

# THE BUSINESS OF FARMING

THE fat of the land" becomes something more than a figure of speech as the eye sweeps the rich acres surrounding Odebolt, Iowa. And "the business of farming" takes on a new definition as the visitor drives out five miles from this lively little prairie town to Brookmont, one of the most famous farms in the whole Middle West.

One of the first sights to lay strong and visual emphasis on the word business, as one approaches the rather impressive group of buildings known as "the home farm plant," is a snug one-story structure with large hay and cattle scales in front, bearing the legend: "Office." Entering that building you will find yourself facing an iron grating beyond which are standing desks, flat desks, a typewriter or two, and the various furnishings suggesting the atmosphere of a country bank. Back of the large room, in which two or three clerks are busy with ledgers, blueprints and office files, is a smaller room—the private office of Albert E. Cook, the owner of Brookmont. Everywhere there is an atmosphere which says: This is a business, an industry, conducted in the same orderly and systematic manner as any other up-to-date industry—not a loose-jointed calling run on the rule-of-thumb, hit-or-miss fashion. But the thing which spoke most loudly to me the message, "Farming is a Business," was a set of maps or plates, in colors, arranged in the shape of a huge calendar and hanging on the wall of the private office.

"Those are our crop rotation maps," explained Mr. Cook, as he noticed that this decoration had caught my eye. "They are the same thing to my superintendent and foremen and bosses as the architect's working-plans are to the contractor, his superintendent, foremen and workmen."

And so I found them. Brookmont is subdivided into twenty-two farms—the home farm and twenty-one auxiliary farms. Each farm is mapped—one plat for each year. On these maps every field is outlined and its crop is instantly indicated by color used. What will be the crop scheme for farm number 14 in 1911? One glance at the 1911 map of that farm reveals the whole layout, field by field. And in the files of maps for that farm is the complete history of the crops which each of its fields has produced. Even the orchard of the home place shows the kinds and varieties of the trees with which it is planted. Here is order, system, plan. And this is the keynote of everything on Brookmont—for the master of this 7630-acre farm "doesn't do a lick of work from one year's end to another"—to quote a less methodical neighbor who carries his account mainly in his hat and prides himself that he puts in as many hours in the field as his best hand.

## The Recipe for Good Farming

BUT to play the thinking part for a chain of farms embracing 7630 acres and have the work move forward with almost automatic smoothness is a job which may well absorb the energies of an active man—even if he doesn't "work." And especially is this true if the balance on the big ledger never fails to be on the right side and of satisfactory size. Only a moderate gift of imagination is required to see Brookmont in the light of an Old-World barony, and its owner as an overlord of a domain—for Brookmont wholly maintains four school districts and

By FORREST CRISSEY

your big ground-plan of crop schemes and of general management, sound, progressive and framed for big, solid results which will at once

get the most out of the land and the most out of the labor, without depleting the land or oppressing the laborer. Here is where what you might call the heavy end of the farming game comes in; your big, broad ground-plan of operations must be right and practical and on lines for big results. Then comes the matter of corner-clipping, of reducing waste and preventing losses in every possible direction. Personally, I give more time to corner-clipping and waste-saving than to the big ground-plan work. Why? Not because it is more important than the other—because it isn't—but because when once a general policy is outlined it is done for all time, excepting for occasional changes to meet special emergencies. This leaves me free to attack the problem of corner-clipping, of detailed economies, of short cuts and of stopping leaks. These problems are always with the farmer, and especially with the larger farmer, whose work must be done by others. There is hardly a day when some problem of this class does not come up for settlement."

## The Hereford Road Squad

TO ILLUSTRATE this phase of his administration work Mr. Cook told the story of his road herd. In Iowa the country roads are wide—wider than those of any other state, perhaps—and there is a common creed in the standard state that any farmer who will not keep his roads clean and free from weeds is too narrow between the eyes to command the respect of his neighbors. One day Mr. Cook saw a gang of his workmen cutting the grass along the highway. He went at once to his office and asked his secretary for the figures on how much it cost Brookmont to live up to the Iowa religion of clean roads.

