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Issued  
Each Week

# FARM AND DAIRY & RURAL HOME

Only \$1.00  
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No. 27

## HOW TO GET THE BEST OUT OF HIRED MEN By an "Ex-Hired Man"

**A Farmer, who once Worked for Farmers, Discusses the Question of Managing the Hired Help from his own Observations, both as an Employer and a Hired Man—From First Hand Experience he Tells of the Likes and Dislikes of the Laborer.**

FOURTEEN years ago I started working as a hired man on a dairy farm. For the past seven years I have managed my own farm, and from this double experience I have good reason to know that the most delicate questions that the average farmer is ever called upon to decide are connected in some way with his hired help.

How to maintain the attitude towards the hired man or men that will keep them in good spirits and friendly towards their employer, and at the same time to be firm enough that the men will know that commands must be obeyed, is the hardest mental attitude to attain of which I know. There are, however, a few general likes and dislikes characteristic of practically all hired men and all other classes of men, to which we farmers must cater if we would have satisfactory help.

### PROGRESSIVE FARMERS FAVORED

My experience is that a hired man likes to be with a going concern. Just the other day at the customary picnic I heard a bunch of hired men discussing their joys and grievances.

"Work for that man," exclaimed one derisively. "Why, I wouldn't be seen off the farm with his team of rackabones. It would be bad enough to have to whip those crippled old mares of his with nobody around to see."

"Yes, I left him last fall," another remarked. "I couldn't stand it feeding straw to those frames that he called cows any longer."

These remarks reminded me of an experience that I had myself when a lad of 20 years. I had answered an ad. in a paper and had written that I would go and look at the place. The farmer met me at the station. The first disappointment was the honey house and rickety wagon. We drove about four miles and finally reached "home," as this farmer called it. I didn't see anything home-like about it. There wasn't a tree within a hundred yards of the unpainted house. The barns would most surely have fallen down if they hadn't been leaning against each other. The fields were weedy. The fences were in disrepair. The cattle standing around the barnyard fitted in finely with their dilapidated surroundings.

I did not stay there. I went and hired with one of his neighbors, whose home really looked homey, and who I could see was a real farmer who took a pride in his occupation.

### WHOSE FAULT WAS IT?

The man whom I had originally come to hire with did not get a man until the season was half over, and then he had to take a fellow whom nobody else would have. He couldn't understand his hired help. I don't suppose he has yet realized that men who have their labor to sell like to sell it to a going concern.

I have always kept this in mind in my own farm management. I aim to have as good a dairy herd as any other man in the district; and I find it a comparatively easy matter to get my men interested in that herd and its milk records. Each of my two men have a first class team over which they are given entire charge, and the pride that they take in their teams would do your heart good to



**A Useful Pair of Twins**

These two big stave silos are on the farm of Geo. H. Montgomery, Missisquoi Co., Que. In these silos is preserved the corn which constitutes the basis of the ration fed to Mr. Montgomery's splendid herd of milking Ayrshires.

see. I do not consider that there is anything unusual about this. I know from my own experience as a hired man that when I got a good thing to look after I looked after it well.

### "A THORN IN THE FLESH"

Did you ever stop to think that to be behind with the farm work is a thorn in the flesh of the average hired man. You may argue that it doesn't matter to the hired man whether you are up with your work or not, that he is paid so much by the day or month, and that if there is any loss from being behind you are the loser.

This argument reminds me of a little experience of mine. I was working in Oxford county at that time, and working for a good farmer too; but he seemed to have a faculty of being just a little behind all of his neighbors in getting his crops in. The derisive remarks of neighboring hired men made me so good and sick of that place that I quit.

We should remember that our hired men discuss the progress of the season's work among them-

selves just as we farmers do. If you will put on your thinking cap you will probably remember having heard your hired man remark, "We got the last of our corn in today," and have seen his face fall when one of the neighboring men remarked, "That's nothing. Our corn field is beginning to show green all over."

### SYSTEMATIC WORK PREFERRED

But if there is anything that will try the temper of the hired man it is being sent around from one small job to another, completing none of them. Just eight years ago now I was acting as herdman in one of the biggest pure-bred dairy herds in Canada. I was getting good pay and my work quite light; but I only stayed there four months! Here was my schedule for the last afternoon I was there:

At one o'clock I started to clean calf pens. Had just gotten well started at that job when the boss decided that he would fix up the silo; it had caved in on one side. We worked about an hour at that when the boss was again afflicted with a change of mind and decided that the silo could wait while we repaired the orchard fence. We really completed that job. During the rest of the afternoon we started to put a fence around the pig yard, heeded a short time in the kitchen garden, mowed part of the lawn, started to clean some harness, and finally got the cows in for milking a half hour late, and only one complete chore to show for the afternoon's work. That man was the most erratic I ever worked for. He never had any complete schedule ahead of him, but just went for everything the first minute it came into his head.

### A GOOD MANAGER ADMIRER

It has been my experience that men do not mind having the day's work mapped out for them. They admire a man who can lay out their work and knows to within a few minutes just how long a job should take. The hired man is a reasoning being. He knows that he is paid to work and not shirk, and so long as the farmer, in fair in his demands he will do his best to live up to his schedule.

I have left the most difficult part of hired men management to the last, principally because it is a problem that I have not altogether solved myself. That is, the manner to be adopted by the employer in dealing with his men.

I do not like that word "master" that is so frequently used by farmers. It doesn't show the right relationship between employer and employed. I believe that the nearer we come to making the men feel that they are partners in our enterprise, the better they will work. There is no place on the farm, particularly in this new and democratic country, for the farmer who goes around with a stately bearing and never opens his mouth except to give orders. That doesn't go here, although I have seen a few men who say that "it's the only way to keep a man in his place." Such a man is rarely the one best served.

Occasionally there may be a man who must be dominated over, or he will not work. They say that the negro is that kind of a laborer, though I cannot say from experience. The proper attitude, however, for the average man on the Cana-