

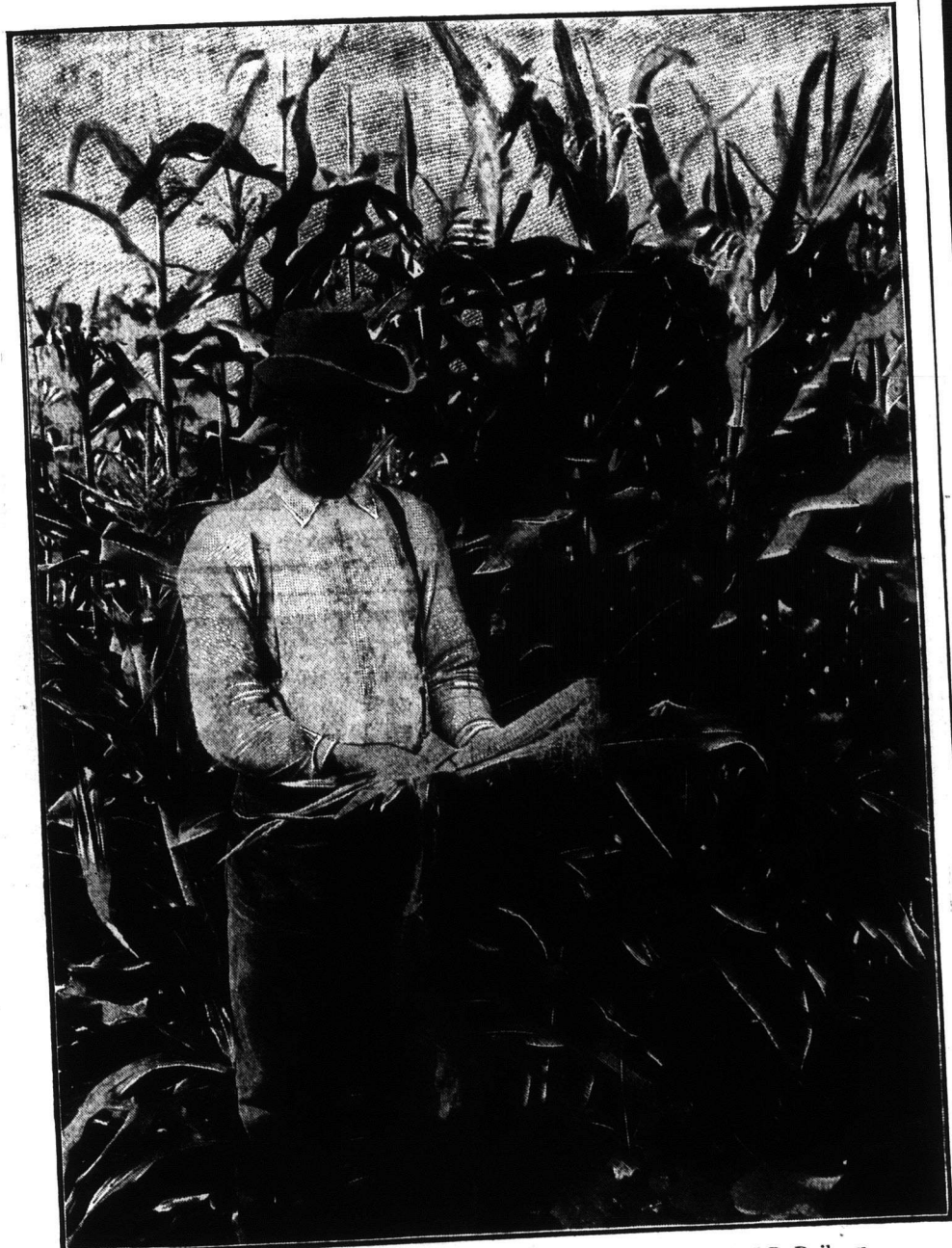
they understood it. They lived a simple, frugal life on the hilly farm which had been first settled by my great-grandfather more than a century before. I was endowed, however, with what, in no boastful spirit but simply as the expression of a fact which I know how to designate by no other term, is called the artistic temperament—the deadly, happiness-destroying type of intellect which longs for higher education, culture, the larger and fuller life that seeks acquaintance with what my parents would have called the vain pomps and glories of this wicked world.