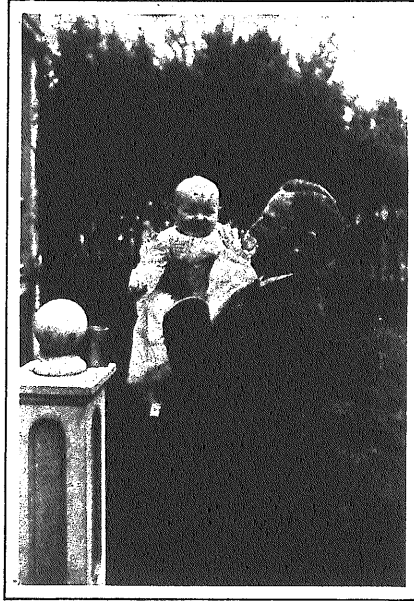
"Not less than four hundred dollars a year," was the answer.

Then he called in his stock superintendent and said:

"Pick out about two hundred of our quietest young Herefords and put them in charge of the best boy on the place; have them herded on the roads and herded close so that they will make a neat, clean job of grass-cutting. And while the lad is doing that he may as well act as fence inspector."

Perhaps this plan would not have been practical with any breed of cattle less quiet than the Herefords, which are almost as tractable as sheep; but as Mr. Cook has several hundred of these thoroughbreds he had no difficulty in organizing a road squad which keeps his highways clean and at the same time puts on flesh which, at the regular market price, figured fifteen hundred dollars in road income as against four hundred dollars in direct outlay. And the herdsman, at the same time, filled the position of fence inspector.

Disease among hogs and cattle is one of the heaviest and steadiest drains on the net income of any large livestock farm. Whatever will serve materially to reduce the ravages of this persistent form of waste is a cardinal economy on any livestock farm and especially so on a farm which seldom produces fewer than four thousand hogs and two thousand cattle in a year, and often increases



The Man Who "Farms With His Head" and Lets the Others "Do the Work"

mainly supports two more. Expressed in American farm terms Brookmont contains forty-six quarter sections; to drive completely around it would involve a journey of fourteen miles; but the fence-repair man has to keep up about one hundred miles of road fence. It is stoutly asserted that there are not five acres in the whole property which cannot be immediately and successfully cropped without drainage. Mr. Cook does not believe that a farmer should put all his eggs in one basket unless he is absolutely obliged to resort to the one-crop basis. Therefore, Brookmont may be broadly classed as a diversified farm—although the foundation of its operations is corn. The main sources of revenue on this farm are: steers and hogs for the livestock market; corn for the grain market; thoroughbred cattle and hogs for the breeding market and seed-corn and seed-grains for other farmers.

In the opinion of this man who farms with his head, wears good clothes and takes occasional trips to Europe, good farming is compounded of equal portions of economical production and of successful selling. Unless these two elements are well matched in the farmer, his results are bound to be lopsided and to fall short of their full normal stature.

"Take the matter of economical production on a place like this," said Mr. Cook. "First of all, it means having



A Bovine Road Squad Which Keeps His Highways Clean



The Home Farm

these figures by fifty per cent or more. Mr. Cook tackled the problem of disease prevention and cure in the temper of a scientist, with an eye always alert for the practical. A season of diligent and studious experiments with hog-cholera remedies gave him a generous distrust of medicines; he was convinced by his mortality figures that, in the matter of cures, the game wasn't worth the candle. Then it was clear to him that his only hope of strangling this kind of waste was by prevention. He no longer attempted to cure a hog afflicted with the cholera, but his investigations proved to his satisfaction that a hog which lives through this scourge is thereafter immune from it. And from these immunes he selected his herding stock. The results of this policy have thoroughly established him in the belief that it is possible to breed hogs which are practically immune from this plague. When this theory is combated with scientific argument he simply answers: "I know that I'm on the right track for I've tried it out, year after year, with a big bunch of hogs. And if it justifies itself with a big drove it certainly will with a small one, for when it comes to hogs everybody knows that there's more danger in large numbers."

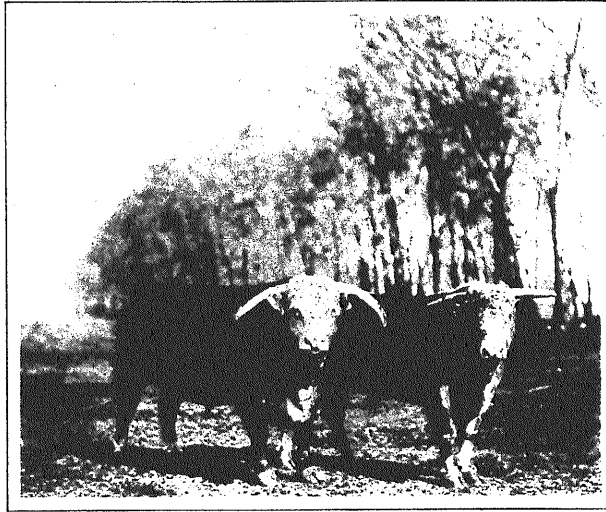
But this idea of prevention does not stop with the theory of accumulating a drove of immunes. Mr. Cook is a stickler for sanitary conditions from the ground up. Not a hog is allowed to be brought to Brookmont which has not passed a thirty-day quarantine. Then all of its quarters are rigidly disinfected once a month with a powerful preparation of petroleum.

