PRACTICAL FARMING

Home Grown Cows.

A neighbor of ours never raises a calf, always depending upon cows picked up here and there for such animals as he may need in his dairy. The reason for this, as he states it, is that he can buy cows cheaper than he can raise them. In this respect this friend of ours is representative of a large class of farmers. On the farms of these men we seldom see a calf or a heifer coming on.

But there is this thing that I notice. This neighbor, and others I know who do not raise calves, are all the time changing their cows off for one reason or another. While these men do not say so, I have my suspicions that this tendency to shift their stock is due to the fact that they do not get cows that are satisfactory when they buy them. It is a risky matter to buy cows, especially where one does not know the man of whom he buys. Nor is the fault always with the former owner of the cow. For it is a fact that the cow which may do well for you may be an entirely different cow for me, with my peculiar ways of feeding and caring for stock.

In my opinion, then, home-grown cows are the best all round. It may cost rather more to get these cows up through to maturity, but when we get them we know better what we have than where we step out and buy a strange cow. For cows are big bundles of peculiarities, some of which are inherited, more acquired.

I have watched this matter of personal characteristics quite carefully, and always with interest. Usually I have found that it is the mother which puts the imprint of her own disposition and eccentricities on the calf she brings into the world. If the cow is a long milker, we may look for the heifer she drops to be so, too. Little notions about standing when being milked, or being light-footed or disorderly, are also transmitted in many cases. In my own herd I have seen a long line of cows marked by the mother to be short-seasoned in the flow of milk. That is, they almost universally have the fault of drying off early, and not coming back until they have had a long period of rest. The loss from this kind of cows is great in the course of a term of years. None of us can afford to keep a cow that does not hold out in her milk yield.

Cows that grow up on the place have another advantage not always taken into account, and that is, they know what to expect from the man who has handled them from the start and they are at home in the pasture and in the yard with the other cattle. This shows itself strikingly when the cow is transferred to another environment. If a cow, for example, has always been treated kindly and has been kept with other cows that she likes to be with, and then is suddenly sold and put under the care of a man who has little feeling for his cows, looks upon them as "machines" and sends them out into the yard or pasture with a lot of cross, "scrappy" cows, she is almost sure to drop off in the flow of her milk. "Getting wonted" is what we say of the cow which is undergoing this change, and sometimes she is homesick and under the weather generally for a long time. I have brought cows in that way into my herd and seen them fight for days to settle the matter of who is boss. It is hard work; and sometimes I have had to separate cows that fought each other that way for a long time; and I am not sure but the best way is to dispose of one or the other of the belligerents rather than to have the herd all stirred up by constant fights.

Going a little deeper into this matter, it is worth while to notice that when we grow our own calves we may by mating cows of certain characteristics with bulls the parentage and qualities of whose ancestors we understand, get calves which are superior in many ways to any we can buy, and better than those we already have. And this possibility of breeding better stock is one that is well worthy of more attention than most of us give it.

Housing Farm Machinery.

The thrift, business ability, and success of a farmer may be fairly estimated by the care he takes of his farm tools and implements. These aids to economic agriculture in Canada result in a large saving every year, and the thoughtful person must acknowledge the immense losses in the aggregate which would result from the general failure properly to house and care for this class of machinery. An investment of such proportions in articles which are used for only a comparatively short time during each year must impress one with the importance of providing suitable housing for the relatively long periods when the implements are not in use.

It is unnecessary to provide an elaborate or expensive building for this purpose, because its principal use is to protect the machinery from the weather. The implement house is unlike the barn, which, especially in cold climates, must be built to protect stock from the cold, or the granary, which must be capable of holding a great weight of grain. All that is necessary is a building of simple construction, strong enough to support its own roof, together with the possible snow loads, and rigid enough to resist wind pressure.

Perhaps the cheapest, most available and commonly used material is wood, which, if kept carefully painted, is reasonably durable. Galvanized corrugated sheet metal is also used to some extent, either for covering the entire building or only for the roof. Concrete is best for the foundation walls and piers. If built in a well-drained location, floors are unnecessary. Floors of concrete are, however, sometimes used to good advantage.

Open implement sheds—that is, structures having a roof and with one or more sides open—are sometimes built to shelter farm tools, but, generally speaking, a building which can be closed all around and yet built with doors in such a way that an opening is available at any point on one side is the most satisfactory and serviceable. If farm tools are to be housed at all, the slight additional expenditure necessary to close entirely the building will assure them of being well housed.

