The Farm and Fireside.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY. TORONTO, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1893. [5 CENTS A COPY 75 CENTS A YEAR]

WAYSIDE CHATS.

One of my last week's correspondents said he intended going into swine raising and for that reason had asked me several questions. I purpose now giving a few pointers about swine, which I hope will be profitable to many others besides the correspondent I have in my mind. Canadian farmers can raise more pigs than they do, and as a noted breeder said recently, there is a necessity for better pigs. There are good reasons for breeding more pigs, as the demand for Canadian pork in the English markets is unlimited, and the prices paid there are higher than those ruling in the United States.

The hog for the market, or the kind that yields the most ready cash and the highest price, is the subject that interests hog raisers. Mr. P. Sharpe, of Toronto, in a paper read before the Ontario Swine Breeders' Association said:—Some writers in agricultural journals uphold that old standby, the Berkshire, while others endeavour to boom the Improved Large Yorkshire. Each breed is endowed with desirable characteristics, yet each is characterized by peculiarities which it would be better without. In the Berkshire we have a compact, and consequently easily fatted hog, but the superabundance of fat and shortness of side depreciates its value in the market of to-day. It must be admitted that the Berkshire sows of the present time are not as prolific as those of former years. For this there may be some exceptions, but experience and observation go to show that the first litter from young Berkshire sows generally consists of from three to five pigs, and afterwards they may reach eight or ten at each farrowing. The Yorkshire, in contrast to the Berkshire, gives a long, deep side, with the fat and lean well intermixed, the kind of pork now in demand. The length of body of the Yorkshire, and in many instances the coarseness of frame structure, renders them somewhat less easily fatted than the Berkshires. In regard to the prolificacy of the Yorkshires, they are certainly one of the most prolific of the breeds of swine, giving birth to litters large in number and uniform in size. Looking at hog raising from a financial standpoint, the number of pigs in the litter is certainly an important one.

Each breed possesses strong points and weaknesses that the other does not, so that the most profitable, as well as the most suitable, hog for the market, may be found to be a cross between the two. This cross has been found to be very satisfactory wherever tried. The use of an Improved Large Yorkshire boar on grade Berkshire sows, is a practice that might be profitably followed by many who are raising hogs for the market. While the thriftiness and good breeding qualities of the Berkshire might be retained, the length, size, the intermixture of the fat and lean meats, and the remarkable fecundity of the Yorkshire are characteristics which would greatly improve the common hog.

Having said something pertaining to these two noted and popular breeds of swine, it is now pertinent to take up the question of the general care of the sow. Mr. N. S. Huff, of Downsview, says that the breeder must have a definite object in view of the kind he wishes to produce, and then make a standard of excellence, or his ideal of what he wants. In-and-in breeding should never be practiced, for it is generally detrimental and against the laws of nature, producing degeneracy, infirmity and weakness of different kinds. The sow for breeding should not be selected from the pigs before six months old. Select a large, roomy animal, oblong in shape, with a broad loin and deep sides, rather heavier behind than in front, good coat of long, glossy hair, short legs, with the outside of the body which in fore legs means a good constitution; hams thick at hock; thick in flank; the head small and dished, and bone strong. Do not breed before eight months old; the older the better for a future breeder. Coupled with an imported Berkshire boar of rather stocky conformation, the offspring will be almost without exception a fine uniform litter. An aged boar is preferred, the single service quite sufficient, the quality better, and the number greater. The sow should be bred about November 7th for March pigs.

The condition of the pen has much to do with success in raising pigs. If it is warm and comfortable, they may come in during March but if it is unsuitable for that season, a month or six weeks later is to be preferred, and the returns will be equally good in the end. The thrift of pigs depends largely on the condition and care of the sow in farrow, as it has a great influence on the offspring. Some breeders assert that to produce strong, healthy and thrifty litters, the sow should be kept thin. This is a serious mistake for a sow in poor condition when farrowed cannot take enough food to properly nourish the hungry little ones, which are a great drain on her. Little pigs will not thrive well unless they receive enough food from the dam to keep them the normal size for the age, which accounts in some measure for the many stunted pigs often seen. The sow in good condition develops the nice pigs, as she has some extra flesh to draw from, thus giving her two sources to draw from to make a healthy litter. Bread her as long as she is prolific, producing uniform litters, for there is no more profitable animal on the farm.

