

selected from the most productive and healthiest hills the year before. For several years back care had been taken in the selection of the seed. We were not used to having our potato crop so uniform and thrifty. The cause began to dawn upon me. We had never thought of selecting a certain type of tuber from special hills for seed. Ours were taken from the bin after the table had been supplied for the winter. We cut and planted them without any special soil preparations. I found out that a clover stubble had been manured and plowed the previous fall and the soil put in good tilth in the spring. Tubers were cut in sets having two "eyes", or more and weighing about two ounces. It was explained that they had found small-sets did not contain sufficient food to give the young plant a start if adverse conditions prevailed. The sets were planted about three inches deep, and, when growth commenced, frequent cultivation was given to conserve moisture and kill weeds. I understood killing weeds, but what was meant by conserving moisture? This was explained and I began to see new reasons for cultivation.

How do you account for the vines being so green and healthy?" I asked. "Oh, we never let the bugs get a start, and we have found that it pays to spray with Bordeaux mixture to guard against blight," was the reply. "Furthermore, this spray seems to stimulate growth and increase the crop. We usually apply the mixture three times in a season and sometimes more often. Poison is added to kill bugs, and so one spraying serves two purposes." I learned that my new friend kept track of what it cost to grow a crop of potatoes and knew at the end of the year the profit per acre. This was news to me and I was about to make further enquiries when my uncle called that he was ready to leave. The half hour had opened up a new phase of farming to me and for the remainder of the trip new methods and ideas were continually being brought to my attention. The scales had at least partially been removed from my eyes, and, as we sped along I began to see new possibilities in the old farm that had given father, and his father before him, little more than a fair living.

For several miles we traversed clay roads and noticed that in places, probably for a half-mile or more, the road would be good and then for some distance it would be rough and full of deep ruts. When enquiring the way to a certain place, my uncle happened to comment on the condition of the roads and it was then we found out that the good roads had been made and kept that way by a continued use of a split-log drag. It was pointed out that in the spring and fall, and after heavy rains, a few farmers on the concession would take their teams and drag the roads in front of their places, thus preventing ruts from forming, and always keeping a crown on the road. The poor roads were in front of places owned by farmers who did not believe in devoting their time to the public good without receiving pay. I at once saw an opportunity for doing some work in front of the home farm. I had heard about the drag, but its usefulness was not impressed upon me until I saw some of its work.

We dined at the next place we called, and, after dinner, we all took a walk back over the farm to see the crops and stock. Some of the crops looked no better than our own, but my attention was arrested by a field of oats that was superior to anything I had previously seen in length of straw, plumpness of grain, and freedom from smut. I learned that the seed of eight of the ten acres had been treated with formalin for smut. It certainly was a demonstration in favor of treating the seed. There were eight acres with barely a trace of smut, but the grain on the remaining two acres was at least one-third smutted. If anything, the home crop was even worse than these two acres, and I began to see another way of increasing the value of our crops at slight expense. We were shown the results from carefully selected seed and our host informed us that since he had commenced saving seed from the best parts of the field and then thoroughly grading the seed before sowing, by running it through the fanning mill several times, he had increased the average yield considerably, but he purposed hand-selecting enough heads to sow a small plot and save his seed from it. In this way he was positive production could further be increased.

In the pasture was a herd of twelve exceptionally fine looking cows and I immediately surmised that they were pure-breds, but no, all but three were grades but a pure-bred bull had been used for years, and heifers saved from the most productive cows. In this way the herd had been graded up and were averaging between 9,000 and 10,000 pounds of milk in a year, testing around 3.8 per cent. butter-fat. Yes, every cow's milk was weighed at each milking and records kept, so that he knew exactly what every cow was doing at the pail. In the winter, feed was weighed occasionally so as to arrive at the feed cost per cow, and note what relation it bore to the milk yield. Uncle enquired if our cows gave much milk, but I was forced to say "I don't know," as we didn't keep records but in my mind I was resolving that next year I would have some idea. In a paddock a three-year-old bull was running loose and the owner gave us his pedigree and told the records made by his dam and sire's dam. He was a splendid individual and his good characters were stamped on his progeny. A number of sleek, thrifty calves were running in the orchard. They were much superior to anything we had at home.

Nothing unusual occurred during the remainder of the afternoon. We passed some fine looking farms where everything was kept in good condition; stock looked well, fences were in good repair, gates swinging

on hinges, yards tidy, and weeds cut. Other farms looked the reverse and stamped the owner as slovenly, careless or indifferent. The night was spent in town and the next day our trip was resumed. Again we saw the well-cared for farm homes, with the houses surrounded by nice lawns with shrubs and flowers showing their gorgeous colors. On some holdings the barns were painted, and, to my mind, it increased the value of the property. At one place we called during the forenoon there was a herd of pure-bred Shorthorn cattle that was being fitted for one of the large shows. The attendant gave me considerable information about feeding, caring for and training cattle that were to enter strong competition. I discovered that this was a business in itself. While I had seen stock on exhibition, I had never paid much attention to it, but when the many important details that must be considered were explained, I wished we had pure-bred stock at home. I saw that there was more money in them than in ordinary grade cattle and one could not help but take more interest in looking after them.

One other important point was gained at noon that day when I watched the horses being fed. I liked horses and it was my work to look after them, at home, but it was always difficult to keep them fat. There was no restriction made on either the oat bin or hay mow, consequently I fed liberally. But here was a man whose horses were fat and sleek, who only fed a mere handful of hay and no more grain than I did. Then it was explained to me that a horse's stomach being small he could not digest to best advantage large quantities of roughage. The morning and noon feed of hay should be small, but should be increased at night. He claimed that it was wasting hay to feed too much. I was inclined to doubt his theory, but resolved to try it out on our own horses and see what effect it would have.