#### Turkish Baths for the Hogs

ON THE subject of disinfecting Mr. Cook has this to say as the most important message he can possibly give to livestock farmers:

"I've made a careful, scientific study of disinfectants, and I think I've learned something worth while. To most farmers disinfecting means dipping. It meant the same to me—at the start. I built a huge concrete disinfecting tank and made the animals take a fifty-foot swim through medicated waters. Then I woke up to the fact that, while this probably was highly purifying for the outside of the creature, it didn't penetrate to the inside, nor did it do its cleansing and protective work on the quarters which the animal inhabited. After one year of the plunge bath I abolished the swimming-pool and substituted a strong force pump. The animals are driven into their sheds, from which all the manure has been carefully removed; the openings are tightly closed, and then the creatures are sprayed with the volatile disinfectant until they are completely drenched inside as well as outside, for the heat of the animals acts upon the spraying preparation and the building is quickly filled with a thick, penetrating fog which the creatures are compelled to breathe. They are cured internally as well as externally. I know that my animals have been almost instantly cured of bad cases of worms by this form of disinfecting. As for animal lice—they simply cannot stand against this treatment. But the cleansing does not stop with the outside and the inside of the creatures; the floors, walls and ceilings of the quarters are as effectually disinfected by the spray and the fog as are the animals themselves. This form of disease prevention may be as easily and effectively practiced by the small farmer as by the large. I have kept careful records of my spraying cost, and they show that, for the labor and materials, it amounts to precisely one cent an animal for each spraying, or twelve cents a year each creature. This one thing alone has saved me thousands of dollars annually. If all the livestock farmers of the United States were to follow this practice it would result in a saving of many millions of dollars a year, besides operating as a practical stay against peril to human life through diseased meats. As my hog sales have repeatedly amounted to sixty thousand dollars a year and I have seldom, if ever, marketed fewer than two thousand fat cattle a year, it must be granted that, in nine years of consistent practice of this form of spraying, I have had a fair chance to prove its merits."

There is scarcely a line of activity on his great farm which Mr. Cook has not considered in his corner-cutting campaign, at one time or another, with results which have



If His Steers Do Not Put On an Average of Three Pounds a Day He is Disappointed

more than justified the time and attention given by this man who "farms with his head" and lets the others "do the work." The treatment of his pastures and meadows is another case in point. Is there a patch of grass land where the bluegrass for this is a bluegrass farm—is not as thick and velvety as it should be? If so, he goes into that part of the pasture where the grass is prime and dead ripe, cuts it with the mower, rakes it and hauls the grass and scatters it upon the "short" pasture, where it sheds the seed and produces an abundant crop. He has never known a failure from this short cut in seeding methods.

Again, he handles his pastures in a novel way which saves the necessity of changing his cattle from one pasture to another. He turns this clever trick by spreading manure on only one-half the pasture at a time. The cattle feed upon the unfertilized ground until the grass is high on the other half and the taint of the manure has disappeared from it. Then they switch over, and the manure spreaders are put to work on the unfertilized portion. This furnishes uninterrupted pasturage and uninterrupted fertilization throughout the season in every pasture.

The fine point to which Mr. Cook applies his economies finds another illustration in the matter of his provision for oil food. He believes that, so far as possible, every farm should produce what is needed for the feeding of the stock kept on it.

Oil meal, or oil cake, is an expensive commodity in the business of feeding cattle for the market, but it is also a necessity, for many well-known reasons. Then, too, the feeding of heavy concentrates is a matter requiring great care and good judgment. For all these reasons Mr. Cook, each year, plants eight or ten acres of flax which is cut just before it is fully ripe. The oil is in it, but the pods are not opened. A handful of this flax hay is given to each animal daily, in its roughage, when it is on a grain feed, and is

eaten eagerly. Mr. Cook believes that he has few acres which are more profitable to him than those which grow his flax hay. Each year his flax field is changed to new ground. "Never pay freight or the profits of middlemen on what your farm can easily grow" is a settled principle with this modern Iowa farmer.

