

THE HIRED MAN'S ROOM

By THOMAS ARKLE CLARK
Dean of Men, University of Illinois.

UP IN the country where I was born and where I spent a few weeks last summer they were complaining not a little about the difficulty of securing competent and regular help on the farm.

I was inclined to discount these statements as to the utter depravity and worthlessness of the hired man, for I had had some experiences of my own as a farm hand during the summers of my undergraduate course in college, and I have still vivid recollections of the hired man's room.

We washed our hands and faces at the pump in a tin basin or in the tub from which the horses drank, and combed our hair, if this menial service were performed at all, in front of a battered mirror hanging outside the kitchen-door.

The room in which we dressed and slept was about eight or twelve feet in size, and was just under the leaky roof with side walls scarcely two feet high and one single, shadeless window looking toward the west.

There was an old rickety, frowsy bed in one corner jammed up against the side wall as close as the slanting roof would permit.

There were flowers at the funeral—roses and chrysanthemums and carnations, and Mrs. Burton sent a huge wreath of violets and orchids.

"Wouldn't it have been a lot better," Jordan said to me as we were walking back home after the services, "if George could have had a little more attention before he died and a little less after?"

"We don't think, I suppose," I answered, "we send our flowers pretty generally after a man is dead."

"Was you ever in the Waldorf-Astoria?" Oscar, my companion in toil, asked me one night in August as we lay sweltering and tossing on our hot mattress.

"I had a little look-in once," I replied, "when I was in New York."

"Is it anything like this?" he inquired. I was forced to admit that the resemblance was only slight.

FLOWERS

By THOMAS ARKLE CLARK
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THE Warners were very poor indeed—so poor in fact that sometimes I am afraid they had scarcely enough to eat. Worse than that, perhaps, they were refined, educated folks who would have appreciated and enjoyed comforts and beautiful things more than most of their neighbors.

George Warner had worked his way through college, had started out on a small salary and with a handicap of debt, and had never got far. His wife had proved an invalid, but she had held on until one of the girls was through college and the second one was in high school, and then she had given up the struggle and died.

Then one calamity followed another. George had a breakdown and was retired on a small pension by the firm for which he had been working, the oldest daughter took to her bed with an incurable disease, and the burden of looking after the family fell on Mary just out of high school.

They had their house, George's pension, and the small sum that Mary could earn by going out a few hours a week to help at social functions. They were proud, and they never discussed their situation with the neighbors who, as is common in such cases, were sympathetic when they gave a moment's thought to the affairs of the Warners, but who did nothing tangible to help out matters.

Mary struggled on. She made her father as comfortable as she could, she looked after her invalid sister, and some way she got enough to keep soul and body together.

Then one day George Warner gave up and died, and the neighbors waked up. They were eager to do what they could; they were overflowing with sympathy for the young girl who had carried the burdens of the family for so long.

There were flowers at the funeral—roses and chrysanthemums and carnations, and Mrs. Burton sent a huge wreath of violets and orchids. The plain little house was full of them, and George had had few flowers during his lifetime.

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THE PENCIL MAKES A FARM PAY BETTER

Farm Accounting Reveals Losing Methods and Points Way to Bigger Profits.

(From Banker-Farmer)

A farm cannot properly be called successful unless it pays a fair rate of interest on the investment and returns fair wages for the farmer's labor. Agriculture is considered by all odds the most important industry in the world, and yet in no other industry is the business end so neglected.

It is common to find a farmer with an investment of fifteen to twenty thousand dollars, yet does he keep books? Perhaps he may jot down a note now and then of an important deal, but this is of no value in an analysis of his business as a whole. No other industry, however small, is carried on without books of some sort.

Farming is a business and to be successful must be conducted in a businesslike way. The business man's mind should have indelibly printed upon it two questions: What profit is my business making? How can that profit be increased? To know the latter, one must find out the former; and to find out about profits requires the keeping of books.

It is not necessary for a farmer to have a course in bookkeeping. Almost every agricultural college in the country has issued a simplified farm accounting book which it sells at cost, and only a few minutes are required each day to jot down the day's happenings.

Accounts Increase Profits

Instances number a thousandfold where farmers have profited by knowing their business. Accounts kept by nineteen farmers in Illinois led them to improve the organization and operation of their farms in ways that added approximately \$650 to their average net income in 1922, the seventh year they had kept accounts.

An Iowa farmer found at the end of the first year he kept books that crops fed to livestock brought more money than when sold outright. His figures showed that his cows were poor; compared with other farms in the state, he found the number of acres cultivated per man on his farm, as well as the number of acres per horse, were below average.

He rented more land and replanned his fields, so that the crop areas per man and horse were increased. He sold some of his scrubs and bought good cows. The second year his income from the farm, after paying all expenses and interest on the money invested, had been increased over \$350.

Costs Can Be Regulated

"I have discovered," says one farm bookkeeper, "that the kind of man you have on a job, as well as the particular team, often makes quite a variation in the cost of performing certain tasks. I have learned from the pages of my book that if I could have increased the yield of my wheat field by two bushels and my corn by five bushels I would have realized a substantial profit from them."

While the farmers may not be able to fix prices on their products, they do have a voice in determining the costs of production. To reduce this cost they must first know what the costs are.

The number of farmers who are keeping books on their business has increased remarkably in recent years, but the number of businesslike farmers is woefully small when listed alongside the sum total of the farmers in the country.

Inventory is Indispensable

The basis of any system of farm accounting is the annual property list or inventory. It is the starting point of the farm records. One must take into consideration decreases or increases in the value of all property owned to gauge the progress of the business. Lacking facts as to the value of his property, no business man can form an accurate estimate of how he stands financially. Increased cash may be due to property which was sold, or increased debts may be due to improvements made. If a farmer is falling behind, the inventory will emphasize this fact. Often when a man is discouraged and thinks he is making no progress, his inventories will tell him that he is better off than he thought.

At the end of each year a financial statement is drawn off. This is the farmer's rating and no farmer with a good financial statement need fear walking into a bank and asking for a loan.

BANKERS HELP

A bank in Monrovia, Ind., tests seed corn for farmers. A basement room was fitted out last season for the purpose and 25,000 ears were tested for fifty-six farmers. One-fourth of the seed tested last year was unfit for seed. This year the percentage will run even higher. The work is done under the supervision of the high school agricultural teacher. He reports that the community will have a surplus of seed corn this year.

The banks of Conway, Ark., have offered prizes for the most marketable sweet potatoes produced on one acre of land. A first prize of \$150 is offered, along with three district prizes of \$50 each. The county agent and the banks are working out the details. The County Bankers Association will help to employ a full time county leader this year for boys' and girls' club work in Calhoun, Cherokee and Buena Vista counties, Iowa.

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THE FIRST SNOWFALL

By THOMAS ARKLE CLARK
Dean of Men, University of Illinois.

I GET a good deal of satisfaction out of the first snowfall. The poetry of it still appeals to me not a little, though I have gotten pretty well over my childish desire to engage in snowball fights and to hitch my hand-sled behind coal wagons and other vehicles as they roll down the street.

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Accounts Increase Profits Instances number a thousandfold where farmers have profited by knowing their business. Accounts kept by nineteen farmers in Illinois led them to improve the organization and operation of their farms in ways that added approximately \$650 to their average net income in 1922, the seventh year they had kept accounts.

An Iowa farmer found at the end of the first year he kept books that crops fed to livestock brought more money than when sold outright. His figures showed that his cows were poor; compared with other farms in the state, he found the number of acres cultivated per man on his farm, as well as the number of acres per horse, were below average.

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