

Miscellaneous.

History of a Canadian Farm.

NO. IV.

My stock soon began to make returns. Our dairy of twenty cows, under my wife's management, more than kept the house in all that had to be bought at the stores. I had now a large clearing of 120 acres, and 60 more falling into crop. This was the fourth and last contract, the crop of which at the following harvest did well, although it did not afford such an abundant yield as the three preceding contracts had done; still I was now quite forehanded. The mares had a foal each every year, and the stock of horses bid fair to equal the requirements of the farm in future.

As to young horned stock, of course we saved all the calves. Veal was worth little or nothing, and the month's use of the cow that was lost by her suckling a calf, was ill repaid by the two or three dollars obtained for the calf when fattened; these amounts being all that such calves were worth at that time; and, besides, my wife argued that the calves absolutely cost nothing the first summer, and at the end of it were worth at least \$6 each as store cattle; and as she always fed them well, they were always in better and more thriving condition than most of those belonging to our neighbours. They certainly thrived wonderfully well under her management. Now, also, our breed of Berkshire hogs began to tell. I previously remarked, you will remember, that I had derived so much benefit from these animals in comparison with those I had formerly kept, that I certainly should have been in pocket by having purchased the improved stock, if the original pair had cost one hundred dollars instead of the twenty that were paid for them. All my experience in farm stock goes to show the same fact, and proved the rule to apply throughout, viz., above all things keep no breed of animals about you that are not thrifty and well doing. My stock of dairy cows were half Devon and common Canadian breed, and although they were generally rather small than otherwise, they were always fat and hardy, and yielded a very large gross return of milk and butter.

I had procured with great difficulty a good grade Devon bull, probably nearly three-quarters bred, so the stock never depreciated in quality subsequently. This bull was bred from a famous milking cow, and my judgment in this selection was entirely guided by an account I had read of some improvements made by a stock breeder named Bakewell, whose experiments in the inheritance of peculiar properties of dam and sire were so carefully conducted and resulted so satisfactorily. According to his experience, if you save a heifer calf from an extra quality milking cow, in the expectation of ensuring the

mother's excellence in the daughter, you will often be greatly disappointed. The fact is, that when milking stock are particularly wished for, you must have the sire from a first-class milker; and this again bred to a cow of unmistakable milking powers, will nine times out of ten ensure the quality of the progeny. Bakewell says: "The sex usually follows the most vigorous of the parents, whilst the propensities, temper, &c., almost always cross; the female progeny almost always inheriting those of the male, whilst the male young inherits those of the female." I think there is a great deal of truth in these ideas, and believe them to form a most useful rule, as nearly reliable as practicable. One fact certainly bears out this opinion, namely, that many splendid mare colts are bred from excellent horses, out of poor miserable mothers; but much more rarely are good horse colts bred from the same class of females. Daily observations show this to be a fact. Certainly the rule sometimes is wrong, but not usually so, and generally it has been found quite correct.

My wife and daughter began to feel at home, and to take the greatest pride in our domestic arrangements. It was their home, and they all loved it. The young people knew they each and all had a farm adjoining, when the day came for the "right man to ask at the right time;" and it was pleasing to see that the whole family loved the farm more and more every year. As a matter of home discipline, I am quite satisfied that it is useless to expect your children to take the interest in home matters we all so ardently desire they should, without some actual prospective right of possession; without, in fact, having to feel that until the death of one or both parents they can never enjoy what they have worked so hard to get. The idea that my death was requisite for the benefit of my children, was always a most painful one for me to feel; in fact, I never could bear to think of their wishing me dead, so as to enjoy my property. I loved my children, and they loved me, and revered their mother; but human nature is as it is, and ever will be. So after mature reflection I took a rather different course from that ordinarily pursued. I let each child know that, on his, or her—as the case may be—coming of age, their earnings were accumulating for their benefit, and their future home was gradually growing, day by day, into value. But it was also clearly understood, that although I should deed the land to them at that time, it was in trust only, in case of their death, for such of their children as should survive me and my wife; but at my death the trust fell in, and then they had full power over the freehold, to sell or do what they pleased with it. The legal part of this arrangement I got from my lawyer foreman, who had married my eldest daughter. He was prudent, and quite as careful as I was; and when giving me this opinion he based his argument on the fact that the farm, when thus

"tied up," was quite as likely to be taken good care of, and a great deal more safe from any chance difficulties or indebtedness that might befall my sons or sons-in-law, under this little homestead law of our own making, than if subject to all sorts of legal attacks from outside difficulties, with which I had nothing to do. No one was wronged by this prudent course; all knew the land, although deeded, was held in trust for the children, and could not be sold for debts; the use, however, remained with the occupant, and I argued that from this cause any honest man could just as well pay his debts, but may be somewhat more slowly, than if the farm was sold to do so and the family beggared; and another strong reason for this course was in the well known fact that young, sanguine, trusting men, are apt to be led away by older and more designing heads, to endorse notes or otherwise become answerable for debts not their own, and this was altogether avoided, as parties seeking for security to persons buying goods from them, would not accept or ask for my sons or sons-in-law to join, when it was well known that their property could not be touched to meet the debt in case the promiser failed to do so.

These legal points are really more necessary to a young farmer than at first sight would seem to be, and there is not a particle of dishonesty in it; it is only foresight and prudence; as every act of his binds the freehold of his farm, and either he should be extremely cautious, or his property should be so deeded, when given to him, as to be safe from all such acts of imprudence. In my opinion, endorsements of every kind are wrong, and should be avoided by the farmer. He has only certain means to rely on, and if these fail any one year, he certainly will have hard work enough to meet his own debts, without having also to pay those of designing or unfortunate friends. And another reason certainly is, that when an endorser or surety is required, it is most frequently because the purchaser is considered unable to pay, and in such cases the utility of an endorser is simply to enable the seller to obtain more for his goods than a solvent man will pay without an endorser. He thus runs a certain amount of risk to obtain this extra price, but the endorser, who has no interest whatever to induce him to become responsible, runs a far greater risk. C.

Ice Houses.

This being the season for storing ice, we would call attention to what is known as the "Stevens plan" for erecting a cheap house and storing ice, from *Hall's Journal of Health* for December:

"For one family, make a house twelve feet each way, by setting twelve posts in the ground, three on a side; board it up, eight feet high, on the inside, so that the weight of the ice shall not press the boards outward, dig out the dirt inside, six inches deep, and lay down twelve inches of sawdust; pack the ice in a pile nine feet each way, filling the space of eighteen inches between the ice and the boards with sawdust or tan bark, with the same thickness on top; make an old-fashioned board roof, leaving the space above the ice open for ventilation. Have a small entrance on the north side of the roof.

"If an ice house can be located on the north side of a hill, and a small stream of water introduced slowly through the roof, on a very cold day, so as to make its way between the pieces of ice, the whole mass will freeze solid; or a pile of snow could thus be made into solid ice, and would last from one winter to another."