

And hence the testimony thus adduced by the practice of the early settlers is always of some value.

But it does not follow that a more extended theoretical knowledge of soils and their adaptability may not be of much value. Some soils are well adapted to the growth of several kinds of crop which may not have been brought out in the practice of the early settlers, but which may be discovered at once by one skilled in soils and a knowledge of their capabilities.

It is true that adaptability in soils may be much modified by the skill of the husbandman, but this usually involves no little expense. The means used in producing modification are mechanical and chemical in their nature, the former including such processes as underdrainage, trenching, etc., and the latter the application of manures that may be particularly adapted to the special needs of the land.

This is a step in advance of the discovery of adaptability through observation of the practices of others, and until the scientific knowledge of farming becomes more rapidly disseminated must be confined to the few.

This study of adaptability is a keynote to successful farming. Without it the husbandman works in a measure in the dark and always at a loss, and the loss is proportioned to the extent of his operations.

There is such a thing existing unfortunately as prejudice to adaptability of soils after this has been discovered. It is the creed of so large a number, that in their practice the thing that hath been is that which shall be, hence when adaptability has been discovered they are loth to adopt it. This may be illustrated by the apathy of many farmers to introduce to any extent the soiling system, although its utility has been so amply demonstrated, as has also the adaptability of their lands to grow soiling crops.

The most faithful students of adaptability in soils, whether natural or acquired, will prove the most successful farmers as a rule, other things being equal.

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### Farmers' Wives.

By D. NICOL, CATARAQUI, ONT.

#### A TRENCANT PEN WIELDED IN A GOOD CAUSE.

I have, in course of time, very frequently heard remarks made to the effect that farmer's wives are drudges. Lately I have become thoroughly tired hearing such remarks. That *some* of them may be said to be drudges in a certain sense, must be freely admitted, but from the conclusion that the appellation is generally applicable, I most emphatically dissent.

It is quite true that some unreasonable farmers expect far too much of their wives; as is instanced in the case of a certain husbandman, whose opinion was desired on one of the great questions of the day, "Is marriage a failure?" "Why," said he, "there's my wife Lucindy, she gets up in the mornin', lights the fire, milks six cows, gets breakfast, starts four children to school, looks after the other three, feeds the hens and the motherless lambs, skims the milk, makes the butter, washes the dishes and also the clothes, darns the socks, gets the dinner, milks again at night, and does lots of other things. Think I could hire anybody to do that for what she gets? Not much, I couldn't. Marriage, sir, is success, a great success."

No intelligent, industrious, economical farmer, would allow his wife to be made a drudge, or to make a drudge of herself. I know of some loud-talking, very pretentious farmers, who, were it not for the executive ability of their wives, would not have homes of their own.

Men of the farm are often extravagant, careless,

ill-tempered and untidy, and these unpleasant habits have frequently to be overcome by the merry heart and cheerful countenance of the loving wife and mother.

By the world generally, there is seldom awarded the full share of merit and praise due to the women who rise with the dawn, and pursue with unflagging devotion, the round of labor and patience required to keep the household going like a smoothly running machine. Yet the happiest, heartiest and most sensible women we ever meet are the wives of intelligent farmers.

It is true, the life of the farmer's wife is a busy one, but she has to endure comparatively few hardships, and enjoys more of the true comforts of this life, than are enjoyed by any other class of the people who have to work for a living. It is not called drudgery to sit in a hot room hour after hour ripping to pieces old style dresses, and rebuilding them according to fashion; ruffling, gathering, crimping, cording, shirring, smoothing, ironing, flouncing and flumating, until with headache and heart sickness the body becomes enfeebled and the mind impaired, and all in order that they may appear to better advantage in the opera-house. Yet that is the kind of life many wives in the cities lead.

If housekeeping, preparing the butter for market, caring for children and chickens and motherless lambs is drudgery, it must be because the mind of the woman engaged at such work makes it so. I cannot think of any more desirable occupation for a sensible woman who would teach her daughters habits of industry and thriftiness. Doing work we do not love is always a drudgery, but no farmer's wife need be a drudge if she elevates her work to her own standard.

