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A. DEVINEY, St. Mary's, Ont.

A Chatty Letter About Farming, Crops, and the Boys.

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

"The Farmer's Advocate" has been a constant visitor in our home for many years. I have been watching with interest the many letters printed in its columns, as they have appeared from time to time. I was much interested in the real farmer, with the real farm, the automobile and the sick cow, and I sometimes wonder if the cow got better and if he still has to pay the license for running his machine. And I have often wondered how Mrs. Remington is getting along with her farm this year, and if the wet weather is interfering with her plans for getting in her crop as it is ours. If her farm is like a great many around her she will scarcely need a man around at all. In our locality there are acres that were intended for spring grain that have nothing on them. Consequently the harvest will be light and so will the work connected with it.

I am a real farmer's wife with a real farm, but no sick cow and no automobile, consequently no license to pay. But we have a hired man, which, I suppose, in these times is almost as much of a luxury, and one which, according to some of our writers, should not be tolerated. I was greatly interested in the scheme for bringing out the retired farmers and the college boys to help on the farm. How did it work out? I do not see any of them around here.

I was very much amused at a conversation between a soldier and his sister. They were both right from old Erin. He was telling her how they were going to get a month's leave to help the farmers and her answer was: "Sure and you must think the farmers are soft to have the likes of you around. —Sure and you'd ruin the man's farm before your month was out. You wouldn't know how to plant a potato, and you couldn't dig up a daisy to save the life of ye. A pretty affair you'd be on the farm to help the farmer out, I think I see him hiring you."

I laughed heartily at her answer, and although in a joke, I thought she was pretty nearly right. The soldier was of fine appearance and a soldier every inch. He had seen active service in South Africa and had travelled a great deal, but had scarcely spent a day in his life on a farm. And I know there are plenty of boys in our battalions who would have been splendid help, even for that month, but there are many like the soldier in question, who would "ruin" the man's farm before their time was out.

It is a mistaken idea that any one can farm. No calling in life requires the science and brain work as well as muscle and energy that farming does. Lack of these is what causes the miserable failures we see in every locality. How often we see the man come in from another country where conditions are very different and try to work out the methods he knows in a place he does not know. I remember one instance of a man coming into our locality. He bought a fine farm; paid a few hundred down and gave a heavy mortgage for the rest. He went to work without asking any questions. It was an ideal spring and the land worked up splendidly. He worked a field up for oats and had it level as a floor without a furrow in it, and started to sow his oats. One of his neighbors told him he would have to plow furrows to carry off the water in case of wet weather, but he said the water must go down through the ground. He would have no furrows in his field to carry off water, the water must go down. They did not farm that way in England and he would not do it here. He sowed his oats on his beautiful, smooth, level field. They came up fine and he had every reason to believe he was right, but when the heavy June rains came his field was like a lake. He never harvested his crop of oats. The next year he furrowed his field.

Take a ride through the country now in your automobile, and watch carefully the farmers as you pass them. You will soon see which farm the scientific man lives on. He was pretty well prepared last fall for this year's spring crop. He had his fields ploughed and well drained. There was just one little short time this spring for getting in the

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