

cient interest and importance to justify a little explanation and amplification. My remark had reference to those who have made dairying "their exclusive business," so that when drought killed the pasturage and dried up the summer streams, the milk supply utterly failed, and having no other string to their bows, very serious inconvenience and loss were the results. I was not writing against specialties in agriculture. A farmer, like a doctor, whose understanding and practising all branches of his business, may devote special attention to some one branch of which he is particularly fond, or in which he is unusually skilful.

I think there is a tendency in certain districts of Canada to go too exclusively into dairying. They are spoken of as "dairy districts," not only because dairy farming is carried on in them, but because of an idea that they are better suited to that branch of agriculture than other parts of the country. It is not very long ago that even well-informed dairymen had the idea that the limits of successful cheese making were very narrow, and the people of a few localities imagined they would enjoy a perpetual monopoly of supplying the world with cheese. It used to be thought that good cheese could not be made in Canada or the Western States, and therefore New York was looked to by the residents in those localities for this article. Now, Canada and the Western States rival and even beat New York in raising this product. It is not easy to set limits to the area from which good cheese and butter can be made.

Too much dairying will have the same effect in course of time that too much wheat growing has had in the past. Farmers are apt to go pell mell into that which, for the time being, is found to be a paying branch of their business. Thus, the early colonists in Canada, in the State of New York, in Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland, etc., found tracts of land, which for many years, by simply ploughing and sowing, yielded abundant crops of wheat and tobacco. In less than two generations many of these lands became utterly sterile, and there are areas in the South that after a hundred years of fallowing will not raise a remunerative crop of any cereal plant. Many Illinois farmers pursued the same course in regard to Indian corn, until now it no longer pays to raise that grain. A few years ago, there was a mania for fine wool, and hosts of farmers took the "Merino fever." Some fancy strains became famous, fictitious values were put upon them, until a single ram was sold for the price of a good farm. This sheep fever led to over-production of wool, and consequent low prices. Reaction followed, good sheep were slaughtered by the thousand, and the business of wool raising became as unduly depressed as it had formerly been improperly elevated. The hop mania of a few years ago is another sample in point. Flax-growing, too, in some sections has been similarly over-done. So, too, there is danger lest dairying in certain districts may become too exclusive. (1)

Ordinary farming cannot be made to pay and maintain the fertility of the soil except by a proper system of crop rotation. Rotation of crops implies mixed husbandry. As Mr. Scott observes, "dairying is not a very exclusive business, unless the cows are bought in the spring and sold in the fall" of which there are not wanting instances. Another method in which dairying is made too exclusive is when more cows are kept than the farm will support, so that feed has to be bought. Milk is, I believe, as exhaustive as grain, and if all the energies of the farm are turned to milk production, and the milk be sold to the cheese factory or creamery (2) precisely the same result of soil impoverishment will come as in the case of too

(1) Fifty years ago, the fine pasture of Cheshire refused to yield cheese, and had it not been for dressings of 10 cwt. of bone to the acre, they would have become barren.
A. R. J. F.

(2) The exportation of butter from the farm cannot do much harm.
A. R. J. F.

exclusive wheat growing. It is only a question of time.

My idea of a farm is that it should sustain itself and the living beings that occupy it, with very little aid from outside and that by judicious cultivation, it should be carried to the highest point of productiveness, and kept there. I fully recognize the difference in soils, and their adaptability to special crops, rendering it wise to give special, but not exclusive, attention to particular products. A well-managed farm should sell grain, clover seed, meat, wool, cheese and butter, but not hay or straw, until it becomes so fertile that too much straw is produced in the grain crops. Then, perhaps, it will do to sell a little hay, - when it brings a high price. Of course, there are exceptional cases in which rotation of crops and mixed agriculture are impracticable. There are districts where the plough cannot be used at all. But a large proportion of country is, in all respects, adapted to a great variety of crops, and to the support, at the same time, of abundant live stock. Experience has proved that wherever mixed farming is practicable, it is the most profitable in the end.

Mr. Scott refers to the success of the distinguished breeder of cattle, sheep and pigs, also to the business of horse-raising, as evidence that it is wise to take some one line of agricultural pursuit to the exclusion of all others. The noted breeders referred to did not follow their respective lines exclusively. They were general farmers, with a special eye to the particular breed of cattle, sheep or pigs which they were seeking to develop. Horse raising is a business by itself, and those who follow it exclusively, do not pretend to farm at all, as a general rule. I am at a loss to understand how "mixed husbandry" should be, as Mr. Scott says it is, "the cause of most of the drudgery on the farm." Of course, a man may have "too many irons in the fire. He may also have too much work of a particular kind to do. It is an old proverb that we should not put all our eggs into one basket. Two or more strings to one's bow are objectionable in love affairs, but I think them an advantage in agriculture.

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