

CHAPTER IV

THE HIRED MAN

MODERN farming is greatly handicapped by the difficulty of getting good help. I need not go into the causes which have operated to bring about this condition; it exists, and it has to be met. I cannot hope to solve the problem for others, but I can tell how I solved it for myself. I determined that the men who worked for me should find in me a considerate friend who would look after their interests in a reasonable and neighborly fashion. They should be well housed and well fed, and should have clean beds, clean table linen and an attractively set table, papers, magazines, and books, and a comfortable room in which to read them. There should be reasonable work hours and hours for recreation, and abundant bathing facilities; and everything at Four Oaks should proclaim the dignity of labor.

From the men I expected cleanliness, sobriety, uniform kindness to all animals, cheerful obedience, industry, and a disposition to save their wages. These demands seemed to me reasonable, and I made up my mind to adhere to them if I had to try a hundred men.