

Why Farming Doesn't Pay.

The readers of the Sun have noted the results of our recent inquiry, "Does Farming Pay?" in the shape of numerous replies from those who know. A like inquiry has been prosecuted by an Indianapolis Journal with substantially similar results. The farmers of Indiana are not, it is found, in as good a position financially as they were a year ago. Wheat sells for 75 cents, against 81 a year ago. Corn and oats have fallen six cents a bushel. There is a depression of two cents a pound in the live hog market, while barrel pork has fallen to \$5 a barrel. Other hog products are down in the same proportion. The crops have been satisfactory, but they bring less than formerly, and the decline continues from year to year. With this decline of the value of the farmer's product, there has been a corresponding decline in the value of his land investment. Lands situated near manufacturing towns like South Bend have depreciated like the rest. A farm for which \$95 an acre was offered a few years ago, was recently sold at \$30. One farmer, who has for many years kept a record of his operations, states that formerly he made 15 per cent. profit yearly on his investment in a farm of 140 acres, while during the past ten years he does not average over 3 per cent. On \$20 acre he cannot now do as well as he formerly did on 140. At the same time that the farmer's profit and capital have been growing less the cost of living has been increasing. The sugar trust has put up the price of sugar, and the other trusts, through their agents, have raised the price of high tariff, have followed its example. The "home market" afforded by the establishment of manufactures near at hand has proven a delusion, as it pays for the farmer's products only the prices fixed in the foreign market. In New Hampshire the steam whistles of the factories have become over the fields of 851 abandoned farms. In Vermont the case is still worse though the farmers there use the bells and whistles of neighboring factories in lieu of dinner horns. A cash market for produce at one's door is of no avail if the cash received does not pay a profit on the value of the labor and investment. The railroads, with their cheap transportation rates, have destroyed the superiority of the home market over any other. What the consumer of agricultural produce does nowadays is to send to Chicago for his beef, to Minneapolis for his flour and to New York for his corn. If a farmer friend in the neighborhood asks a paying price for his produce. The prices prevailing at centres like Chicago and Minneapolis are determined at Liverpool and London, where the farmer's surplus is sold. It amounts to this, then, that the farmer but his sugar and other necessities in a home market made dear by the protective tariff and sells his products in a cheap foreign market in competition with all the world. How has he gotten into this absurd position? Everybody is prospering just now but he. Evidently somebody has the value for his corn. An Indiana farmer tells how it is. "The laws of the country," he says, "are made in the interest of anybody but the farmers, and until he wakes up that fact and demands his right he can never have his share in the country's prosperity." There is a strong feeling among the pretended friends of the farmer—subsidized, no doubt, in many cases—to divert his attention from the high tariff, the chief cause of his trouble, to questions of currency, inflation, &c. There is a vast deal of printer's ink wasted to prove to him that the best object, disconnected from the interests of the farmer, could be more ridiculous. The silver kings of Nevada would like very well to dup him into a false position, as the tariff lords have too often done, but it is to be hoped that his hard fortune in the last year or two will open his eyes to his real interests.

A Sketch of Edison.

The subject of this sketch was born the 11th of February, 1847, at Milan, a small canal village in Erie county, Ohio. Here he passed the first 13 years of his life, after which he became a news boy on the Grand Trunk railway. It is said that he never went to school regularly for more than a couple of months of his life. However he was fond of reading and had a searching speculative mind which more than compensated for his want of "book learning." It is not generally known that Mr. Edison once edited and published a newspaper. But it is a fact. While on the road he erected a chemical laboratory and a printing office in an old baggage car. The title of his newspaper was the Grand Trunk Herald. On one occasion while experimenting the car caught fire and the conductor after extinguishing the flames threw the laboratory apparatus and the Grand Trunk Herald out of the window. One day having a heavy load of papers to take into the cars, he asked some gentleman standing by to help him in the car, whereupon the man obligingly caught him by the ears and lifted him upon the platform. This incident impaired his hearing and he has been somewhat deaf ever since. While on the road he learned a good deal about telegraphy and was ever afterwards a reckless experimenter. For several years after attaining his majority he moved about from place to place as telegrapher, sometimes being discharged for negligence. At Starford, Canada, being required to report the words sent to the man who every hour to show that he was awake, he invented an apparatus to do it for him. At Indianapolis he kept press reports waiting while he experimented with new methods for receiving them. One night while employed at Louisville, he was experimenting for how to put a message in a cup of sulphuric acid which played the mischief with a banking office below. At New York he invented an instrument to print the stock quotations by which he made some money. This caused him to be retained by the Western Union Telegraph company, to give the President of the telegraph inventions. From that time until the present he has had uninterrupted success. He lived for several years at Newark, N. J., engaged in the manufacture of a Gold Indicator. While there he fell in love and married Miss Mary Stillwell. Becoming dissatisfied with the manufacturing business, he located at Menlo Park, N. J., where most of his inventions were made. Here he won the appellation of "The Wizard of Menlo Park." His laboratory was in a two-story wooden building, painted white. Here every day and night surrounded by numerous assistants of chemical and curious instruments he could be seen in a blue flannel suit, spotted over with acid seeking new ideas and inventions. Mr. E. keeps a private secretary to look after his extensive correspondence. It is said that he receives over one hundred letters a day. Mr. Edison has two children, one Dot and the other Dash, named after two symbols of the telegraphic alphabet. Long live Thos. Alva Edison, and may his name be in the South be pleasant and profitable.