During gestation the sow should have a full ration and plenty of exercise, but should not be given too much concentrated food if in high condition. The ration for a sow in first-class condition should be shorts, barley meal, and roots—the grain ground together, and the roots pulped. The sow in poor condition during the first half of the period may be fed on food consisting of fat-peas or corn, barley, and oats, ground and sprinkled on sliced carrots or mangolds. Carrots have a larger amount of fat than mangolds. In the last half of the season the first mentioned ration should be given. Roots not being very expensive, should be given freely.

The sow should be placed in a quiet apartment by herself at least two weeks previous to farrowing, so that she may become reconciled to her new quarters. She may be allowed to run out during fine weather, but care is necessary lest she meet with an accident. If possible when parturition is about to take place, some one should be on hand to care for them if necessary, especially if the temperature be low, lest the little ones suffer a chill. In such a case sometimes it is necessary to remove them to the house and warm them, and in the interval the soiled bedding can be removed. Do not feed the sow until she looks for it, then feed lightly, giving warm slop of milk and shorts, about two pounds, and two tablespoonsful of raw linseed oil. Increase the feed gradually until the third day, when a full ration of peas, barley, and roots, ground together, in equal parts, may be given. Some scald the ground grain and boil the roots, and add to it bran of the same weight, which is a soothing, a stimulating food. Bran and ground barley are good for milk.

When the pigs are two weeks old, they should be induced to eat, and thus lessen the strain on the sow. Sweet skimmed milk with shorts, in a trough not accessible to the sow, is good and when so fed, they will scarcely miss their mother when being weaned. They should be castrated when three weeks old, and may be weaned when four weeks old, but they had better be left with the mother until six weeks old. Do not remove all the pigs at once, and leave one or two in order to let her dry. The sow should not be given much succulent food; peas or corn with a little sow is weaned, she may be served again when in good condition. Several days after the for an August litter.

The little pigs should be separated so that her five sows in each department as they will there be less. Such housing can be easily done in summer, and in winter at a small cost. Feed three times a day, milk, shorts, and oatmeal. If there is a yard in connection with the pen, the ground should be hard and from ten to twenty feet from there, but it should be partially protected from the sun. Once a day ground food or chard grass, vetch or clover, and later on, peas and sweet corn stalks and corn—may be given. As soon as the pigs are large enough for table use, feeding for fattening may commence. Pigs fed on bulky, green food have a larger capacity, and digest a greater quantity of corn or peas when being fattened in this way, increasing weight in a quarter time, and thus adding to the profit of the breeder. If clover is fed, it should be sprinkled with ashes, as it contains an injurious acid. Coal or wood ashes, powdered charcoal and salt should be given regularly in order to keep the pigs healthy. Salt promotes digestion and is a preventive of cholera and worms. Give the above ration until the pigs are five months old then give peas or corn whole and dry, and all they will take, to put on the finish. Occasional feeds of clover, peas, or beans, improve the quality of the pork.

Never feed any kind of sour food except sour milk, as it is injurious. Pigs relish wholesome pure food, and it pays to give it to them.

The spring pig is the most profitable, as the warm weather is favourable for its growth and such pigs should gain a pound a day. One of the pigs reaches about 200 pounds, feeding is unprofitable, as little weight will be added. The pig, pastured, can be produced at a less expense than in a pen. Generally speaking, one loss on the farm is the grain in the stubble. The breeding stock and the pigs should be turned in to this, as they will do well there if given nothing but drink. Before putting the pig in the pasture it should be ringed to prevent rooting.

If possible, sell your pigs alive, unless the difference between the price of live pigs and dressed ones is too great, as considerable time is spent on dressing them. Dressed pigs, however, if nicely done, sell more readily than live ones, and often at a higher price.

I hope I have not wearied my farmer friends with so much talk about pigs, but pigs mean money and that is my only reason for giving so much space to them.

* * *

"A Canadian Girl," from Epping, invades our corner for the first time, but she kindly drops a suggestion for "Daphne":—

"Dear Tramp,—I have always been interested in the Chats, but never ventured to enter the corner as a correspondent until now. I never fail to read the first and third pages of Farm and Fireside, and find many useful hints by so doing. I see your correspondents are tending towards political discussion—woman suffrage in the rear.

"I think women, if they wish to do their duty, have their hands full already. Why not leave politics to those who are more able to contend?

Mr. Tramp will you please explain to me how it is that our carbon oil is not as good as American oil? We have been using American oil lately, and find that it does not blacken the lamp chimney as the Canadian oil does in selling oil on the American side, what measure is used?