The Brookmont method of handling the help problem is as original as the treatment of its roads or its pastures or the way in which its stock is disinfected. Perhaps Mr. Cook is prouder of nothing else than he is of the fact that he has a Brookmont alumni of more than one hundred men who came to him without funds, as hired hands, and left him to locate on good farms of their own.

"The man who comes here to Brookmont as a raw recruit soon finds out from the veterans that there is a notion in the front office that the man who will do something for himself will do well for the farm and its owner, and that if a man doesn't show any disposition to get ahead on his own account there is an impression that he will not hurt himself looking after the interests of the Boss. Then they soon learn that if they put themselves out to better my condition I will go to especial lengths to better theirs. Again, it doesn't take long for the shirks and drones and grouches to catch the spirit of the farm and determine that it isn't the place for them. Genuine good feeling is a condition of employment at Brookmont. A man who is sore isn't wanted about the place. But the emphasis is put on the other side of the matter. Whenever a man shows that he is really looking out for the good of the farm he hears from it in a personal way. For instance, just the other day a fine big steer became injured. One of the barn-hands said to the foreman: 'Don't kill that steer; leave him to me, and I'll pull him through.' And he did nurse the creature back to good condition. He was a barn-man, and it was his work to take care of the stock, but he received a ten-dollar bill and my personal thanks for what he did. Then, take the corn-planting season. The men know that the hand who puts in especially straight rows is fairly sure to get an order for a good suit of clothes. And so it goes with everything in the line of work on the farm; the boys know that by looking out for me they are looking out for themselves and that an especially good piece of work is not going to be missed in the office."

#### Big Prizes for Good Workers

"TEN hours in the field is the rule of the field season. 'Work while you're at it, enjoy your rest' is the motto for farmhands here. Ten hours in the field is enough for any man who puts in good, hard, honest liks while on duty! If men are given longer hours than this it is my observation that they will distribute ten hours of effective work over the longer period—not deliberately, but because it's human nature.

"But there are big prizes, too. It has always been the practice here to give a man a chance to work for himself if he so wishes, and if he makes good, to back him in getting a place of his own. Each three hundred and twenty acres of Brookmont is considered as a separate farm, with its own set of buildings and its own foreman. The foreman may work for wages or he may run the farm on a contract to raise the corn and deliver it in the crib at fifteen cents a bushel. In this connection it should be said that the price would be too low for the work were it not for the high productivity of the land here, where the yield is very heavy. If he works for wages the foreman receives forty dollars a month. Many of those who take the contract at fifteen cents a bushel make much more than the regular wage. A large number of them have cleared fifteen hundred dollars a year, for the contract foremen get all their supplies from the store, which adds exactly six per cent to the actual cost of the merchandise. They are also charged six per cent on the farm equipment which is turned over to them. In many, perhaps most, cases these foremen pay for the equipment and leave me to go to farms of their own. This is the rule with the best of them. While I dislike to lose the services of tried men of this kind, it pays in the long run to give them every aid to get on an independent footing; it encourages all the men to do their level



Type of Cottage on the Twenty-Two Farms

best under the stimulus of knowing that they will be helped instead of hindered in an effort to get on their own feet. It is a common occurrence for foremen to leave me and take with them equipment on which they have made only a partial payment. One of my former foremen is now worth one hundred and fifty thousand dollars and many of them own farms worth fifty thousand dollars and are clear of debt. Of the one hundred and four heads of families who have become independent farm owners since leaving my employ not one of them had any property when beginning work at Brookmont, and in most cases I advanced the money to bring them and their household goods here.

"Some of the best hands I have were hoboes. They saw the system work and decided to save their wages and make a new start in the world. Many of these men have substantial deposits in the savings-bank at Odebolt on which they receive four and a half per cent interest. These deposits of men who were once confirmed hoboes frequently run as high as two thousand or three thousand dollars. Every wage man on the place is paid on the fifteenth of the month for his labor of the preceding month. Many of them wish to leave their wages with the office and 'let them pile up.' They are not permitted to do this, but are told to take their money to the bank where it will be earning something for them. This encourages thrift and helps to make better men of them.

