



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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The Wherefore of Farm Improvements

By the Editor

FINE farm buildings, the kind that we see featured in the agricultural periodicals, such as Farm and Dairy, are not built to add to the farm income. Oh, no! They bear testimony to the farmers' love of the beautiful. They are built to satisfy his desire for a homestead of which he and his children may well be proud.

A home, beautiful if not extensive, nestling in the shade of great trees, the porches opening to the road, where a neat wire fence makes intrusions by the live stock impossible, and a back yard that is carpeted with grass and bordered with flowers—such is the dream of thousands of farm women throughout the land. If we visit the inside of the "dream home" (and many have made their dream homes real homes) we find the model kitchen equipped with every convenience for doing the most work with the least effort. In the sink are taps that yield hot or cold water at a turn of the wrist. A bathroom, fully equipped, also constitutes a part of the ideal home. In short, we find all the advantages that, in the past, have made the city so attractive to country girls that they have contributed even more heavily to rural depopulation than their brothers.

THE YOUNG FARMER'S DREAM

The farmer himself joys in the anticipation of some day building such a home for his family. But he also has an ideal for the farm buildings. When finances permit he will have stables that are the models of convenience and comfort for his wife is planning for her kitchen. He often

pictures the attractive building with its twin silos, hip roof and painted sides that will be one of the landmarks of the country side, and a source of pride to the community as well as himself. Surrounding these buildings, he sees well tilled, well fenced fields. Such, I believe, is the dream of every young farmer and every young farmer's wife.

But the dream is not always realized. Its failure of realization is not always due, either, to lack of finances. We have all seen young couples start out on a farm poorly equipped with buildings, but determined that in time their steading shall be the best in the country. They have held their ideal for a few years, but gradually it grew dimmer and dimmer until at last they are satisfied with an occasional new coat of paint for the house and some slight remodeling of the stable. In the meantime their credit has been steadily improving. They could retire they wish. Why the unfulfilled dream?

I have talked with a good many of these people who have trod many years of life's path, and are still living in the old home in which they started. Inconvenient and unattractive as it is, and the reason of their "backsliding" is not hard to find. It is just this—improvements are not, financially, a profitable proposition. Old Judge Haliburton of Nova Scotia, who under the nom-de-plume of "Sam Slick" was once one of Canada's most appreciated writers, expressed the idea correctly when he said that good bank accounts were always found in rural communities of large barns and small houses.

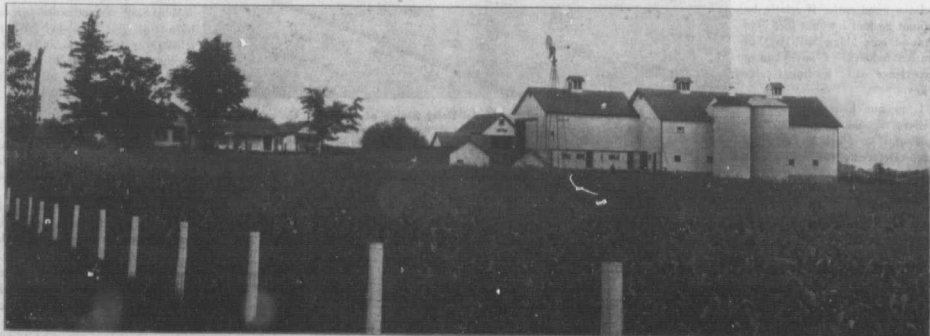
The barn is a part of the productive equipment of the farm. Without it the crops could not be stored until marketing or turned into milk, beef, pork, and so forth. So the barn must be built. But rough, cheap siding will keep out the rain and snow, as well as the best. It is the common belief that paint does not add sufficiently to the life of siding to make it profitable; and probably this belief is well founded. Hence the cheap siding is used, and if paint is applied at all it is to the door jams and the window casings. Hence the majority of barns in the greater part of rural Canada are eyesores and blots on the landscape rather than a source of joy to all who see them.

The home is not an earning department, strictly speaking. A couple of thousand dollars spent on pure bred stock or farm machinery will come back, both principal and interest. A couple of thousand dollars in a new home does not add one cent to the earning power of the farm. Hence the new home, too often, is not built.

IDEALS CHANGE THROUGH LIFE

At the base of all, I believe, lies a change of ideals. The young people have the right viewpoint. They see clearly that the joy is not in making the money alone, but also in spending it on all that leads to a fuller and more satisfying life. But the dollars come hard. Money is not as easily made as they thought. Gradually the making of money becomes almost the sole aim. Are my deductions not correct?

But there is another side to this question. "Life is more than meat." Have we not been too apt to regard the farm as a place on which



The Farmstead Beautiful—A Home that is Cozy and Attractive, Farm Buildings that are Substantial and Pleasing, Such as will be a continual joy to the Owners and the Pride of their Children. Are Improvements Such as These Worth While?