

**A Word to Farmers' Sons.**

[From President Mills.]

In compliance with your request, I shall, though much pressed for time, address a few words to farmers' sons, especially to those who have charge or are about to take charge of farms. I regret to say that many farmers' sons are not making a good use of their time. Far too large a proportion of them are living very listless, useless lives, not well satisfied with their condition, and doing little or nothing to improve it, going through the dreary routine of daily life—eating, working, sleeping; sleeping, eating, working—without any well-directed effort to rise above the condition of mere laborers.

Young men, allow me, after many years of observation and experience, to offer a few words of advice in the form of very mild imperatives:—

1. *Make up your mind to be something more than a mere laborer.* Labor is honorable and no one is degraded thereby; but human muscle alone counts for very little in these days of steam and electricity—very little in the keen competition and amidst the unceasing progress which we see in almost every line of human activity. If you have been dreaming in Sleepy Hollow for some time, wake up, open your eyes, and look around. You will be surprised at the changes which have taken place since you fell asleep.

2. *Observe, read, and think.* In every community, the educated classes are the ruling classes.

"For just experience tells, in every soil,  
That those who think must govern those who toil."

Your education is very defective and you are doing nothing to improve it. Begin to read. Nearly all great men are great readers. It is not necessary to go to a high school or a college to get an education. Some of the best educated men in the country are self-educated—self-made men; and you can acquire a good education if you will only observe, read, and think. Read papers, magazines, and good books. Read closely, read thoughtfully, and think over what you have read. It is wonderful what a man with even one talent can do when he makes a good use of his time.

3. *Take at least one agricultural paper.* You need the information contained in such a paper. It will be of much practical value to you—value in dollars and cents; and without it you cannot keep in touch with the leading agriculturists of the country.

4. *Attend meetings in which matters pertaining to your own occupation are discussed or illustrated.* Such as meetings of the Farmers' Institute, the Horse Breeders' Association, the Cattle Breeders' Association, the Sheep and Swine Breeders' Association, the Dairymen's Association, the Creameries Association, the Fruit Growers' Association, the Poultry Association, and the Bee-Keepers' Association; also the annual Fat Stock Show, and one or two of the leading fairs—not all of these, but as many as you can, and especially those which bear most directly upon your special line of work. But do not spend too much time at fall shows, to the neglect of fall work.

5. *Take some part in the affairs of your township, county, and province, and of the Dominion.* Do not be a blind follower of any party. Do your own thinking in such matters; and, if need be, sacrifice a little to put the best men into positions of trust and responsibility, and to keep professional demagogues from ruling the country.

6. *Be punctual.* Punctuality is an important factor in all kinds of business; and it is to be regretted that farmers generally are looked upon as gretted that farmers generally are looked upon as less prompt and punctual than men in commercial and professional life. Lying is among the disgraceful vices. Men everywhere resent the imputation of falsehood; and yet a great deal of practical lying is done in everyday life by persons, young and old, who thoughtlessly make promises which they neglect or forget to fulfill. Think before you make promises or enter into engagements; then keep your promises and fulfill your engagements to the letter.

7. *Attend closely to your business.* Hard work is the price of success in all honest vocations; and, in these days of low prices and intensely keen competition, the man who frequents hotels or spends much time away from his farm need not expect to succeed.

8. *Make an intelligent, persistent effort to improve your farm.* There is great room for improvement on many farms. The soil is poorly cultivated, and weeds are plentiful, fences are out of repair, and the farm buildings present an appearance of the most discreditable neglect—stones here, and a pile of rails or boards yonder, and an old sleigh or a broken implement somewhere else—all seeming to say that the owner is lazy or utterly devoid of taste. Untidy men ought to give up farming. They are a disgrace to the old Quaker country in which we live; and like the old Quaker, I am disposed to say that the man who allows wild mustard, wild oats, quack grass, and other noxious weeds to take possession of his farm is working too much land, is lazy, or does not understand his business. Straighten and repair your fences, then keep them in good order. Remove all piles of stones from your fields: you can haul them to the woods or somewhere else in winter. Rest not, night or day, till your farm is clean—till you have all noxious weeds thoroughly under your control, and most of them destroyed. Tidy things up and keep them tidy, around your house, in the yards, and about the farm buildings; and plant some trees (maple, elm, pine, and spruce) to shelter and adorn your home.

