



We Welcome Practical Progressive Ideas

# FARM AND DAIRY

## & RURAL HOME

The Recognized Exponent of Dairying in Canada



Trade increases the wealth and glory of a country; but its real strength and stamina are to be looked for among the cultivators of the land.—Lord Chatham

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## School Garden Work Among the Indians

**E**DITOR'S NOTE: One of the most interesting topics discussed at the conference of School Inspectors at Guelph last summer, was "School Garden Work." One of the most interesting of these addresses on this subject was given by Miss M. Moffitt, who told of her experience in teaching agriculture and conducting a school garden in an Indian Reserve. Through the kindness of Miss Moffitt, Farm and Dairy is able to give Our Folks her story, and also illustrations showing her garden and pupils. Here is Miss Moffitt's story in her own words:

My experience in school garden work is so recent that it is still fresh in my memory. I shall write a few words on three points only: the beginning, the object and the effects of the garden.

The introduction of the garden was the most discouraging part of the work. I met with no opposition; on the contrary with most encouraging verbal approbation of all I suggested, but no action; and action is more successful than words in carrying out a plan.

When I entered on duty I found the school grounds barren of shade trees, but adorned with an abundance of docks, thistles and weeds; sufficient to supply all summer courses of the Ontario Agricultural College for years to come with specimens of the native and imported articles.

At the end of the first year we decided to improve the grounds. The pupils dug out, roots and all, over 2,000 docks, filled the mud holes around the school, made a walk with flat stones gathered in the yard and neighboring fields and planted a few flowers.



The Girls Enjoy the Work quite as Much as the Boys

Miss Moffitt does not confine the school garden work to the boys. The girls have their plots as well and prove themselves good farmers. A few of her pupils may be here seen with vegetables from their plots.

I wanted to do more but was somewhat in the dark as to how to proceed; at this period the teachers of N. Bruce had an excursion to Guelph, and Prof. McCready, in doing the honors of the College, took us through the Consolidated School gardens, explaining their object.

### Miss M. Moffitt, Bruce Co., Ont.

I returned to Cape Croker very enthusiastic. I talked school garden morning, noon and night, and like the ancient mariner forced the unwilling to listen, to my satisfaction, if not theirs.



Products of Their Own School Garden Plots

These happy little Indian boys are pupils of Miss M. Moffitt, Bruce Co., Ont., who has established a school garden in connection with the Indian school which she teaches. Miss Moffitt tells of her experience most interestingly in the article adjoining.

An Indian whose property adjoined the school offered me an acre for "little Guelph," as we called it. I asked the authorities to accept the gift and fence it in. They all agreed it was a good idea, very good and very necessary, but, I suppose, through force of habit, let it end there.

Meanwhile our good neighbor was the victim of a drowning accident, and his successors were unwilling to part with the land.

As the school yard was too small for both garden and playground, the latter being more necessary, I concluded, after waiting a year and a half, that the school garden idea was dead, and began to think of burying it, when we received a letter from Prof. McCready inviting us to join the School's Experimental Division.

I need not say we responded to so providential an invitation. The school garden question was revived, a neighbor offered his field as a playground for the boys and the garden was started. It proved so satisfactory that the second year the Indian Department enlarged our grounds to a little over an acre, and now the

boys play in their own back yard. My first object in having a school garden was to induce the people to have vegetable gardens near their homes. Having this object in view, I reserved a small part of the garden for the teacher's use.

In this I plant a number of vegetables, especially the new kinds, and give seeds of the same to the girls for their home gardens, that by comparing their gardens with the teacher's, they can see the benefit of proper care and cultivation.

A few results of seeds thus distributed may illustrate this feature of the work. Last fall one woman after using Golden Bantam sweet corn daily during its season, had quite a quantity to dry for winter use.

One girl of 15 years of age, raised 80 large cabbages, and two dozen of squash, besides taking first prize in the potato Club contest. Other gardens have produced equally good results, while some have yielded an abundant crop of weeds. Most of the lessons in cooking are given in the fall. I teach the preparation of the vegetables, and also of apples for the table. The boys have charge, besides their individual plots, of the corn, grains and trees. They planted, cared for and pruned, several young apple trees. The last addition to the school grounds was a neglected orchard.

### SOME OF THE RESULTS

Now for the effects: The adult population evidence an increasing interest in farming, and I believe I am not wrong in thinking the school garden comes in for a good share in this awakening. Among the pupils, the garden has given an opportunity to develop two necessary traits; respect for the property of others and a sense of honor: when left to work by themselves. Formerly, among the boys especially, the one thought or aim seemed to be play; if they were left alone to do any work, the task remained undone. Now I can send the boys or girls of one class out to the garden while I take up other lessons, and they seldom abuse the privilege of working in groups and do their work as well as if the teacher were present.

In our first school garden all the vegetables that could be eaten raw disappeared rather mysteriously and I never saw a ripe apple on the trees. Now each can enjoy the fruit of his own garden, and since they have taken charge of the apple trees, it is a sad day for the boy or girl