

CALLING THE COWS.

BY SHIRLEY CLAIR.

Co Bos! Co! Co! Come Dapple, come Daisy and Dell,-- See, I am coming to open the gate, Supper is ready, I cannot wait! Hurry up, Crumple, don't be so slow! Here it is milking time--Co Bos! Co!

Co Bos! Co! Co! Come Daisy and Dapple, you know very well The sun's going down, time milking was over. And some one is coming down the path thro' the clover, He will go to the milk house and wait there, I know, Come along, Dapple! Co Bos! Co!

Co Bos! Co! Co! Take care now, Crumple! Steady there, Dell! For some one is waiting, and often he yows, "Tis sweeter than music," my calling the cows! He is waiting to tell me what I very well know! Time milking was over. So Bos! So!

-Western Rural.

Miscellaneous.

Sericulture in Australia.

An exceedingly valuable contribution to the literature of sericulture has been recently made by M. A. Roland, of Aube. It will be remembered that this gentleman is distinguished for his remarkable success in producing healthy silkworm grain. At his farm, Mrs. Bladen Neill was instructed in the system of sericulture, which she has been endeavoring with so much energy to introduce in the Australian colonies. M. Roland has been induced by the committee of the Sericulture Department, presided over by Sir D. Cooper, to exhibit his entire method of open air "education" in the grounds of the London International Exhibition. In order to make his process of treatment well understood by the public, he has prepared a succinct explanatory treatise, which he has read not long since before a meeting of the Society of Arts. For several years past, in all parts of Europe, and in some portions of Asia, rears of silkworms have had their efforts well nigh paralysed by the spread of several diseases amongst their worms. In place of the profits which were at one time afforded by sericulture, disappointment, and loss have prevailed, and whole districts where the industry previously flourished, have been reduced to sore distress. M. Roland's efforts have been directed in the first place to securing a healthy breed of worms, and then to the perfecting for their subsequent management of a system free from the deteriorating influences heretofore in force. In both these respects he has succeeded beyond his most sanguine expectations. The gist of his method is that he discards the old practice of cultivating the worm in over-heated and unhealthy rooms, and, approximating as nearly as possible to the processes of nature, rears the larva upon the mulberry tree itself, and conducts all the subsequent processes of management in the open air. M. Roland admits that this system is not absolutely new. Experiments in open air education were made in France as early as the beginning of the eighteenth century, and later on in Italy and Austria, but on account of the practical details being insufficiently attended to, the results were not encouraging. With large-hearted honesty he credits Dr Chavannes, an ex-professor of zoology, at the Academy of Lausanne, with being the first to prove that such a system of silk-worm culture could be effectively carried on with the most gratifying results to the health of the grub. He claims to have only adopted Dr. Chavannes ideas, and by dint of further experiments, supplemented and completed their application. In describing the open-air method, as he practises it, M. Roland first insists upon the necessity of "education" upon the Mulberry tree itself, in order to the production of vigorous and healthy worms. The trees should be willow-shaped, not exceeding two feet six in height, and so pruned that the head becomes covered with young shoots. The additional apparatus required consists of a "menchon." This is a piece of wire gauze about nine feet long, and three feet, six inches wide, which forms a guard round the tree. Pieces of canvas are so connected with it, that when tied round the trunk, and over the top, the worms are completely protected from the weather, and from the approach of any noxious insect. Within these "menchons" the larva are hatched naturally at the time of the appearance of the early shoots on the plant. When all the leaves are eaten, the silkworms are removed to another tree in full foliage. As they pass through their different ages they are thinned out, and, eventually, in each menchon, fifty cocoons are left for moths to be hatched from. These lay the grain which hibernates on the tree, and in the spring provides the young worms for that year's operations.

M. Roland's experience shows that by this means that great, and until recently, almost unhoped for desideratum to sericulturists—a hardy race of silk-worms—can be secured. Just as rearing in heated rooms enfeebles the grub, and renders it delicate, so a return to nature's order brings back its lost robustness. The worm is free from all the dreaded diseases which had worked such havoc in magnaneries under the old management. If, as very rarely happens, a caterpillar should be attacked, it does not involve infection to the others—it speedily cures itself. In a few years the silkworms regain all the characteristics of the wild Bembyx. It clings to the tree in spite of wind and rain, feeds healthily, and increases in size and strength. The moths are livelier and more alert, and the pattern upon their wings comes out with greater distinctness. The larva, under microscopic examination is found to contain exactly similar blood as in the wild state, while it promises a certain return for the following year. These are results which cannot be too highly appreciated. The artificial system of nurture has threatened the extinction of the silkworm. By a return to the order of nature, M. Roland has proved that all its native vigor may be restored. But the propagation of silkworms upon the mulberry tree is too tedious and expensive a plan to admit of silk being profitably grown in that way. M. Roland therefore depends upon it simply to breed a healthy race of worms in the first instance, and for the purpose of silkgrowers, has introduced a system of education in the "magnanerie." This is a large shed of considerable height, specially constructed to admit the unimpeded circulation of the air. Its sides are covered with wire gauze, and the roof is pierced with ventilating chimneys. Down the centre of this building an open frame work is constructed (with a clear passage between both its sides and the walls), upon which rests three tiers of trays placed above each other about eighteen inches apart. Upon these trays, supplied with the necessary apparatus, which is of a very simple character, the worms are tended through their various stages. The details of the process are far too long to admit of description here, although they are full of interest to sericulturists. Of the effects of this open-air rearing in the promotion of silk production, M. Roland speaks with the greatest satisfaction. The worms retain their vigor and healthiness, the cocoons are abundant, and yield silk of excellent quality, and in large quantity. What rearing upon the mulberry tree does for the production of healthy grain, the open-air silkworm shed does for the silk-grower. The one system is the natural complement of the other. In face of the results obtained in Europe under M. Roland's method, it is satisfactory to know that the introduction of sericulture as a lucrative industry is not being lost sight of in South Australia. No country in the world is more suitable than ours for the profitable and extensive cultivation of the silkworm. Although the subject has been treated with most unwise neglect in the past, it is pleasing to learn that the Silk Industrial Association are quietly and steadily prosecuting their labors with a view to bringing about a better state of things in the future. Their efforts, too, have not been without success. The plantation of mulberry trees on the bank of the Torrens is growing exceedingly well, and fortunately the kinds are those especially recommended by M. Roland. It is to be hoped that the members of the Association will be encouraged by the importance sericulture is attaining elsewhere as a national pursuit to persevere in their experiment until they have succeeded in firmly establishing it as one of the staple industries of South America. Adelaide Observer.

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THE CANADA FARMER is printed and published by the Globe Printing Company, at 26 & 28 King Street East, TORONTO, CANADA, on the 15th and 20th of each month. Price one dollar and fifty cents per annum, free of postage.