We were back home by sunset, after having spent two very enjoyable days. I had seen more in these two days of what was being done outside of our neighborhood than I ever had previous to this, and our own methods seemed out-of-date as compared with what progressive farmers were doing. I realized that these men used their heads as well as their hands in doing their work. Brains are as essential to successful farm-

stables and around the show-ring. I learned a good deal about type, etc., and was intensely interested when representatives of the herd I had seen in August were led into the ring to be compared with individuals from other herds.

I find that it is necessary to get away from the farm occasionally and see what others are doing. It is easy to be self-satisfied and get in a rut if one continually remains at home with his work. Everytime I meet other farmers, stockmen and business men, I get ideas because I am now looking for them.

Our farm and surroundings look more attractive than they did two years ago. By growing crops our soil is best suited for, sowing good seed and looking after the stock better, our returns are increasing and we believe will continue to increase. I am not working now because I am compelled to, but because I like the work and find it interesting. The longing to leave the farm and go to the city has left me. Farming is a big job and requires head work as well as hand work to make a success of it. Two years ago I was discontented, now I am happy with the stock, crops, etc. The motor trip, with the opportunity of learning what others were doing, changed my idea of rural life and prevented me from quitting the farm and going on the pay-roll of some firm in the city, thus tending to decrease the production of food and to increase the cost of living. True, life is not all sunshine on the farm, but before deciding definitely to leave it, view the work from every angle. If it isn't giving you a living find out why. It is very often the man, not the farm, who is at fault.

Wellington Co.

FARMER'S SON.

THE DAIRY.

Poor Versus Good Sire.

Although a scrub bull is still to be found at the head of some herds, his place is gradually being taken by the sire of good individuality and whose ancestors have made profitable returns at the pail. The sire lacking type, conformation and quality and of nondescript breeding has been the means of keeping many dairymen struggling along to make ends meet. One poor cow doesn't do the herd much permanent harm. She can be sold, and at most there will only be two or three of her progeny in the producing ranks, and their value will depend largely on the quality of their sire. With a bull it is different. If he is a poor one, he is an extravagant animal to keep on the farm. He is worse than worthless, as his poor qualities are transmitted to his offspring, and one bull may be the sire of thirty or more heifers in a year. Supposing one dairyman has ten heifers a year for three years, the length of time a bull is usually kept on the average farm, from a poor bull, what does it mean to him? In fact, the loss cannot be estimated, but it would be more than the price of two good bulls. The sooner dairymen realize that the poor as well as the good characters of the sire are transmitted to the offspring, the better it will be for the dairy industry. It is often necessary to spend money to make money, and there are few places where money will return as large interest as when invested in the right stamp of a bull. A poor bull in the herd shows plainly the thoughtlessness of the breeder. It is a case of holding the penny so close to the eye that the dollar farther off cannot be seen. It is foolishness rather than economy to buy a common or scrub bull because he costs less money than one with character and breeding.

Cows used to give little more than enough milk to feed their calves, and the records that are being attained to-day are the result of using good bulls. High prices are being paid for sires that have the proper backing. Are the animals worth the money? When we read of the progeny of such sires giving 30,000 pounds of milk and 1,200 pounds of butter-fat in one lactation period, and then think of these dams transmitting the producing qualities to their sons and daughters, the reply must be in the affirmative. The results do not all occur in one year, or in one generation, but each succeeding generation shows an improvement. On the other hand, if a bull is deficient in quality or is from a poor producer, those characteristics are passed on and the breeder loses in the end. The right kind of a sire may cost \$200, while a scrub bull may be bought for \$75. Here is a saving of \$125. It is three years before the heifers commence producing, and the interest at six per cent. on the investment of the poor bull will bring his cost up to about \$89.32. The well-bred bull will have cost \$237.50. The care and feed for the three years is about equal. Consider bull calves from the good bull of no more value than from the



Golden Fern's Noble.

Grand champion Jersey bull at National Dairy Show, Springfield, Mass.

ing as they are to carrying on any other business. In the morning father and I discussed several problems which had presented themselves to me and while he did not agree with all my ideas he was willing that I should work out some of my plans. That was two years ago. I have not revolutionized the farm work, or made a model farm out of the old place, but I have made some changes and have discovered that our soil is as productive as any if given a chance and that pure-bred stock will live on our farm as well as on others.

I immediately began keeping records of our cows, and the results surprised the whole family. Most of the cows we owned two years ago have been sold. The scales pointed out the boarders our eyes were unable to see. They were sold to the butcher and others put in their places, two of which are pure-breds. The bull we were using, no longer suited, so we purchased one whose ancestors had proven to be valuable animals. The price almost shocked father, and brought forth uncomplimentary remarks from the neighbors, but his progeny are superior to anything we ever had on the place, and when his heifers freshen we will have a greater idea of his real worth. A record herd cannot be built up in a year, but we have made a start.

I reduced the hay ration for the horses more than half and in less than a month I noticed an improvement in their condition, without increasing the grain, and, if anything, they were working harder than earlier in the season. In reality I had been wasting a lot of hay. I also discovered that some cows pay for heavier feeding than others. In fact, where I previously saw drudgery, I now see something of interest at every turn.

The trip increased my thirst for information about farming, and that fall I attended the Canadian National Exhibition. While I still took a delight in going through the mid-way, more time was spent in the