ACTS LIKE A CHICKEN.

Strange Effects Resulting from Being Pecked by a Mad Hen. A remarkable case of madness, resulting from a wound inflicted by an angry animal, has recently appeared near here on the plantation of Joseph Middleton, which lies about three miles from this town, writes a Brazoria (Tex.) correspondent of the Philadelphia Times. A negro woman employed by him while setting a hen to hatch a nest of eggs raised the fowl from the nest in order to do so. The hen turned on her and gave her a peck on the hand so severe as to break the skin, drawing at the same time a few drops of blood. As the wound healed up without doing her any harm, she was thought of the matter, the woman only mentioning the occurrence casually to some of the other negroes on the place. Some ten days after the hen had pecked her the woman began to exhibit strange frolics of demerol, and, from a good-natured, obliging creature, has become so fractious and surly that all are afraid to approach her. She refuses all companionship and wanders about the country all day from early morning, only coming to the house for her meals. If any attempt is made to confine her or to lay hands on her she becomes violently angry, and makes various dashes and springs toward any one present. For days now she has not spoken a word, but keeps up continually a low, clucking noise, most horribly like that of a hen, and sits by the hour searching in the earth with her hands and feet. In eating her resemblance to a fowl is displayed in a most remarkable and shocking manner, for her food is taken up by her pecking at it with all the motions of a chicken's head while feeding. All who know her before her madness say that her entire expression has undergone a change. This is probably true, for her features now wear a sharp, eager aspect and her eyes have a most unnaturally hard and bright look, with a kindling way of glancing about her. At night she refuses to sleep under a roof, and is generally found hiding about sunset under some tree or bush, and will vigorously resent with an angry cackle all attempts to disturb her. She is visibly growing weaker, and physicians who have seen her say that her death is only a question of a few weeks at most. The negroes about regard her as one bewitched or "hoodooed," and can not be prevailed upon to approach her, even her husband and children having deserted her. People come from all over the country to see her, while she remains to all appearances perfectly oblivious to her visitors and quietly pursues her pecking as long as she is not interfered with.

CAST ON A BUOY.

The Thrilling and Perilous Adventure of Two Picky Boys. At a picnic held at Fort Pickens, Fla., last summer two young men, Max Glen and Jake Forsheimer, went out in a small boat for a row along the bar. While they were trying to round Santa Rosa Island their boat was drawn into the current, and in spite of all their efforts they were borne rapidly outward toward the Gulf. "If we only had a flag or something," said Jake, "we could call help from the shore, p'raps." Max's fortile brain quickly devised a signal. Both boys wore white cotton shirts, and in an instant Max had pulled his shirt off and was waving it on his car. He stood up in the boat, the better to be seen from shore, and vigorously waved his signal of distress. The boat suddenly swayed, and Max lost his balance and fell overboard. He floated helplessly on the water, and the next instant both boys were in the water. Jake succeeded in getting a hold on the side of the boat, and Max, who was buoyed up by the oar which he still grasped, soon drifted alongside where he could seize the boat. Neither Jake nor Max could swim. How long they could maintain their present situation was uncertain. They were in constant danger from sharks. Fortunately, sea-boy No. 10 was right in their course. The boat drifted against it and stopped. "Let's get on the buoy," said Jake. "It's our best chance," and suiting the action to the word he soon climbed upon it, and then reached down to Max, who lay on his back in the water. Jake drifted away while they were attempting to right it. Meantime their friends on the shore had seen their flag of distress and understood their danger. They were frantic when they saw Max fall. They ran to the life-saving station for help, and a boat at once started to the rescue. The boat failed to discover the youths on the buoy. They searched the Gulf for the greater part of the day, but as length they gave up, thinking the sharks had devoured them. A boat from Barrancas happened along toward evening, and, fortunately, came near enough to the young men's raft to be heard. They were soon released from their uncomfortable position, after having been over five hours on the buoy. "We like to have broiled there in the sun," said Max, "and at one time six sharks were swimming near us. If there had been any sea on 't would 'a' been all day with us. If the waves had struck us, we couldn't have stuck there a minute."