Here is a suggestion that perhaps 'Daphne' could find useful in making Xmas presents. To make a bookmark, either pure white ribbons, ie tested in gilt, or coloured ribbons, lettered in black, may be used. Two pieces of ribbon each twenty-four inches long, and three-fourths of an inch in width, are required. Join the two ribbons in the centre by means of a ring, leaving the four ends free, and print the following quotations in lettering, one on each half of the ribbon. 'Thoughts rule the world.' 'Read on and on.' 'Take in the ideas of the day.' 'Retain the true, reject the false.' Or this verse may be used:—

Then read from the treasured volume,
The poem of thy choice,
And lend to the rhyme of the poet
The beauty of thy voice.

"To the end of each ribbon some small trinket may be attached, such as a small bell.

"As this is my first letter, I hope it will not find its way to the waste basket and that I may be allowed some future time to again visit the fence corner."

It has not reached the waste basket, as your letter is worth a better fate. We make as good a refined coal oil in Canada as is manufactured in the United States, but the great trouble is to get it, as the dealers do not make as large a profit by handling it as they do with the inferior grades. Sometimes the burners are at fault, the perforations or gauze holes getting choked with dust, so they should be washed in warm water. Or, first try the effect of putting a little salt in the lamp along with the oil, which improves the flame. On behalf of "Daphne" I thank you for your bookmark suggestion. Such a mark would be a neat and cute present.

* * *

"Amateur," Napanee, asks for information concerning a tree protector:—

"Dear Tramp,—Having been a subscriber to the Mail for years, and a constant reader of the correspondence in your fence corner, in which department I take great interest, I therefore take the liberty of asking for information in regard to an article I see advertised in the Mail. I allude to the Patent Composition Tree Protector, advertised in last week's Mail by McGill Bros., London, Ont., in 'Situations Vacant' Column. I would like to know if it is a reliable article, and will really protect trees from the apple worm codlin moth, etc.? There are so many frauds perpetrated upon the people they have become suspicious. I would try the article if I knew it was what is claimed for it. You seem to know about everything, so I apply to you. If you would not care to give the information, perhaps some of your fence corner correspondents may have used the article, and could give the information."

I know nothing whatever about the article advertised, and therefore cannot express an honest opinion concerning it. Write the firm, and ask for testimonials, and then drop an addressed envelope to the writers of the testimonials for their private opinion. I wish I could help you.

* * *

"Ganymede," one of my most regular and welcome visitors, again turns up this week:—

"My dear Tramp,—We are now enjoying the finest of sleighing. Between the 21st and 25th of November we had an immense fall of snow in this part of the province, considering the season. We have now a good two feet on the level, and business is booming in the wood and log line.

"'Minaico' wants my ideas on the Single Tax question. Well, to tell the truth, I know very little about it; so little that I do not feel like giving an opinion upon it at present. Come forward, 'Minaico,' and give us your ideas upon the question, and We Us & Co. will soon set you right if you do not advance something pretty good.

"Well, 'Snowflake,' as you are a newcomer I suppose we will have to let you down easy, and not be very hard on you but for the life of me I do not know how to do it. You say that 'women to-day are showing themselves equal if not superior to man in almost every branch of trade or profession that requires intelligence and tact, etc.' You are labouring under a false impression if you think that it is owing to their great intelligence and tact that women are filling so many positions at the present day, that were formerly filled by men. The only reason why women are filling these positions is that they work for one half the salary that is demanded by men, and as a great many people are still of the belief that the cheapest is the best, they are very liberally patronized at present. Now, 'Snowflake,' I am going to prove that woman is not equal to man in mental capacity, and I defy you to prove otherwise. According to phrenology the average size of a man's head is 22 1-2 inches around, the average of a woman's is 21 1-2 inches. Therefore you must admit that a man's brain is larger than a woman's, and as the brain is the organ of the mind, man must have a larger intellectuality than a woman. It is a general fact that the larger the pieces of wood, iron, etc., are, the stronger they are; that large horses, persons, etc., are proportionally more powerful than smaller ones, and this of everything else. The phrenological law is that size, other things being equal, is a measure of power. As man is larger in stature than woman, therefore he has more power. As I have shown that man has a larger brain and more power he must certainly be the greatest in mental capacity. As for women casting aside all party feeling and voting for the best legislators as they thought, it is all nonsense. If she were married woman she would have to vote as her husband told her, or break her marriage vow to obey her husband. If she were single she would vote for the man who was the biggest blarney, for it is a well understood fact that woman in the majority of cases cannot resist when her approbativeness is touched.

