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The Field.

A Visit to my Neighbours to Find Some Way to Make Money and Mend my Circumstances.

The new year having arrived, with its customary festivities and consequent leisure and inclination to visit one's friends, I, among other restless spirits, who have nothing to do and plenty of time to do it, concluded to devote a few days to visiting my neighbours. In my opinion such recreation is absolutely requisite, as a farmer is much confined at home during the summer season, and the fall and early spring roads offer little inducement to leave home on visiting excursions. But, with good sleighing and a good fast horse, some time and a little money to spare, I consider it very advisable to see what others are about.

The present object in my mind is to acquire some insight into the management and feeding of cattle for the butcher, as well as a knowledge of how to raise the feed for so doing to the best advantage. It is manifest from the state of my farm accounts just balanced, that unless I make some alteration, either my wants must be fewer and less well supplied, or somebody will suffer. Growing grain alone will not pay. My farm is getting every year more foul with weeds and thistles, and the consequent yield of grain per acre less and less; so with a crack of the whip, away goes old piebald at a fast trot of nine miles an hour, to see what others are doing.

Just as I turned out of the side-line on the concession, I was hailed by my old friend Johnson, an intelligent Englishman, whose hearty halloo for me to stop at once decided my course for the trip. After some chat and explanation of my object, he asked me at once to turn back with him. He gave the reins to his son, and jumping into my cutter, we wheeled south instead of north, as my course formerly lay, and drove towards his farm, situated about ten miles off. Of course

we were soon talking shop, and I explained some of my difficulties. After listening attentively for some half hour or more, he said, "Your case is not singular, and was just mine three years since. I will give you the outline of my life and trials some years back. Four years since I could not meet my store account, which would grow in spite of all I could do. My wife did all she could to economise; our children were poorly dressed; the blacksmith's account in arrear; wheat all sold every fall, directly after harvest, to meet the absolutely necessary expenses, and each year for a while afterwards I felt a little easier. But about New Year's Day of that year, the store account came in, with a polite request for attention, and not to forget to call. Heaven knows, I attended to it enough, for it was never out of my mind, nor did I forget to call, but I did not call, for the very simple reason that it was no manner of use to do so, if payment was the object of the polite request for a visit. I talked to my wife, and we concluded that it was better for her to go, state facts and request time, offering my note for the amount. I have always felt mean ever since when I thought of it, sending my wife instead of going myself; but I had so frequently made excuses to account for irregular payment, that I felt more like running away from the village than visiting it. There was, however, no help for it, and the result of her explanations was that time was given, and I was once more comparatively at ease in my mind as to the future. But money must be earned, and how to do it was the question. As usual, when I wanted a bright idea, I consulted with my wife, who at once hit on the idea of taking a job from my next but one neighbour, of logging and fencing about 30 acres of land that some contractors had chopped, but failed to complete. A bargain was soon struck, and the terms, if I had a good season and fair returns, probably remunerative. I was to have \$4 an acre and the first crop for my work of logging, burning and fencing. I and my sons could, I knew, do the work, with one

hired man, and a good crop would make me forehanded. Early in the spring I got as many rails split and rail-cuts hauled off the fallow as would fence the land, and after my own seeding was finished we attacked the job with a hearty good will. The weather was favourable, and we soon had the job well on towards completion. My crop was good that year, and paid all my outgoings, and when harvest of the following year came, I had over thirty-five bushels per acre of fall wheat on the job lot, and sold the whole for \$1 25 a bushel. I had now a fair start, if I could only keep it; and after harvest was over, early in September, I ploughed up about ten acres of old grass sod. The work was carefully done, and in the spring, after spring seeding was over, I turned all my strength on this ten acre piece. My idea was that the half-rotted sod would yield a good crop of turnips. I dragged the land thoroughly, being careful not to disturb the sod, passing the harrow lengthwise over the land. I harrowed and rolled alternately, with intervals of a few days, until the 20th June, when I sowed the turnips in drills twenty inches apart. I was most careful never to get on the land unless it was quite dry, and in good order. The turnips came up well, and grew rapidly; and what gave me no little satisfaction was that the weeds did not grow. This fact I attributed entirely to the way I had worked the land; the constant stirring the soil had caused all the seeds, or most of them that were within the influence of the air, to germinate, and the following harrowing destroyed all that had vegetated. When the turnips were about two inches high, I made a small light harrow with wooden teeth, and passed it over the land, driving across the drills. This course eventually completed the destruction of every seed that might have previously escaped; it had the effect of exposing as much as possible of the root of the turnip, which is the best remedy for "fingers and toes" I know of, and once hoeing completed the work. The result of that crop of turnips was about