A convenient implement house recently built by a neighbor farmer is about 28x64 ft. in size. The roof is covered with corrugated galvanized sheet metal. A concrete floor in one end provides a place for buggies with rubber tires of other vehicles which should not stand on a dirt floor. This building has two 16-foot doorways on one side, and one 16-foot doorway on the opposite side, giving easy access to any part of the building. One continuous door hanger track extends along the entire side on which the two doors are located.

The openings in an implement house must be of large size, about 16 feet wide, to accommodate the widest farm machines, and sliding doors are the only practical kind. Swing doors of large size are sure to warp and sag, especially when made of stock lumber. They are also subject to being blown about by the wind, damaging either the door or the hinge fastenings.

Although the doors of this building are made in one section, it is much better practice to use two doors to each opening. These may be operated independently or may be flexibly connected together by two strips of steel or wood, one near the top of the door and the other near the bottom. This permits the movement of the two sections as one, but overcomes to a large extent the tendency of large doors to warp.

It is frequently desirable to partition off one end of the implement house to be used as a garage. In that case an 8-foot opening into the garage may be provided. The garage should have a concrete floor, and windows enough to give good light. A small work bench and a cupboard for storing supplies, etc., will be found convenient. In fact, if the garage is made a trifle large and a door opening is provided into the main part of the implement house, it will be very convenient to use in making light machinery repairs.

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The Soldier's Return to the Farm

By O. W. EVANS.

When John Roberts returned from overseas and resumed his duties on the old farm a short time ago, he gave his kind-hearted old father a bit of a jolt one day, when he said:

"Dad, what in the name of Sam Hill have you been doing to that harness? You got it less than two years ago and now it looks almost ready for the scrap heap. Next time you're in town get a couple of cans of saddle-soak, a sponge and some neats-foot oil and I'll show you the way we kept horse equipment in the army.

"And for the love o' Mike, who shod that horse? Wait 'till the lieutenant sees—"

"Why, what's the matter with that?" broke in the surprised father. "The shoe fits and it looks like a durn good job."

"Yes, it looks neat," was the rejoinder, "but the bird who tacked that shoe on ought to get the stone-pile for a year. Can't you see he's cut the hoof to fit the shoe instead of shaping the shoe to fit the hoof? And look at the way he's cut those bars; that nag will go lame in two days. Wait 'till I see that blacksmith guy."

Thus it was that Farmer Roberts began to find out what the army did for his boy, and thus it is that farmers all over the country are coming to realize the same thing with the boys in their own localities.

It has been said that there are more men alive in Canada to-day than there would have been had the war not occurred. The reason for this is the fact that the rigid discipline, splendid setting-up exercises and the rugged out-of-door work to which every recruit was subjected, so built up the thousands of recruits to the army and navy, that hundreds of lives were saved—hundreds of lives of young men, who, because of their sedentary occupations and lack of out-of-door work, had become so emaciated and run-down that they would never have survived the terrible ravages of the epidemic of influenza which swept over the world a few months ago.

This is true, more so of the city man than of the boys from the country. It is the one big benefit resulting from the war to the metropolitan districts of this country, and the men who return from the service will resume their work with new life and a renewed vigor, which will multiply their personal efficiency and make them more valuable as citizens.

The men from the farms and outlying districts, however, were as a whole, far above the city man in physical condition and the results of the systematic training were not so marked in their cases, although it tended to make them more alert and active. To these men, however, came the great benefit of the splendid courses of training along lines which are practical and can be put to use in their everyday work upon the farms.

The farmer boys who are so fortunate as to have served with the artillery units of the army received perhaps the greatest amount of instruction which they can later utilize on the farm. In the horse-drawn outfits practically every recruit was taught the methods of handling horses. He was instructed first in the nomenclature of the horse, until he could name and refer correctly to the various parts of the horse anatomy. Next he was taught the most systematic, and hence the quickest, method of grooming, and also the simple tests of whether or not the horse is well groomed. Following this a course was given on horse-shoeing, and although it was not the purpose to make every man a practical and expert horseshoer, yet he learned the correct way to shoe a horse and the dangers to be encountered and the results to be had from improper fitting and adjusting of shoes.