9. *Take care of your implements, and do not buy any more than you really need.* The annual waste under this head throughout the Province of Ontario is enormous. Implements of various kinds—plows, harrows, rollers, mowers, reapers, wagons, etc., are left out, exposed to rain, frost, and snow! What a disgrace, and what a loss to the owners! Yet many incur this disgrace and suffer the loss involved therein; and such men often have a weakness for buying implements which they could do without, getting them on credit, and wearing them out or breaking them before they are paid for. Do not be guilty of such folly. Keep all your implements, wagons, sleighs and carriages under cover. Keep them in good repair; and let no one persuade you into buying what you can do without till you have the money in hand to pay for it.

10. *Be a leader in some branch or department in the breeding or feeding of horses, cattle, sheep, swine, or poultry, in buttermaking, bee-keeping, or something else.* Do not be satisfied to live and move along on the dead level.

11. *Keep out of debt.* Sensible people respect the young man who wears rusty, threadbare clothes, and drives in the old buggy or democrat until he gets the means to buy something better. Such a young man has a chance of success, while the one that borrows money to purchase clothes, carriages, implements, or anything else (unless in rare and exceptional circumstances) is almost sure to become a hewer of wood and drawer of water for some money-lender or loan society. Whatever you do, live within your means and pay as you go. Have nothing to do with mortgages or promissory notes. Get some interest if you can, but do not pay any.

I shall not venture to speak to you about religion and sound morality (strict truthfulness, scrupulous honesty, etc.) as the true foundation of success on the farm and elsewhere. I assume that this important fact is impressed upon your minds from week to week.

Yours faithfully,

JAMES MILLS.  
Agricultural College, Guelph, Dec. 5, 1895.**A Canadian Dressed Meat Trade.**

As already announced in the ADVOCATE, the unwarranted British embargo on our beef cattle is to be followed by one upon sheep. Hereafter, the latter will also require to go forward ready for slaughter. Live stock husbandry is an essential and inseparable part of Canadian farming. To insure permanent prosperity, the best possible markets must be accessible for our animals and animal products. What the Canadian farmer needs is relatively better prices or greater profits than during past years. It is believed that having two strings to his bow—by shipping dressed as well as alive—will tend to secure this object. Dressed beef shipments were tried on a limited scale to Britain some years ago, but, one of the promoters wrote us, "our losses were so cruel" as to discourage any further efforts in that direction, though the same parties have been wonderfully successful in building up an immense trade in bacon, etc.

Encouraged by his experimental butter shipments to England early this year, Dairy Commissioner Robertson has recommended to the Government a plan, now under favorable consideration, designed to open up an export trade in Canadian dressed beef, mutton, poultry, etc. It will involve the establishment of abattoirs, and a chilling establishment, the fitting up of cold storage steamer apartments, similar accommodations for its receipt in Great Britain, and arrangements for its distribution through depots at Liverpool, London, Bristol, Birmingham, Manchester, and possibly Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee, and other large cities. Be-Edinburgh, say, with beef, it is proposed that the Government buy, say, 500 head per week during the shipping season, at Montreal, to be killed, dressed, chilled, wrapped in distinctively Canadian packages, shipped, received and distributed all under Government supervision, as a guarantee that nothing except of the highest excellence would go forward. The cost to the Government would depend somewhat upon the prevailing price of cattle next spring. On this point, Prof. Robertson says:—

"I am confident that the whole plan and business could be managed without any cost, loss or charge to the Government, and would show a profit; but to the price of Canadian cattle in Canada in case the price of Canadian cattle in Canada should be relatively higher than in former years—then which would be a good thing for the country—then I estimate that a sum of \$30,000 might be required to meet the extraordinary and unusual expenses to the extra-ordinary and unusual expenses to the business at the abattoirs, on board the steamships, at the depot at the port of landing, and at the depots or shops for the distribution of the beef and other meats in Great Britain."

At the end of a year he expects that a joint stock company, or other commercial concern, could be formed to carry on the enterprise.