"I am glad to see you in the corner, 'Cupid.' Your first suggestion for debate is very good, but would not last long on the side of war, as Canada has never lost very much that way; but as to the loss she has suffered by whiskey it would fill volumes if all her losses were put down in print.

"Well, 'Raindrop,' you want to know what was my idea for making a racket with everyone in the corner. Why it was just to see the fun. If we all agreed with one another there would be very tame to the majority of us young people. But as it is, I think that we all look forward with eagerness to the day when the Fireside comes, just to see who is giving us a drubbing this week. It makes us sharper and quicker to see a point, and must certainly benefit our debating societies. You want a description of yourself, as you are pictured in my imagination. Well, here goes—but you must set me right in every mistake I make. You are dark, with hair inclined to curl; five feet four inches in height, neither thin nor stout, weight 127 1-2 lbs., 23 years, 4 months, and 16 days old on the 25th of Nov., hazel eyes, straight nose, with a curved upper lip, round featured, a slight receding forehead, well rounded chin, fair and ruddy and free as the dancing waves on the dark blue sea. Now in return you might give a description of 'Ganymede.' No, 'Raindrop,' I cannot agree with you when you think that women should have a vote. Voting is a necessary evil, and if women only knew what is good for them they would never enter politics.

"I wish I could give you a receipt for barley pudding, 'Heather Bell,' but as I never ate or saw the 'stuff' I know nothing about it.

Well, Mr. Tramp, did you get the card I sent you in regard to the Single Tax question? Perhaps you were not able to supply the information I wanted. What do you think of my envelope?"

Are you not mistaken, "Ganymede" when you say that the women would have to vote as their husbands directed them? The vows taken when the marriage ceremony is performed are rarely observed to the letter by either of the contracting parties, and while the husbands may strive to love and cherish, the wives like to have their own way, and they generally succeed. I like your frankness, when you say that you fall foul of some of our visitors just for the fun of the thing. Controversies, of the most friendly character, serve a good purpose so long as they are kept within proper bounds, as they tend to brighten and quicken our reasoning powers. I gave you the address required, but I do not see the point about that envelope. Another evidence of my obtuseness. We had a good snow storm on Sunday, and our first sleighing this season.

* * *

"Lonely Will" comes forth from his Maritime home to break a lance with "Ganymede":—

"Dear Tramp,—Is it possible that I must advance once more within the old fence corner after an absence of four months to racet again my old opponent 'Ganymede,' of Bayfield to pick up the tangled threads he has let fall, to try to unravel them in such a manner as to prove satisfactory to him, so that he may not err again? Well, Mr. Tramp, in the November 2nd issue of Farm and Fireside, after a long vacation, our old hostile visitor once more advances on the scene. This time, if I remember aright, to give 'Lonely Will,' the Nova Scotian drone, a drubbing, but if I am not mistaken 'Ganymede' knew perfectly well at the time of writing that the said Nova Scotian drone was more active in meeting his arguments than any he ever knew of. Did you ever hear such absurd doctrines as he has set forth concerning the card-playing question? After lighting his pipe—mark you, dear boys and girls, he confesses openly that he uses that vile and abominable weed known throughout the land as tobacco—to steady his nerves while he wields his pen, he proceeds to the defence of card playing. 'Ganymede,' you allow that I was a little too severe on you and you think that I wrote quite an epistle on July 6th, and that I growled like a dog with a sore ear. By calling me a Nova Scotian drone you paid me quite a compliment, but I cannot congratulate you on the choice of words used in your comparison. I put myself on the same platform as Sir John Thompson and Sir Hibbert Tupper simply because, like myself, they were Nova Scotians by birth, and not drones, politically or otherwise. Has not 'Lonely Will,' being a Nova Scotian, a chance to succeed in life? I do not like personalities, and will not indulge in them. Cannot you carry on a nice little discussion without descending to barroom methods. You are an intelligent man, and we expect you to display your intelligence by treating your opponents in a gentlemanly way. Please do not disappoint us.