Scop a Little to Boot.

About the time that Daniel Drew began his Wall street career he was up in the country one time to visit some friends and two farmers called upon him to decide a case. One had sold the other five bushels of wheat, and proposed to measure it in a half bushel, and sweep the top of the measure with a stick. The other objected, and Uncle Daniel was asked to decide. "Well, legally speaking, a bushel is only a bushel," he said. "And can the measure be swept off?" "I think it can." "What with?" "Well, if I was selling wheat I should probably use half the head of a flour barrel." "Which edge of it?" "Gentlemen, that is a point I cannot now decide on," sighed the old man. "If I was selling to a widow or a preacher I am certain that I should sweep the measure with a straight edge, but if I was selling to a man who pastures his cows in the road and his pigs in his neighbor's corn, I am afraid I should use the circular side and scop a little to boot."

The Milk of the Coconut.

The Colonies and India relate that a new trade has lately sprung up between India and Germany. A trade in coconut butter, which some German chemist discovered could be made from cocoanut milk. The cocoanuts are sent to Germany from India, chiefly Bombay, and one firm turns out from 8,000 to 8,000 pounds of coconut butter daily, which is said to be pleasant to the taste and smell, easily digestible and incomparably better and more healthful than cheap butter or oleomargarine from Europe.

Richmond and Danville Railroad.

Table with columns for Train No., West Bound, East Bound, and various station names like Boston, New York, Philadelphia, etc.

DOUGHTY SAM JONES.

Some of the Sayings to Which He Gave Utterance at Lynchburg, Va. God never called me to preach like other men, nor other men to preach as I do, though some have tried it and got badly left. God Almighty made me just as I am, and I have never interfered with the job one particle. I'll promise you one thing: to tell the truth as it sticks to you like a curbstone to an old sheep's wool. It'll be there when you shear him. I don't mean by an honest man one who pays his debts. That's the meanest sort of honesty. Any man of sense or decency will do that if he can. Some church people, however, are afraid to walk along some streets for fear of meeting a man who won't pay. They do business as "agents," and board their wives in order to successfully rob their creditors. If any body asks you to take a drink, he thinks you're a hypocrite, and if you take it he thinks right. I've more respect for a faro dealer than a progressive church pastor, because the faro dealer plays for money to support his wife and children, while the progressive church pastor plays for nothing but a booby prize, for which he risks damnation. The church member who rents his house for a saloon is like the Confederate who fought on our side, but ran a powder mill for the Yankees. He didn't kill any Yankees, but supplied the powder with which they shot down thousands of rebels. The preacher that tells his house such a member ain't any better than he is. I wouldn't give ten cents to hear Ingersoll on "The Mistakes of Moses," but I'd give ten dollars to hear Moses on the mistakes of Ingersoll.

DEADWOOD'S BELLE.

She is an Orphan. Every Body's Pet, and the Belle of Deadwood, S. D., is a young and dashing girl. Her name is Margaret Sanford, and she is an orphan. Who her mother was no one seems to know. Her father entered a mining camp about twelve years ago, foot-sore, ragged, almost starved, having walked across the country from Nevada to the miners' camp. He had a few dollars and began to constitute themselves little Margaret's body-guard. One night, says the Philadelphia Inquirer, the old man was found dead before his door, which the drifting snow had fastened so he could not enter. The child was fast asleep inside. After the funeral she came to a settlement, going as a cook's assistant, and making many valuable discoveries of ore. She learned to use the rifle and revolver, and became one of the crack shots of the camp. With two exceptions she was never molested, and there was a funeral after each of these attacks. A year ago she struck an ore bed richer than the most in that vicinity, and again her miners to the spot. This time they made a voluntary contract to give her one-fourth of the yield. They kept their word, and now she is a rich woman. She is tall, slender and good-looking, and wears long golden hair streaming down her back. On horseback she is a perfect backwoods picture, with her short skirt, buckskin leggings, brown blouse and wide-brimmed hat.

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John Jacob Astor Forgot Six Millions.

At the death of William B. Astor, father of the late John Jacob, says the N. Y. Star, after everything pertaining to the enormous personal estate was supposed to be arranged, the dying man suddenly said: "John, what did we do with that six millions of registered U. S. 4's?" "We have forgotten them, father," replied the son. "What had we better do with them, John?" "That's a good idea, John. Hurry a man to Washington specially, and have them transferred before I die. This was done, and the incident is a suggestive pointer as to the vastness of the property held and to be disposed of.

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