

Boys and Girls on the Farm.

BY G. R. BRADLEY.

I may say, perhaps the most neglected crop about the farm is the crop of boys and girls. On no other crop does the present and future success of farming depend as much as on this one. A great part of the present labor on farms is being performed by the boys and girls, and soon they will be the farmers and farmers' wives. The successful education of this crop is one of the most important questions of the day.

How shall they be mentally, morally and physically educated and trained, that they may love the work of the farm? Mentally, they need opportunities of an education much the same as other boys and girls. Our rural schools answer the purpose as far as they go; these, with an opportunity of reading good books from a well-stocked library, will, if rightly encouraged, give a desire to read, study, learn and talk. A boy or girl having a desire for these four things has at least one-half of an education, for by perseverance the remaining portion will follow as a superstructure on a firm foundation. From this point I intend to notice the boys more particularly, as the girls invariably wish to become the partner of some business man in the town or city. There is an existing feeling that a farmer does not need an education. It has been truly said, "there is no profession which for its successful practice requires a better stored mind than agriculture, and none in which the actual ignorance is greater," yet when it is decided that a boy is to be a farmer, the same day it is decided to take him

from school. It may be all right to take the boy from school for a year or two, still it should only be temporary.

A high school course for a year or two, with particular stress laid on chemistry, botany and other natural sciences, followed by a two or three-year course at some agricultural college, should give the lad, now a young man, a good, sound, English, scientific and practical education, which, while cultivating and broadening the mind, will not make him afraid of any or all work connected with the farm. Such are the kind of farmers we need to-day, if we are to be a successful nation. Many would be inclined to say, "You give a boy such an education as that and he will leave the farm." If a person is in earnest about farming, an education will never lead him from it. Some will ask, why does education lead so many farmers' sons from the farm? It is lack of love for the farm, its surroundings and work. Why this lack of love for farming? It has been said by some one that the first thing most people do when they come into the world is to grumble. There are a good many farmers who seem to be like this—born grumblers. This leads to discontent, and soon the son tires of acting in the capacity of hired man, with this difference that the boy often gets no wages. He reasons that farming doesn't pay, and as a matter of course looks for some other employment more remunerative. You might as well expect fire to burn under water, as that a love for farming would be developed in such an atmosphere of discontent and fault-finding and complaint. Again, the defective manner in which farming operations are often conducted, unneces-

sarily tiring the body and giving no time for mental thought and improvement, is a great influence. Stop complaining about the degraded nature of work. The truth is, every one who is worthy to live works. The lawyer, doctor, teacher, preacher, and so on, all work, and work hard if they succeed; and so must the farmer, but they must adopt a better system. It is the farmers themselves who think meanly of their calling, and teach the world to rate it low. "Only a farmer!" "Only a hayseed!" are expressions often heard, principally because they do not show the world they are the motive power. If we as farmers were possessed of more ambition, we would aim higher, plan better, and be more successful. As a natural consequence a love of farming would be developed in the boys, and consequently no fear need be entertained that a thorough education will induce them to leave the farm.

Prof. W. A. Henry, of the Wisconsin Experiment Station, recommends coarsely ground or rolled barley, mixed with one-third its weight of wheat bran, as a grain ration for cows.

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