"As for euchre playing, my friend, may I call your attention once more to the fact that I am ignorant of such a game. It is a game I know nothing about, nor, by God's help, never will, and my advice to every moral young man or woman is to shun such evil recreations. The very name seems to creep o'er my frame with a deathly feeling. As far as card playing is concerned I can and will give you some arguments to digest at some early period, as time will not now permit. Yours,

"Now, Mr. Tramp, one word with you. I am so glad that Mrs. Tramp had such a glorious vacation in the country this summer. I know dear Mr. Tramp, that you needed every day and hour you spent on the farm with your old friend Mr Henry. Did you an idea what city life is like, especially in the heat of the summer? I did appreciate your letters while on the farm right merrily, and the many amusing incidents you related brought a smile to the face of a dreamer like 'Silent Will.' I am right glad to see Uncle Isaac gathering once more back to the old fence corner. I see my old friend 'Raindrop' has once more visited Toronto and she has not forgotten 'Lonely Will.' That's right, 'Raindrop,' we touch elbow way, side by side, through the thickest of the battle, and we will not mistake one another now. I will close for this time with love to all the merry boys and girls of the fence corner, not forgetting my kind respects to you and Mrs. Tramp."

I am glad you enjoyed those letters written while I was holidaying. Lonely Will, as I found it hard work to tear himself away from all my kind friends for a few hours while penning those letters. If they contained anything that amused or edified any one I am well repaid for my work. You will soon hear from one of our friends, as there is a attraction here that they cannot resist, I believe that you and Ganymede quit chaffing with each other, and recollect that you are carrying on a discussion in the presence of ladies.

* * *

"Bushwhacker," of Muskoka, is a new arrival, who favours woman suffrage:—

"Dear Tramp,—If your letter box is not already too full, will you kindly make room for a young lady from the North. I have heard and read a great deal about your fence corner, and have thought many a time I would drop in and see what it is like. As I expect it is widely different to the fence corners on some of the farms in this locality and hour you spent on the farm with your old friend Mr Henry, gave you an idea what city life is like, especially in the heat of the summer. I did appreciate your letters while on the farm right merrily, and the many amusing incidents you related brought a smile to the face of a dreamer like 'Silent Will.' I am right glad to see Uncle Isaac gathering once more back to the old fence corner. I see my old friend 'Raindrop' has once more visited Toronto and she has not forgotten 'Lonely Will.' That's right, 'Raindrop,' we touch elbow way, side by side, through the thickest of the battle, and we will not mistake one another now. I will close for this time with love to all the merry boys and girls of the fence corner, not forgetting my kind respects to you and Mrs. Tramp."

I am glad you enjoyed those letters written while I was holidaying. Lonely Will, as I found it hard work to tear himself away from all my kind friends for a few hours while penning those letters. If they contained anything that amused or edified any one I am well repaid for my work. You will soon hear from one of our friends, as there is a attraction here that they cannot resist. I believe that you and Ganymede quit chaffing with each other, and recollect that you are carrying on a discussion in the presence of ladies.

* * *

"Bushwhacker," of Muskoka, is a new arrival, who favours woman suffrage:—

"Dear Tramp,—If your letter box is not already too full, will you kindly make room for a young lady from the North. I have heard and read a great deal about your fence corner, and have thought many a time I would drop in and see what it is like. As I expect it is widely different to the fence corners on some of the farms in this locality. Now, Mr. Tramp, that you needed every day and hour you spent on the farm with your old friend Mr Henry, gave you an idea what city life is like, especially in the heat of the summer. I did appreciate your letters while on the farm right merrily, and the many amusing incidents you related brought a smile to the face of a dreamer like 'Silent Will.' I am right glad to see Uncle Isaac gathering once more back to the old fence corner. I see my old friend 'Raindrop' has once more visited Toronto and she has not forgotten 'Lonely Will.' That's right, 'Raindrop,' we touch elbow way, side by side, through the thickest of the battle, and we will not mistake one another now. I will close for this time with love to all the merry boys and girls of the fence corner, not forgetting my kind respects to you and Mrs. Tramp."

I am glad you enjoyed those letters written while I was holidaying, Lonely Will, as I found it hard work to tear himself away from all my kind friends for a few hours while penning those letters. If they contained anything that amused or edified any one I am well repaid for my work. You will soon hear from one of our friends, as there is a attraction here that they cannot resist. I believe that you and Ganymede quit chaffing with each other, and recollect that you are carrying on a discussion in the presence of ladies.

* * *

"Bushwhacker," of Muskoka, is a new arrival, who favours woman suffrage:—

"Dear Tramp,—If your letter box is not already too full, will you kindly make room for a young lady from the North. I have heard and read a great deal about your fence corners