neighbors, oh, my! And how are you going to live? You run to a large town and get work at any wage you can get. You want \$15, what you have been getting, but you take \$7, for you are dead broke. That is the secret of the low wages of the present day. Of course, your money has gone to support non-producing real-estate agents. They are as thick as taverns everywhere. For my own part, I have no

land to sell for myself or anybody else. I have no axe to grind in that form.

Naturally, we all like plenty of neighbors. There is room in this world for every one. Billions of acres are waiting for man to till. In Ponsonby, where I am staying, about 60 or 70 miles or less from Montreal, there are upwards of 300 vacant lots, 100 acres each, at about 50 cents an acre. What cheaper land do you want? There are hundreds of merchants and mechanics in Montreal who have their summer lots of 100 acres there, where they rusticate, plant fruit trees, etc., not knowing the day they may decide to settle down from the worry of city business. There are, too, to my knowledge, many men in this neighborhood who could get their \$15 a week if they went to the city, but they won't move from here. I know many who have come back from Manitoba with the last \$200 or \$300 saved from the wreck, but who are as well off to-day as princes or lords. One old man has fifty sheep; he gets one or two lambs a year from each, worth \$4 in their season. What more does he want? He has no trouble with them. They feed themselves, and if they need a little care from him he does not grudge it. They are grateful creatures,—more so than cousins or nephews, nieces or aunts, or friend generally.

You break up your home, go thousands of miles away, and you are not able to come back. There is an old saying and a true one, "Never reach your arm out farther than you can draw it in again." Of course, the farthest away hills look always the greenest; but bread and butter first, poetry next. It would cost you more to take your organ to the west than you would buy a farm near Montreal for. You can go and come yourself, leave the family till you see the way to reach your arm out full length; never lift one foot till you have fastened the other. Ho, for Ponsonby; plenty of room, as they say in the street cars: "Room for one more; push up there!"

Just you start for Montebello, on the C. P. R. It is about sixty miles from Montreal, and it is a quaint little village. Start, say, two, four, or six of you together. Take with you some biscuits and canned food, a drinking cup, and some small change. Start from Montebello, and walk or drive about eighteen or twenty miles through primeval forest, skirt lakes, cross streams, hills and valleys. You will find it the prettiest walk you ever had. Soon the rail will be within six miles; it



is being laid. Call on the School Secretary, W. Wilson, at the first house past the Post Office, or on the Township Secretary, T. Chambron. They will tell you what lots are for sale. They know who are behind with taxes, the non-residents, etc., or they can show you Government lots for sale. They will charge you \$2 a day to pilot you round and show you the lots, and if there are four of you it will only cost you fifty cents a day each. That won't break you. If they cannot go, they will find some other qualified person to go with you.

Ponsonby is full of everything a man needs; of timber, there is beech, tamarac, pine, maple, spruce, oak,—in fact, nearly every tree you can mention. Lake, stream, rock, hill and dale, beaver meadow, and rolling upland—you can choose what suits you. And you do not buy a pig in a poke either. And when you return from your trip, I doubt if you will find that it has cost you a five dollar bill. We have two saw-mills, planing mills, grist mills, four or five post-offices, school-houses, and Little Bethels in galore of every creed and denomination. They even have a Protestant Dissenting School. What that is I don't know. Perhaps the Editor can tell us; they are generally walking cyclopædias. But good bye. I must catch the train for Montebello. My boy is waiting there to leisurely drive me home free from care. Ta, ta!

Stay a minute, you say? Well? But are we not dreadfully dull in the winter time? Why, no. We have more company than we want both summer and winter. People here have so much time on their hands that they do not know what to do with it, therefore they visit. Why, I have seen some fools drive ten miles to get a bottle of whisky, and ten miles back, making twenty miles. How many of you boaste citizens can afford to waste that amount of time and energy on such a frivolous matter? Could you do it? Not much. Yet some of these men would not take \$1,000 for their little farm. How many of the common chumpy workmen will you find who have a bank-book or a house they would not take \$1,000 for? Ha, ha! Farewell! All aboard for the Ottawa train! So my droll friend was gone, and I am itching to follow him.

Wm. Stuart  
Montreal

1876

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