

A Successful Adventure in Agriculture

How a Homeless English Lad Became a Successful Canadian Dairyman

By W. G. ORVIS.

IF the successful adventures in Canadian agriculture by men from the Old Land were all chronicled, they would fill many books. That there have been many failures all will admit, but because of them, most of us are all the more willing to respect those who, coming to a strange country and starting with nothing, have worked their way well up to the front rank of farmers. When a young boy of 14 years of age is taken from his home and surroundings to a far-away land, where he finds himself penniless and in a large measure dependent upon those with whom he lives, who could wonder if he did lose heart and never climb high upon the ladder of agricultural success. The subject of this story, Mr. Fred Hillman, Prince Edward Co., Ont., is built of other stuff, for, instead of failure—he can point with pride to successes that many others, more favorably placed, have not achieved.

"In the year 1871 I came to Rawdon, Hastings county, from England," said Hillman. "I was only 14 years of age, and was penniless. I knew practically nothing of farming, but was anxious to learn." Therein lies the secret of his success. Unlike many who have come to our farms with seemingly no desire to improve, he was willing and anxious to learn. He worked for six years for his first employer, receiving in return his board and clothes. As an example of how he had to work he quoted to me his recollections of his first job in this country, which was bunching peas with a hand rake, truly a man's job.

Saving the Pennies.

Early in life Mr. Hillman developed the saving habit, and as he had no other habits to make inroads upon his earnings, after the necessities for food and raiment were provided for, the balance was put in the bank. In evidence of his thriftiness he said, "I hired to a man in Sydney township for \$10 a month, and in 18 months saved \$50." From Hastings county he went to Toronto, where he met a farmer who asked him if he was looking for work. In a short time a bargain was made whereby he was to receive \$20 a month and board. Mr. Hillman tells the story of this place as follows:

"We drove out Yonge Street for 16 miles and arrived at the home of my new boss near Richmond Hill, about supper time. After the meal I was sent to the field to mow barley with a scythe, and the next day given a place in a fall wheat field to rake and bind after the cradle. The boss watched me for a while, then he went away remarking that the new man had done that job before. Apparently he was satisfied with me, but I was more than satisfied when, at 10 o'clock in the forenoon, some one from the house brought out a pan of hot coffee and a nice lunch. This happened again in the afternoon, and I thought that I had struck the ideal place to work."

From York county Mr. Hillman went back to Hastings county, where he spent two or three winters in lumber camps as cook, gaining independence and much knowledge of the way of doing things. One instance of how such a life

develops the resourceful side of a man was found when the cook's shanty was burned down and all the cooking had to be done in what was something like an open fireplace, only much more crude and likely to tax the originality and the patience of the cook.

Enough money was saved during these years to enable Mr. Hillman to try farming, and a small farm was rented in Hastings county, and three cows purchased from Mr. R. J. Graham for \$32. This farm soon became too small to utilize all



A Countrywoman Who Takes a Real Pride in the Farm Flock. Mrs. F. C. Smith, Haldimand Co., Ont., and her flock of over 150 White Wyandotte chickens, raised this season. They are from the famous strain developed by John B. Martin, Norfolk Co., Ont., a breeder and exhibitor of international note.

the energies of our friend and he sold his stock and implements and took a large place on shares. On this farm everything was found for him, and he did all the work for one-third of the crop and produce. Things did not run so smoothly here as prices were low for the things to be sold. Compared with present-day prices they were very low. Butter sold for 11 cents a pound; dressed pork, five cents a pound; eggs, eight to ten cents a dozen, and potatoes only 30 cents a bag.

For several years Mr. Hillman worked this place and then hired out again to farmers who kept good stock and tilled their land for big production. All through these many shiftings there was, however, one purpose dominant in his mind. This was to own some good stock and a farm of his own. Consequently, when the opportunity came to take a farm on shares in Prince Edward

county, where there were a large number of cows, he was not slow to accept it. At the end of two years he bought out the entire stock and implements, paying nearly all cash. He then rented a large farm on the southern shores of the Bay of Quinte to begin farming in earnest.

His First Pure-Bred.

About this time, Mr. Peter Parry, a Holstein breeder, died, and his entire herd of pure-bred Holsteins was to be dispersed. Mr. Hillman decided to attend the sale, and, if possible, purchase at least one female. Victoria DeKool was knocked down to his bid of \$53 by the auctioneer, and she was taken home with much pride, for, with her the realization of cherished dreams came nearer. Victoria proved to be a cow of great profit to her new owner, and her record gives very conclusive proof of the wisdom of purchasing pure-breds and keeping their progeny. She was bought nine years ago, and to-day Mr. Hillman has 23 of her female descendants in his herd. All the male calves have been sold for good prices, two of them being purchased as premiums for the circulation department of Farm and Dairy. As the young pure-bred females freshened, the grades in the herd were disposed of, and now only pure-breds are kept. As evidence of their producing ability, the August cheque for 14 of them in the local cheese factory amounted to \$175. Three of them were two-year-old heifers, and sufficient milk was kept at home for the family needs and to feed five pure-bred calves. The average production of the cows for the first nine months of this year is given herewith:

January, 1,985 lbs.; February, 1,944 lbs.; March (two of three cows milking coming in late in the month), 2,411 lbs.; April, 1,223 lbs.; May, 1,496 lbs.; June, 1,643 lbs.; July, 1,220 lbs.; August, 1,000 lbs.; September, 1,953 lbs. The average production for each cow a month during this time was 1,116 lbs., and the total production of the herd for the nine months was 60,428 lbs. of milk.

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Compensations in Farming

The Material Rewards Are Not All

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WHILE I was sitting comfortably by the fire the other evening the question came to me, "Why are you a farmer?" I tried to answer it candidly and truthfully from my own viewpoint, and I would like to pass my conclusions on, hoping they may assist others, as they did me, to a more clear understanding of the matter.

My first thought was that it was for the money there was to be made, but from a careful analysis of my position I found that this could not be cor-

rect, for there are many more in the business than there is money to be made. It is for the leisure time anyone who has had farm knows that leisure there. Neither was it and pleasures to be enjoyed have they been, a pleasure was I a farmer? In other question, "Why answer came quick a statement forced me, men farming to-day that I did. Destiny living and the farm was open. But though I tried to engage in farming, aspects it is not the tions, still it offers numerous cases that those who for a lines of work have resorted to a deliberate choice of backs.

When a boy works a small lake. Many of the enjoyable evenings this lake afforded, as when winter came I had ample opportunities skating and ice-boating. This did much to make my life on that farm enjoyable one. I remembered also that there was a pair of horses in which I took great pride. They were common in many respects, but good workers, and I became so attached to them that when the time came for me to go elsewhere they were the hardest things on my place to part with.

Later I worked for a man who was just starting in pure-bred cattle. As a hired man, it was take much interest in them, however, interested pedigrees, naming of the caring for the cows to us. We were all so interested in the drudgery that cattle.

When I started farming one or two pure-breds, as a hired man increases the fascination of some of these things on the farm that it is holding us to it in spite of the many alluring things in other vocations, and of the many hard and disagreeable things that come to all who live on the land. I heard a prominent Holstein breeder say recently that if it were not for pure-bred cattle he would not farm for ten minutes. Another man, who is still young, and in a sense growing up with the business, remarked to me that the farm with a pure-bred herd of cows was more to



The First and Second Prize-Winners in the Holstein Aged Cow Class at the Pr. Edward Co. Fair. On the right is Keyes Segis Walker (Prize), 1st prize and champion cow. On the left, Princess Segis Walker, winner of 2nd prize on the aged cow, owned and exhibited by Partelle and Leaven.