As regards the privileges which farmers' wives are permitted to enjoy, let us for a moment compare them with those of the wives of dwellers in the city. They are permitted to live longer. It has been proved that the death-rate of districts increases with the density of the population. Investigations which have recently been made on a large scale by Dr. Farr, prove conclusively, that of all living beyond the age of eighty years, only an extremely small proportion were born or spent their childhood in the city, while a large proportion were reared upon the farm. The reason for this state of matters is not hard to find. The conditions of city life are such as to lead to much greater prevalence of epidemic and contagious diseases; while dwellers on the farm enjoy plenty of pure air and sunshine, simple food and out door exercise. Their habits are regular, their hours of rising and retiring are early, and they are never worried about being out of employment.

Most of farmers' wives have all the necessities and many of the luxuries of life, can ride in their carriage whenever they choose to do so. They can always have plenty of sweet milk and cream, fresh butter and eggs, they can pick the choicest fruit from their own trees and vines, they live close to nature, and if they do not enjoy her riches and beauties, it must be because they are not inclined to appreciate their glorious privileges.

It should be a great satisfaction for mothers on the farm to know that the great majority of the successful business men of the cities, and of the men occupying responsible positions in public life, were reared by them. They produce men of robust constitution and strength of body, without which no one can long endure the strain of business and professional life.

We must acknowledge the difficulty of obtaining female servants for the farm house, now that females are employed to a great extent in doing work that was formerly done altogether by men.

Boarding the hired men in the farm-house was at one time considered judicious economy, but now many farmers have become convinced that it is more economical to build small houses, affording accommodation for married men, by which means better and more reliable help is obtained with less trouble and fewer changes.

I am of opinion that whatever is calculated to lighten the labor of the farmer's wife will tell in the home comforts of the farmer himself. This may appear to be merely a selfish consideration; nevertheless, the adjusting of requirements is the fundamental necessity for ensuring household harmony.

The world has grown kinder to all women than it was formerly, and it will become still kinder as women reason more for themselves. It is not now as it was when the Scotch patriarch admonished his daughter: "Janet, it's a solemn thing to get married!" "Yes, father, but it's far more solemn to be single."

We read and hear much about the necessity for educating farmers' sons, so as to incline them to love and honor the noble vocation of their fathers, but as yet we have heard little, if anything, about giving farmers' daughters an education that would better fit them for the important position of farmers' wives. I do not know why agricultural colleges should not be open to women and men on the same terms. We must freely admit that the better educated the farmer is the more likely will he be to recognize the rights of his wife, her right to as pleasant a home as his means will afford; her right to social intercourse; her right to a control over house and personal expenditures; to an opportunity for improvement; to an understanding of all matters of interest to himself, and to a share of his time and affectionate consideration. The cultured man respects himself so highly that he considers nothing too good, that is within his means to obtain, for the woman he has chosen to rule his home and to be the mother of his children. The educated woman will recognize all the physical and spiritual rights of her family; she will manage more economically, govern more wisely, and work more advantageously, beside having a better time in doing it.

### Hon. John Carling, M.P.

Minister of Agriculture for Dominion of Canada.

Men that serve their country in any of the various public capacities, are fortunate indeed if they have their merits and labors appreciated even by those with whom they are more directly associated, and thus it is that many are forbidden even the consolation of securing a modicum of happiness, by proxy it might be said, through the good opinion of others. Not so has it been with the subject of our sketch, for, besides long enjoying the confidence of his constituency, the Hon. John Carling has ever been the recipient of the greatest respect from those associated with him in his legislative labors.

The Hon. John Carling, M.P. for the city of London, is the youngest son of Thomas Carling, a native of Yorkshire, England, who came to Canada in 1818, and in the year following settled in the county of Middlesex, in the township of London, where the subject of our sketch was born on the 23rd of January, 1828, and educated in the public school of that district. Equipped with a sound education and being blessed with an industrious temperament, it is not surprising that Mr. Carling at an early age took a lively interest in the public matters of the time, and soon became the moving spirit of many business enterprises, as shown by the fact that he was for