That the foregoing is a large and serious undertaking is evident upon its face, and will afford full

scope for the energy, enthusiasm, executive ability, and financial prudence of the Commissioner. In the event of its passing into private hands, as indicated, it will be needful that the interests of the farmer and breeder be safeguarded in such a way that no oppressive monopoly be allowed to spring into existence, otherwise the prospective financial advantages to the producer might be lost.

Writing us from Ottawa, on Dec. 9th, the Dairy Commissioner said: "You may take this announcement of the plan for the opening up of an export trade to Great Britain as the best Christmas greeting I can offer to the farmers of Canada. I think it is an enterprise which will confer immediate and lasting benefit on all those who are interested in the live stock of the country."

We might add that Prof. Robertson outlined his project very fully at a large gathering of breeders and others held on Dec. 10th, at Guelph, Ont., during the Provincial Fat Stock Show.

**STOCK.****The Canadian Horse Trade.**

SIR,—During the period of depression that has existed for the last few years, not only in Canada, but all over the world, perhaps no branch of our live stock industry has felt its results more than the horse trade. The introduction of steam and electricity as means of locomotion, added to the prevailing scarcity of cash, has caused an almost unprecedented fall in prices; but while this has resulted in a heavy loss to many of those engaged both in breeding and in dealing in horses, it has not been altogether an unmixed evil, for it has, I trust, taught that a careful study of the markets to be supplied, and an intelligent system of breeding, with a view to producing just what these markets call for, are absolutely necessary to make any money at all out of horse breeding. Prior to 1890 the trade in horses in this country can best be described as being in a boom condition. The demand for all classes of horses was large, and that for draft stallions was, one might almost say, unlimited, the result being that practically anything in the shape of a draught colt was kept entire, provided the owner could scratch up some sort of a pedigree for him.

Carload after carload of draught stallions of every description—Clyde, Shire, Percheron, Suffolk, Belgian, Norman; it mattered not what in many cases, as long as they had a pedigree and were imported—came pouring into the Western States from across the Atlantic, while train-loads of Canadian-bred stud colts left the Province for the same points. In fact, it seemed almost as though it must be the aim in life of every farmer in the West to own a draught stallion of some sort. The result of all this was only what we might have expected had we calmly considered the matter. I say we, for the writer was one of those who went through the mill. The boom broke, farmers in the West found that they had other and far better uses for their money than the purchase of what in many cases were utterly useless apologies for draught horses, and with the reaction there naturally came an utter stagnation of trade in this branch of the business. Then the demand for street railway horses, which had taken a large number of our general purpose animals, ceased, owing to the adoption of electricity; and the introduction and rapid rise in popular favor of the safety bicycle reduced the need for and consequently the demand for light harness horses of the ordinary stamp. With characteristic energy, Canadian dealers then began to look for another outlet for their stock, and the English and Scotch markets were tackled. Great Britain takes our wheat, pork, cheese, coarse grains, beef, etc. Why can she not take our horses? A few lots were sent over and met with fair sale, and as a result for the last five years our shipments to the British markets have been increasing every year; but with what results? Has it paid? Looking at it from the dealer's standpoint, I should say the answer would be doubtful, for while some shippers have undoubtedly made fairly good profits, others have lost very heavily. Looking at it from a breeder's standpoint, I have no hesitation whatever in answering, No! for in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, even when the dealer has made a profit, he would not have done so had he not bought the horse in the first place at a figure very much below what it cost the farmer to raise him.

The questions, then, that are of vital importance to the Canadian horse breeder are, Does Great Britain want our horses? and if she does, will she pay a price for them that will at least give us a fair recompense for raising them? Both these questions, I think, may be safely answered in the affirmative. For many years dealers in the large towns in both England and Scotland have had to import numbers of horses to supply the demand, and there is in my mind no doubt but that Canadian horses will find a fairly ready sale at remunerative prices, provided they are sound and the right kind, and that is where the rub comes. A very large number of the horses sent across the Atlantic in the last five years have been of a very inferior class. Short-legged, active horses, close built, with plenty of middle, and good, hard wearing feet and legs, and weighing from 1,250 to 1,450 lbs. will generally command a fair price in the English markets as