How to judge horses for speed, strength and endurance, was one of the important things which the artillerymen learned. He was taught how to size up the various animals and to pass judgment as to their qualifications for the special work for which they were needed. Feeding is another thing which was taught to the recruits. Out on the farms it has been the custom to give the horse about so many forksful of hay or so many scoops of grain at different times, but upon very few farms in the country has this been done intelligently or with any special system. A horse in good health will generally eat all the grain which is placed before it, or until it can eat no more. Overfeeding is one of the greatest sources of horse ailments, and this particular course taught in the army was to instruct the men in the exact amounts and proportions of the different feeds, to be given to the horses of various sizes and weights, during the different seasons and in accordance with the amount of work which the animals were doing. It is the system which has been worked out after years of experience and observation by the remount specialists and veterinarians of the army, and is bound to be a great boon to the farmers, both in economy of feed, and in keeping the horses fit and well.

Care of the horse in accident and disease, is a course which is particularly valuable to the farmer boy, and one which was given a great amount of attention in the horse-drawn artillery regiments and in the cavalry. Knowing the proper thing to do at the proper time, in case of accident or sickness to a horse will often save a valuable animal to years of further usefulness and this was the aim of this particular course of study. Together with this the lessons given in scientifically cleaning and caring for harness will go a long way towards reducing the expense in this part of the farm equipment.

The course which was perhaps the most enjoyed by the young men from the country, and which was equally abhorred (at first) by the city-bred recruits, was equitation or horsemanship. Starting off in the most difficult way, the soldier was taught first to ride bare-back, then with the blanket and sur-cingle and later with the army saddle. The theory of this was to give the man his sense of balance first and the knack of gripping his mount with his thighs, rather than depending upon his stirrups, before he took to the saddle. After this was accomplished and the proper aids were taught and practiced, the recruit was instructed how to put his mount through all the paces and movements. A great many men came to the camps who had rode and handled horses for years in their own natural way. These had to be "unlearned" many things which were against the canons of military equitation and taught again correctly, but in a great majority of the cases these men, after becoming accustomed to the army way, agreed that the latter was the most logical and made for the better training and preservation of the horse.

In the motor-drawn artillery regiments certain men were given intensive and highly specialized courses in motors. The tractors used are not unlike those used on the great farms of the west, and the soldiers were given the opportunity to learn not only how to run and take care of tractors and wheeled material, but also to observe the possibilities of these machines for domestic use.

The trained infantryman was perhaps the military "Jack of All Trades." His courses included irrigation, sanitation, trench digging, and building of revetments and shelters, all exclusive of drill and the use of the rifle and bayonet. The Jackies of the navy, besides learning much of the same things that the Tommies were taught, also came to understand the secrets of weather prediction and the tying of many kinds of useful knots for various purposes, all of which will be of practical help to these boys when they return to the farms.

Considered as a whole, the nation at large, and the farmers in particular, will benefit largely from the great war in a way which will make for greater efficiency of the worker, better economy, and a greater output and production from the soil, because of the more intelligent application. These results will become more and more apparent as the young patriots who enlisted in the service of their country return to resume their work in the great and growing agricultural sections of the country.

Bedtime Stories

Betty's Return.

Mary Ann and Dean were two very happy children. When one day they overheard mother say, "We will have to get rid of the old cat 'Betty.' Her days of usefulness were about over; she was stiff, homely, and always underfoot."

The aged house pet was placed in a bag, tied securely and put in the wagon, as father was instructed to "take her so far away that she could never get back."

It was just before Christmas and the farmer was on his way to the nearest county town with a load of pork. When fifteen miles away from home he untied the string and "let the cat out of the bag," thinking that would be the last of Betty.

Well, what do you think? Scarcely four weeks had passed when, in the middle of a cold, blustering night, the thermometer down to zero, snow two feet deep on the ground, there was a scratching on the back door and mewing. How quick the little ears heard the familiar sound of old Betty. Out of bed jumped Dean and down to the kitchen as fast as his little legs could carry him, crying "Come, mother, open the door quick."

Sure enough, Betty had come back, and walked in as unconcernedly as though she hadn't been away an hour, rubbed up against the children as if to say, "Here I am again." Poor old Betty was so thin, and to think she had come all that distance in the deep snow. No time was lost in placing a nice dish of warm milk before her, the children clapping their hands and saying, "Betty did come back, as Mary Ann said she would."

When Betty had finished her milk, she leisurely walked around to her old spot back of the stove and lay down, purring contentedly.

Which goes to show a cat has the sense of distance which is not found in human beings.

The Prince's Day.

