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FARM AND DAIRY

& RURAL HOME



We Welcome Practical Progressive Ideas.
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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No. 3

Diversified Farming that is Profitable

Mr. H. C Hamill Does Not Believe in One-Line Farming, and Practises as He Preaches

By F. E. ELLIS, B.S.A., EDITOR, FARM AND DAIRY

A FEW weeks ago I told in Farm and Dairy of a very pleasant visit made one day last June to the farm of Mr. H. C. Hamill, Box Grove, Ont. Then I dealt chiefly with Mr. Hamill as a successful breeder of Ayrshire cattle. It would not be correct to assume, however, that Mr. Hamill is a dairyman, pure and simple, whose income reaches him only in the form of cream cheques and occasional lump sums for the sale of pure-bred Ayrshire stock. Not by any means. Mr. Hamill fully believes that too intense specialization in any line of farming is a mistake. He practises as he believes, and his practice accords in the large measure for the financial success that he is making of his farm.

It is more than a score of years now since Mr. Hamill made his first attempt as a farm manager. His first bid for fortune was made early; as a boy of 18 he entered into partnership with his younger brother of 16 to rent their father's farm. Five years later we find the two of them still in partnership, moving on to a 200-acre farm of their own near Lorneville, in Victoria county. For seven years they worked together harmoniously on the big farm, when the elder brother purchased a farm of his own of 100 acres, and moved on to it along with the nucleus of a pure-bred Ayrshire herd that he had established. He soon found, however, that if he was to develop a good trade in pure-bred Ayrshires, he would have to get nearer his market. Just about that time a farm was offered for sale at Box Grove, in York county, for \$12,000. Mr. Hamill had only a small portion of the purchase price to offer, but his offer was accepted, and he started out with obligations totalling \$10,000. That was seven years ago. All of that heavy debt is not paid off yet, but Mr. Hamill is well on the way to the complete ownership of his farm. He has achieved the success that has been his by diversified farming, which he has practised from the first; diversified farming not in the sense of a little of everything and not much of anything, but in the sense of specialization in two or three lines that have proved profitable.

When Mr. Hamill purchased Craigielea Farm, as he now calls it, weeds almost had the upper hand, as a result of the indifferent farming methods of the previous owner. "The only fight I have had," said Mr. Hamill, "has been against weeds. In my business as a breeder, I have had no trouble in selling my surplus stock, even to the young ma's. Thus I have been relieved of one of the big problems of the pure-bred breeder,

seed to buckwheat. If a man depends on buckwheat to smother the weeds, he is very apt to neglect the weeds before seeding. I found that the buckwheat crop as a smotherer did good work, but I calculated that by the time I had seeded, there would be few weeds left in the field to smother. The hoe crop grown also helped to exterminate the weeds."

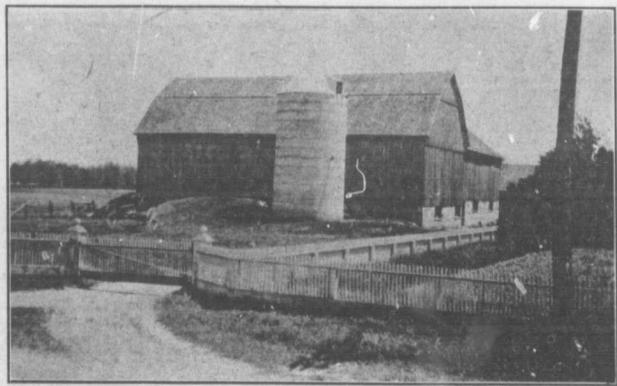
"And after harvest cultivation," I suggested. "Yes, after harvest cultivation was also followed," said Mr. Hamill. "That same after harvest cultivation has been one thing that has kept us away from Toronto Fair. We would plan to get the slaked sod all turned over the latter part of July and work well to Sept. 1st. The amount of work that you give makes a big difference when you come to sow your wheat, and Toronto Fair often got the go-by in order that our prospective wheat field might get proper cultivation.

Fight Weeds

"So far as hand work is concerned, we made a practice of digging out the burdocks, but on a farm as dirty as this one was, it would take a man with lots of time to spud out all the weeds. We can kill many times more weeds with the cultivator than with the spud, and we took the cheapest way. As a result of combination of these methods, we have to-day a comparatively clean farm."

I can testify that the farm to-day is clean. In Mr. Hamill's company, I went over the whole of the 135 acres of rich, clay loam land. Of course, there are weeds yet. There are weeds on every farm, but the Hamill farm is much cleaner than the average. The first fight has been fought and won. In present day management, the herd and the farm aid each other. Mr. Hamill does not believe that the profits of the dairy herd can be calculated apart from the profits of the entire farm. Here it is, he believes, that many get off the track when figuring the profits of dairying.

"You will remember," remarked he, "that in an argument that I had with Mr. McDonald through the columns of Farm and Dairy, I claimed that the manure will pay for the labor involved in dairying. Mr. McDonald could not see



The Big Barns That House the Ayrshire Herd of H. C. Hamill, York Co., Ont.

In the adjoining article an editor of Farm and Dairy tells something of H. C. Hamill himself and the farming methods that, along with his Ayrshire Herd, have contributed to his success as a farmer. Well balanced, diversified farming, in large measure, explains the satisfactory progress Mr. Hamill is making towards the ownership of a splendid dairy farm in one of the most fertile and prosperous sections of Ontario.

—Photo by an editor of Farm and Dairy.

but the fight that I had with weeds more than made up for the advantages that I had in other directions. I remember the first year that I was on the farm, taking five loads of weeds and thistles off one field of 13 acres. No one could tell, to look at the field, what the crop was supposed to be. On another field I got the compliment of having the dirtiest field in the county. On a four-acre field on which I now have alfalfa, I seeded barley. It was so thick with wild oats that the men forking it out of the mow did not know that it was supposed to be barley."

Mr. Hamill was not long on his new farm until experiences such as those just mentioned convinced him that he had to get the weeds off the farm or they would put him off. The methods that he followed are interesting. "In those years, I summer fallow for fall wheat and grew buckwheat," said he, in explaining his methods. "I would thoroughly cultivate till July 1st, then