"This general policy of handling help is dictated not by philanthropy but by plain business sense. It gives me better men, keeps the good ones with me a longer time and, above all, gets out of every man in my employ the best there is in him.

"Foremen are paid two dollars and fifty cents a week for boarding hands, and the wage scale is as follows:

"January, February and March, twenty dollars a month. April, May and June, twenty-five dollars a month.

July, August and September—harvest—one dollar and fifty cents a day. October and November, twenty-five dollars a month.

"This is subject to variations. For instance, huskers are paid three cents a bushel and earn two dollars and fifty cents to three dollars a day. There are plenty of men who husk one hundred bushels a day. In the heavy season Brookmont has about one hundred hands; in the off season about forty and in the intermediate months around sixty. In addition to these there are the foremen, the livestock superintendent and farming superintendent. All of the farms in the system, whether handled by foremen working on the bushel basis or by those drawing regular wage, are under the central control and must be cropped and managed according to the policy enforced by the farming superintendent and the livestock superintendent. Without this provision there would be chaos."

In the experience of Mr. Cook the great secret of successful corn raising is the thorough preparation of the seed bed and the planting of the seed that is known to be right. Next in order comes persistent cultivation. Unlike David Rankin, Mr. Cook prefers to be his own seed expert. One reason which he urges for this decision is that seed raised on his own place is sure to be thoroughly acclimated. Another reason is that a certain strain of seed corn has been carefully developed on his soil for twenty-five years, and he holds that no substitute could be had from professional seed-corn growers which would do as well for him.

Here are Mr. Cook's rules for growing good corn and plenty of it:

"Make a fine and mellow seed bed, check in your corn and then drag thoroughly before it comes up. When it is about three inches high go in with the walking cultivator; after that cultivate four times.

"The test of successful farming comes in a season which is out of the ordinary. One year we had a drought in Iowa

and that year my neighbors did not raise more than ten bushels of corn to the acre. Early in the season I made up my mind that we were going to have a sustained drought and I cultivated accordingly, keeping every man in the field stirring up the surface of the soil until the tall growth of the corn drove the cultivators out. This was to retain the moisture in the ground. Farmers around here called me a fool for doing this—but what was the result? I averaged thirty-one bushels to the acre on four thousand acres, and marketed that corn at fifty-five cents a bushel. It is my aim to keep steers and hogs enough to feed out three-fourths of the corn raised on the place; the other fourth is sold on the market."

Starting with sod land, the crop rotation scheme of the Brookmont farm is two successive crops of corn; this is followed with small grain, either oats, barley or wheat. With the small grain is sown medium red clover. For this last seeding, the bed is thoroughly prepared, the grain sown and the land dragged once. Then the clover is sown and the land dragged lightly. The reason of this treatment is that the grain gets in more thoroughly and gets a start. The clover does not get in so deep and grows better for that reason.

Mr. Cook finds that he is able to figure the first crop of corn following sod running at sixty to seventy-five bushels an acre. Sometimes he is able to get as high as one hundred and four bushels to the acre. The second crop on the same land generally falls off to a yield of fifty to sixty bushels to the acre, and if the crop were corn again the third year the yield would not be more than forty bushels.

In the fall of the third year he pastures his cattle on the clover land after the grain has been cut. The next year, the fourth, the clover is cut for hay or for seed, and early that fall the land is turned under in order to realize on the fertilizing value of the clover. The next year it is returned to corn again. (Concluded on Page 64)

# BALLYHOO BILL

By George Randolph Chester  
ILLUSTRATED BY ARTHUR WILLIAM BROWN

## He Goes on the Pumpkin Circuit

OBSERVING from a safe distance that those who entered the pass gate of the Rodney County Fair "mitted a red broad," the tall young man with the washable collar seized upon a red advertising card from the roadside, deftly trimmed it with a pocket-knife to what he judged to be the proper size, and walked briskly up to the gate, merely "flashing" the bogus pass at the gateman and restoring it to his pocket as he started through. He had nearly made it when the gateman, a stockily-built fellow with a heavy jaw and somewhat sluggish faculties, remembered that the card had not seemed to be exactly the right shade of red; closer scrutiny made him certain that he had not previously seen the tall young man.

"Lemme see that pass," he demanded.