If princes of old lived lives of lazy luxury, modern princes take matters more seriously. Here is a typical day in the life of the Prince of Wales. Seven o'clock, rise. Eight to nine, breakfast. Nine to ten, heavy correspondence. Ten to twelve, public engagements, interviews, etc. One to half-past two, luncheon. Three to five, public engagements and visits. Five, tea. Six to seven, work in the library. Eight, dinner. Naturally, the programme varies, and the Prince is an enthusiastic sportsman when he is free of engagements. A good deal of his time is taken up with the business side of his estate, the Duchy of Cornwall, from which he draws about £50,000 a year. Last year he spent half that sum on benefiting the estate.

On the occasion of the visit of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales to Toronto, a State procession will be held through the streets on Monday, August 25th, the day our next king will open the Canadian National Exhibition. He will pass through several miles of thoroughfare from the Government House to the Exhibition grounds.

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INTERNATIONAL LESSON
AUGUST 17.

Christian Missions—Acts 1: 8; 13: 1 to 14: 28. Golden Text, Mark 16: 15.

Acts 1: 8—Ye Shall Receive Power, and Ye Shall Be Witnesses. These are among the last recorded words of Jesus to His disciples. Theirs is the great commission, He tells them, to be witnesses unto Him "both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." Theirs also is to be power from on high to perform that work. It was not for them to know "times or seasons," the time or manner of His returning again and setting up a kingdom upon earth. They were still hoping for the restoration in Palestine of the kingdom of David. It is significant that Jesus neither denies nor affirms that hope. But He bids them to be witnesses for Him in all the world. We are not wiser than our Master. Let us leave off, therefore, vain and foolish speculations about times and seasons of His coming, and set ourselves to the fulfilment of our mission, the mission handed down to us from the apostles, in obedience to our Lord's last command. And may it not be that in this very way, by carrying His Gospel in the power of His Spirit to all the world, that we shall not only prepare the way for and hasten His coming again, but actually bring it to pass as a spiritual fact, a spiritual Presence, the dominant and vitalizing force of Christ in the Spirit putting all enemies under his feet, and asserting His final and everlasting dominion over the minds and hearts of men?

Acts 14: 1-7. "In Iconium." Paul and Barnabas are upon their first great missionary journey. From Antioch in Syria they have gone over the sea to Cyprus, and having traveled from end to end of that island had sailed northward to the coast of Asia Minor. Hence they had gone through the mountain passes into the interior, and from Pisidian Antioch had turned eastward to the cities of Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. They had met with varied experiences, the most discouraging of which was the bitter and determined hostility of many Jews. From them the apostles turned to the Gentiles, and opened wide to them the door of faith (13: 46-48). The promise of power was being surely fulfilled in their preaching. In Iconium they "so spake that a great multitude both of Jews and Greeks believed." But again there was persecution and they fled to "the cities of Lycaonia."

14: 8-20. "At Lystra." The power which Jesus had promised was sometimes manifested in Paul, as in Jesus Himself, in works of healing. Here, in Lystra, he made a cripple stand on his feet and walk. The Gentile people marveled, and thought that he and Barnabas must be gods in human form. There was a story current at that time in that country that certain of the gods had visited them, and it was natural that they should become greatly excited over what they now supposed to be their return.

Similar things have happened in our own day, where missionaries with the healing skill of modern medical science, or with the methods and appliances of modern chemistry and physics and engineering, have seemed to the simple folk they were trying to aid to have supernatural power. The story is told of a Scotch medical officer with the British army of occupation in Mesopotamia who had been able to treat successfully many cases of blindness among the Arabs. "The result is that he is beset by the blind. People come leading blind relatives and friends from miles and miles away." In some cases cure is impossible, but "they think he could cure them all if he wanted to. They even go so far as to make prayers to him and try to propitiate him with gifts, as though he were some kind of god."

And indeed the missionary is often, as Paul and Barnabas were, in the place of God to such people. He brings to them some true knowledge of God, and exemplifies his teaching by his daily life and by the service he renders them. Yet he seeks no honor or worship for himself, but only for the God whose representative he is. Here the apostles "scarce restrained" the people from offering sacrifice to them. Nothing could more effectively demonstrate the pitiful need of humanity for that which the Christian missionary can bring.

In order to accommodate the Canadian War Memorials paintings at the Canadian National Exhibition, an extension of 130x30 feet to the Fine Arts Gallery is necessitated. Some of the paintings are over 20 feet long.