

THE FARM THAT PAYS.

Paper Read Before the Farmer's
Institute By Mrs. Emily
Hoppin.

A Vivid Picture Drawn of Two Farms
That Were Visited in This County
By the Writer.

Twenty years ago if a farmer wanted to borrow some money he went to his neighbor and obtained the same. Today if a farmer wants to borrow he is obliged to go to a bank, for he knows his neighbor has none to loan, and possibly is borrowing himself. The reasons for this lack of money among farmers are several. Some of them do not lie within the province of this paper, for instance, the low price of wheat and the influence of trusts upon farm products, but the farmer can blame himself in a measure for lack of money.

James Lane Allen says in the Kentucky Cardinal (and I am sorry he said it in regard to one of my own sex): "It is surprising what a fool a woman can be when she puts her mind on it." I can truthfully say that it is surprising what a fool a man can be when he puts his mind upon it. Certainly some of our farmers seem to have their mind turned in this direction.

Suppose we visit the home of one of our wheat farmers. He is considered a good farmer. When I see his wife and daughters in town they are well dressed. They have good horses and carriages. We should expect to see in their home something above the average.

His home is rather a pretentious one, and there is quite an array of out buildings. As we drive up we first see a randall harrow, that probably cost \$100, decorating the road in front of the house. The discs are covered with rust and the paint is worn by the weather, yet it was a new one two or three years before, my host tells me.

The front yard is overgrown with weeds, and near the front door lies a single plow left from the cultivation of the yard the year before. A few walnuts and cottonwoods shade the house, and there are a few rose bushes near the walk. We enter the house and are ushered into the parlor. On the walls are a few family portraits, on the table lies a large Bible and album, in a prominent part of the room stands a little book case containing Bancroft's History of the United States. In a little while I am taken into the sitting room. The room is lighted by a lamp without a shade. The table is bare of books, but on it lies the county weekly and the Sacramento weekly. The room would be absolutely cheerless were it not for the glowing fire in the great fire place.

wonder at the hegira of farmer's sons from the farm.

In the morning, as I am interested, my host takes me about his place. Everywhere are machinery and wagons lying exposed to the weather. A few cows are standing in the corral where they have been milked. I asked of their breed and butter making capacity, but I find my host buys most of his butter, although he assures me that the cows do "pretty well." Some of them when fresh making four pounds a week. A few hens of no particular breed are scratching in the barn yard, but my host says hens don't pay, and do not lay much except in the spring, so he buys most of his eggs and also buys fruit and vegetables.

This farmer cultivates his soil thoroughly, he has good teams, good machinery and works his land carefully, but he thinks it "small" to bother with looking after machinery, wagons, hens and cows. He rises at four in the morning and works till dark, his wife does the same, yet after the cost of production is paid and the living expenses and incidentals, there is nothing left for extra expenses or luxuries or pleasure.

For the sake of comparison we will take the yield of wheat from fifty acres. We will call the average yield nine sacks, which are 12 15-100 cents. We will say the wheat brought a cent a pound, or \$607.50. The cost of production is \$5.20 per acre, which includes taxes and insurance, which leaves a balance of \$6.95 per acre, or \$347.50 from the fifty acres. Evidently our farmer can not have a luxurious living from his fifty acres.

Now, will you go with me to another farm. This farmer drives good horses and has good carriages. His wife and daughters are comfortably dressed. We reach his home. As we near it I notice walnut trees along the road which have been grafted to the English nuts. He has fifty trees only. They brought him in 1000 pounds of nuts, which were worth 10 cents a pound, or \$100.

As we drive up to the house we pass under beautiful olive trees that border the drive, there are twelve. They brought him in eight gallons of olives per tree, or ninety-six gallons, which netted him 85 cents per gallon, or \$81.60. Back of the house is a small orchard containing about fifteen almond trees, a few apricot, plum, prune, pear, nectarine, apple and peach trees. From these my host had supplied his table with fresh and canned fruits and jellies, and had sold from the almonds trees \$60 worth of almonds, besides having several sacks for his own use and some for his friends.

In our farmer's yard are several orange trees which keep his table well supplied. Back of the orchard is a small vineyard of four and one-half acres, containing table grapes, Muscatel and Sultanas. From this our farmer had netted \$500, besides having grapes and raisins for his own use, giving some away and making his year's vinegar.

This farmer had fowls around his barn, but he told me that as an experiment he had shut up thirty of them the year before. They were thoroughbred Brown Leghorn. The thirty hens had netted him \$3 per hen or \$90, besides having the increase of pullets for another year, and males for the table.

He told me he was particular to keep a winter laying fowl, and one that would lay white eggs. During that winter he had sent eggs to the city for a neighbor from fowls of mixed breed. His eggs had brought from four to eight cents more per dozen than his neighbor's; in fact, had sold for choice eggs.

Our friend had an alfalfa field of thirty acres, beautiful in its greenness. On it, apparently very happy, were a few horses, about thirty head of cattle, a drove of swine and a dozen ewes.

His cattle were well graded from a pedigreed cow, that had given when fresh 24½ pounds of butter per week and had averaged for the year over 600 pounds.