"At first they rejoiced at my love of reading, the quickness with which I learned, and even at my passionate fondness for music, and the rapid attainments I made in that art. They gave me every educational advantage within their power, and finally sent me to the nearest co-educational college, in which I graduated with honors by the time I was twenty-one. But they were utterly horrified and scandalized when I, a year before the end of my course, confided to them my desire to become an actress and make the stage my life work.

tion, we were engaged, although my parents knew nothing of this. My betrothed promised to make, within a few weeks, a visit to the little town where I lived, and then, after meeting my father and mother, to seek to secure their consent to our marriage.

"This he soon did, but alas! the evil fates had yet another blow to inflict upon me. I had forewarned Harold, who was a young lawyer with liberal opinions regarding all the questions of the day, about the extremely old-fashioned religious views entertained by my parents, and their violent prejudices where these were concerned. He had promised me to use all possible discretion when such things were touched upon; but, unfortunately for him and for me, my father soon drew from him the confession that he was unorthodox in his belief. Furthermore, by direct questions he learned that my betrothed did not believe in the verbal inspiration of the Bible, and that he held almost every lax and dangerous view against which the preacher in our church at home was constantly declaiming.

"At once, therefore, my parents branded



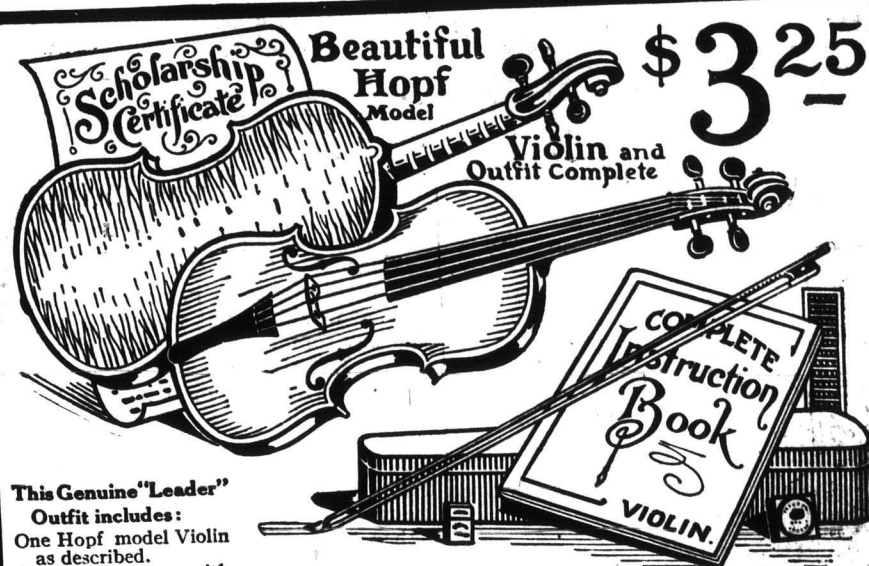
The Corn Belt Creeping North. On the Tofield-Calgary Branch G.T.P. Railway.

"Both my father and mother treated this proposition as nothing less than the direct inspiration of the Evil One, an open confession that I wished to devote my life to all that was wicked and abandoned. Each of them declared that if I persisted in this design if would inevitably bring down their gray hairs in sorrow to the grave. And in face of this opposition, knowing that my parents told the truth regarding the effect that the carrying out of my plans would have upon them, I gave up my cherished ambition.

"But that was not all. At the very end of my last year at college I met The Man. His name was, I will say, Harold Duval, although of course, he had no such melodramatic cognomen as that. Handsome, well-educated, ambitious, dashing in manner, he was a very Prince Charming who came into my life and took my heart by storm. With him by my side, I should have altogether forgotten my disappointment at not being permitted to take up the career for which I longed. When I left for home after my graduation,

my betrothed as an 'infidel,' and conceived the most violent prejudice against him, although he could have escaped being thus stigmatized only by telling direct falsehoods, which of course he scorned to do. In addition, they conceived the idea, and quite honestly, I think, that it would mean the loss of my immortal soul if I married this man. They now saw in my desire to be an actress a temptation which, when I had fortunately escaped, the Prince of Darkness had followed up with the subtler design of encompassing my eternal destruction by uniting me to an unbeliever. They begged and implored me to give this man up, and finally forbade my meeting or speaking to him, threatening me with the awful curse of father and mother, if I transgressed their command and married him.

"I did not know what to do. Much as I loved this man, having given him my whole heart, yet I did not dare to elope with him and marry him as he urged at our secret meetings; for beside the fact that this would have seemed to me



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