With perfect assumption of confidence the tall young man reached for the "broad," at the same time attempting to push through the turnstile. By this time, however, the stockily-built man had his foot against the stile, and the attempt was a failure. Consequently, the newcomer took the card entirely from his pocket, looked at it himself, and was amazed to discover that it was not regular! Finding that this clever histrionic bit met with but an icy response, he laughed engagingly. His face, in repose, was as gravely serious as that of a Greek statue, but when he laughed he expected the world to laugh with him.

"You've a quick eye, neighbor," said he. "I left my pass and hadn't any time to go back and get it, so I framed up this; but it didn't go with a wise old fox like you on the gate!"

A little mollified, the gate-tender became a trifle more pliable.

"I suppose you think you're workin' inside," he suggested banteringly.

"Sure! Don't you know me? I'm Ballyhoo Bill."

That name, born on the instant and coming like an inspiration, was one which never could have been given him by his associates nor assumed among them by himself, for the simple reason that he was a ballyhoo man; but it visibly impressed the gateman.

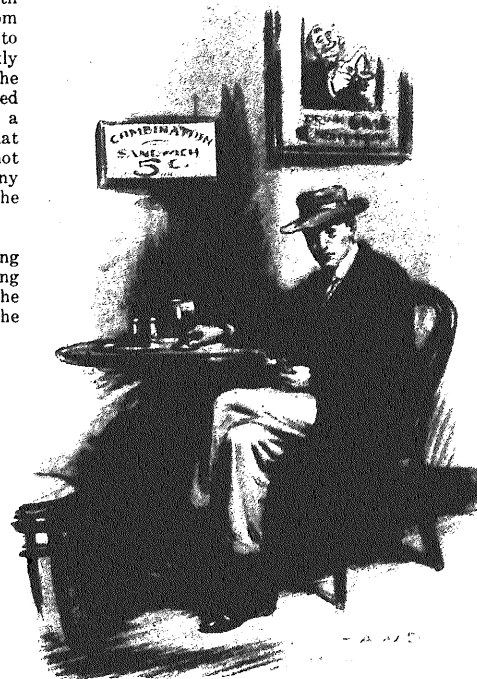
"Who you workin' with?" was his next question.

The answer was prompt:

"The girl show."

"You might just as well wait outside for them," the guardian of the free portal unexpectedly informed him. "Your outfit's goin' to get the run today."

"I got later news about that," announced the tall young man with calm superiority, although secretly relieved to find that he had not seemed to lie, since there really was a girl show on the grounds.



He Had Been Rather Foolish to Leave the State Fair Grounds Without an Attempt to "Locate"

"Anyhow, I don't remember seeing you before," persisted the gateman. "If you want in real bad you might just step across to the pay gate and hand 'em two bits. The association'd be glad to get it." He paused long enough to give the stranger another careful scrutiny. Not all the cinders and coal dust and smoke and grime of travel had been washed from his face and hands. His clothing, although the suit was good enough and fitted him well, was overly wrinkled and also looked cindery. "An' if you ain't got the quarter the square jaw sagely observed after this inspection, 'they don't want you inside anyhow."

The tall young man produced a very small roll indeed, consisting of three well-worn and dingy one-dollar bills folded into a compact wad, which he immediately shoved back into his pocket.

"I never separated myself from any kale yet to break into a pumpkin fair," he stated as one voicing a righteous principle, "and I've seen more of 'em than you ever heard about."

"Then it won't hurt you not to see this one," retorted the gatekeeper, who was keeping up the argument now merely because he was of an argumentative disposition and had the triumphant side of it.

The self-styled Ballyhoo Bill recognized the absolute futility of another attempt, though about to make one, when his eye lighted with fresh hope. A man in a flannel shirt and a threadbare ready-made tie—a low-browed and tousle-headed man—laden with a pail of lard, four loaves of bread and a roll of meat, had just set down his lard pail and was reaching for his pass. The signs were unmistakable. He belonged to a lunch stand.

"Hello, pal," said the tall young man. "I'm with the girl show and I can't shill through Johnny Hep."

"You bet I'm Johnny Hep!" suddenly asserted the gateman.

"And I left my ticket of admission in my sleeping-room," went on the tall young man, suddenly dropping the lingo, "and the gatekeeper says he don't know me."

"Oh!" said the other, recognizing the stranger by his jargon as "one of the knows." "This buddie's all right, pal. I know him. He's no simp. Other days he's come in at noon when your pardner's on the gate."

This was so obviously a lie that even the gate-tender grinned.