Our friend had milked an average twelve cows during the year, they

he had sold \$600 worth. He had discarded the old way of getting the cream through the "setting" process and had bought a separator with a capacity of 750 pounds per hour. He run the milk through this twice a day, it taking from ten to fifteen minutes. The milk was then ready for the calves, warm and sweet. In addition to having the sweet milk for the calves, hogs and fowls he was enabled by using the separator to have the cream ready to put away safe from the flies, dirt and fluctuations of the weather.

This cream he kept in a water refrigerator; one he had learned to make at the farmers' institute of the year previous, and his cream had been kept, he told me, at an average temperature of 58 degrees during the summer time, even during the hottest weather.

He had sold during the year \$250 worth of beef cattle, besides killing for his own use during the coldest weather.

He had bought a pedigreed male for his swine, had killed for his own use and had \$1000 worth to sell.

He had cut from his alfalfa one crop of hay of forty-five tons which he reserved for his own use.

On the alfalfa were a dozen ewes that had brought him \$9 in wool and the increase, which furnished him some mutton for the table and \$16 cash.

On the remainder of his fifty acres, which had been in alfalfa two years before he raised twenty sacks of grain or twenty-seven cents per acre, which after deducting the cost, brought in \$211.80 per acre, or \$327 for the fifteen acres, nearly as much as our grain farmer had from fifty acres.

As the night was coming on our friend asked me to spend the night, an invitation I gladly accepted. We entered the sitting room and saw the same glowing

saved.

One of the most interesting features of the institute was a paper read by Mrs. Emily Hoppin. That it was fully appreciated and enjoyed was demonstrated by the generous applause which followed its reading. Mrs. Hoppin is a graceful as well as a vigorous writer. Her language is always well chosen, her illustrations apt and her conclusions convincing. With a poet's imagination and an artist's skill she presents a picture fascinating because it is life-like.

Her paper presented two pictures. One was that of a farm and a farm home in which the presiding genius was a man of good habits and untiring industry, but who never employed the intellect of the brain to lessen the labor of the hand. He followed aimlessly in old grooves and adhered to traditions. He was a one-crop farmer and his wheat barely paid the cost of production. He had a few olive, orange and other fruit trees, but gave them no attention and never marketed a pound. He had a few cows of uncertain breed, but generally bought his butter, and sometimes bought his meat. He had a few chickens that rambled at will over the farm, but he was frequently compelled to buy eggs. He bought the best of machinery, but always left it unsheltered when not in use. He had but few books and papers in the house, and they were selected indiscriminately. Notwithstanding his unceasing labor, the mortgage continued to grow until the farm fell into the hands of the bank.

The other picture was that of a farmer

who made a study of his business, planned with his head in order to conserve his muscle and who never hesitated to adopt new methods when convinced of their utility. By giving his walnut shade trees a little care they brought him a small revenue. By availing himself of the experience of others, he planted fruit trees that supplied the wants of his family and afforded a surplus which, when marketed, more than paid the expense of keeping the orchard. He had an alfalfa field which afforded him abundant hay all the year around and fattened his

fire our other friend had, but the atmosphere of the home was different. Pictures were on the walls, inexpensive to be sure, but copies of some of the world's masterpieces. A piano stood open. On the music rack were lying Mendelssohn's wonderful "Song Without Words," and some of Chopin's and Beethoven's creations, and some sacred music and songs. The book cases held books written by standard authors and some of the current fiction. On the table around which the family gathered were several magazines, some weeklies, one city and one county daily, Hoard's Dairyman and one paper devoted to stock. A large lamp, well shaded gave a soft mellow light. The room was exceedingly pleasant. The boys of the household settled down after supper near the table and there was no wandering to the town. My hostess told me afterward that so far her sons had shown no desire to spend their evenings away from home.

This farmer friend rose early and his wife, too, was stirring at an early hour. I was inclined to sympathize with her over this early rising but she assured me she enjoyed it. Her kitchen looked off on the broad green fields and to the hills, which she said were a never failing source of strength. Some roses were near by where she could see them and on the piazza some morning glories opened their dainty chalices each morning for her to enjoy, and I have the birds, too, she said, for I do not allow them to be molested, so every day I am cheered with songs from the meadow-lark, the canaries and one beautiful oriole, while a lovely little humming bird has, summer after summer, made her nest in a rose bush. The work is tedious sometimes, but there is work in every business, and after all, your work is what you make it; and then, too, she said, I make my head save my hands a good deal.

I compared my two farmer friends—one with his unlightened drudgery and his small sum of \$350 left for his living, the other, with the work brightened and lightened by the books, pictures, music and flowers, and their income of \$3000 from the same number of acres.

I might speak of a still larger income, the cows, for instance, ought to be so well graded they would bring in \$1000 instead of \$600. Some of the land could be set out to fruit and almond trees, the poultry yard could have accommodated ninety fowls as well as thirty and thus trebled the income, the olive and walnut trees could have been set out all around the place, and have been a source of profit as well as beauty. It is very strange that our Yolo county farmers should go on year after year, struggling with mortgages, when the money lies in their land ungathered; when a wonderful power lies at their very doors, in the water of Cache and Putah creeks and Clear Lake. Our farms only need labor backed by brains, to demonstrate that they hold for us good homes, ease and culture, if we will only try not to be more foolish than the Lord intended us to be.