"Go on through, the both of you," said he. "I don't believe you ever had a pass, Ballyhoo Bill, but I'm sure of one thing: you belong with these grafters, and you might as well herd in with the rest of 'em."

He looked after them with a puzzled expression until he became aware that a quiet-looking, gray-mustached man had been standing behind him unobserved.

"Good-morning, Mr. Myers," he said with deference. "What was them two talkin' about, anyhow?" and he scratched his head in perplexity.

"Just ordinary business affairs," replied the veteran fair manager, smiling. "That tall young fellow is a side-show barker, or outside lecturer, as they call themselves, and he looks to be a good one. He is out of a job and tried to shill through your gate. A shillaber is a booster for a sideshow, and, consequently, to go in free anywhere is to shill through."

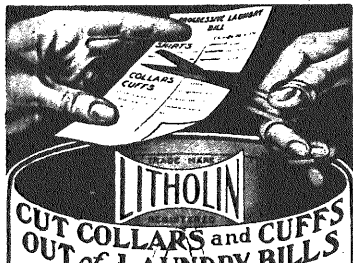
The gate-tender had not removed his fingers from his hair.



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**THE BUSINESS OF FARMING**

(Concluded from Page 12)

The foundation of Mr. Cook's herd of thoroughbred Herefords was laid by his father, in 1883, in an importation of more than three hundred head of the choicest stock to be found in England. In regard to this feature of his farming enterprise, Mr. Cook says:

"I find that my Hereford herd, based on actual sales, has made increase at the rate of twenty thousand dollars per annum. The main part of its growth is made on grass." Other than this the principal ration is crushed corn-and-cob. It is his experience that animals thus fed will not overeat and become overheated and stalled. When it comes to the fattening process his steers are, in the fall, pastured on stalks and are fed cornmeal. They are given plenty of hay and straw, alternated with roughness. He holds that it is simply good common-sense to give his cattle as much variety as possible in their diet. By top-dressing his pastures in the fall Mr. Cook is able, according to his estimate, to realize twice the grass crop which he would otherwise get without this special fertilizing. His pastures have carried, in cattle, as high as an animal and a half to the acre, these animals going into fall grass as high as their knees. If his steers in pasture, with a corn ration of one-fourth to one-third of a bushel a day, do not put on an average of three pounds a day to the animal he is disappointed.

Because Mr. Cook believes in the policy of being his own seed-corn expert he has been drawn into furnishing seed for others. This he has found to be a very profitable side-line, as it entails little additional work and expense. He uses about four hundred bushels of seed-corn a year in his own fields, and is, perhaps, his own best customer—although he sells hundreds and, perhaps, thousands of bushels to other corn-growers in the Middle West, at an average price close to five dollars a bushel. At the present time, according to the foremen of his seedhouse, he is at least two thousand bushels short of the demand—which may be fairly taken as an indication that there is good money in raising seed-corn with a high reputation for germinating power and large yield.

**On the Right Side of the Ledger**

In the fall, before the first frost, when the cornstalks show signs of turning, men are sent into the center of the field to pick the most perfect ears showing especially early maturity. The corn is then hauled to the seedhouse and re-sorted by experts, the ears being placed in racks so that each ear may be identified by its number. Then, in the spring, four kernels are taken from each ear and placed in the germinating boxes for test. According to Mr. Cook's statement these tests show that his seed-corn is now running "ninety-eight to ninety and one-half strong."

"How," asked Mr. Cook, "can farmers expect to get a good stand of corn when the seed which they plant is so poor that ten per cent of it does not grow at all and there is forty per cent weakness in that which does grow? I am firmly convinced that the corn planted by the average farmer will not, by actual test, demonstrate a higher ratio of prepotency than this. Not more than five per cent of the farmers in this country test their seed-corn before planting it, and the result is an annual loss of millions of dollars to the agriculture of this country.

"I find," he says, "that my farms have paid me, for a term of ten years, just about twelve and seven-twelfths per cent interest on a valuation of one hundred and thirty-five dollars per acre over the entire tract of seven thousand six hundred and thirty acres. My hogs have made an average of thirty-six thousand dollars a year, ranging in numbers from twenty-five hundred to five thousand. My Herefords and my hogs have made practically all their growth on grass, other than the feed derived by the swine from following the cattle, and my increase in Herefords has averaged twenty thousand dollars a year, these figures being taken from actual sales."

On this showing farming conducted on an industrial scale and on business principles certainly comes out on the right side of the ledger!

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