CHAPTER X.

THE FAIR AND AN AUCTION.

"They serve God well
Who serve His Creatures."

In the fall, when we had plenty of apples to eat, the boys and hired men began taking extra good care of us, and we heard them talking about taking apples, the mares and colts, and some of us cows to the fair.

But, some time previous to this Mr. Philips went to see G. G. Hitchcock and his cattle. Mr. Hitchcock said he liked his cows, but that there was no use to raise bull calves, as he could not sell them. Mr. Philips said he told him that they would sell if their ancestors were good milk and butter producers, and had a good registered pedigree. Mr. Hitchcock then said he had a good one, several months old, that he called well bred, that he would sell. Mr. Philips liked his looks and the price suited him, so he told Mr. Hitchcock that if he would have him registered he would buy him, as he had a chance to sell his old bull to a farmer. They agreed that his name should be Sir Dandee. His registered number was 3,237. He was then nearly a year old, and came in time to go to the fair with us, and took the first premium as a Guernsey bull calf.

When we went to the fair, the hired man led Sir Dandee, in order to break him to lead. Mr. Philips led my father behind a wagon, as he was used to that, and the boys drove the rest of us. Beside myself, there was my daughter, Yeksa's
Queen, who was now large and handsome, being over a year old. Then, there was a handsome grade Guernsey cow, called Lizzie, and a grade Devon, called Fill Pail. They said she gave more than nine thousand pounds of milk in a year. Old Nelly did not go and she was quite cross about it. She said she supposed the reason was because she was not high bred nor high toned enough to go in such smart company; but that she believed, and would bet, that she gave about as much milk as any of us; and I thought so too, for she always filled her pail, and it was not a small one either, but she had no good breeding and had to stay at home. We reached the fair ground all right, where we saw many other cattle, also a lot of horses and colts. We were put into stalls and tied near together, and well cleaned off and light covers put on us to keep off the flies.

A great many people, both men and women, stopped to look at us and most of them said, "Oh, see what nice Jersey cattle these are." When told that we were not Jerseys, but Guernseys, many of them said they had never seen any of that breed of cattle before. Each of us were awarded a first premium, and one of the grade cows, also, received a first premium, while the other grade cows did not receive any premium, which greatly pleased the hired man, as he said the judge missed it, because he gave the premium to the poorest of the grade cows. We thoroughbreds did not have any competition, but the judge said we were worthy and fit to be shown at any fair. I noticed that Mr. Philips' colts wore blue ribbons too, and I heard him tell the boys that he was awarded the first premium on his show of apples.

A man, I think they called him Grumbler, who had some poor looking cows near our stalls, was greatly dissatisfied with the judge's decision, and said that a fair was a poor place to get justice; for he knew that his cows were better than Mr. Philips', but they gave him the premium, just because he was secretary of the fair association once and had pedigrees for his cattle, and that anybody could buy pedigrees anywhere for five dollars
apiece. The judge told him that was all some people knew about pedigrees and pedigreed cattle. After the judge went away Mr. Grumbler came back and brought three or four young men with him, and went into a stall near where we stood; then he took a large bottle out of his pocket and asked the young men to take some whiskey with him, and said he could treat if he didn’t get any premiums. He offered some to Mr. Philips’ boys and the hired man, but they thanked him and said they did not want it, that they never drank such poisonous stuff. When Mr. Philips came back, the boys told him about it, and he said, “You did right boys, to refuse to drink with Grumbler and those young men. It is too bad that men who know better, and who know what a terrible curse drunkenness is will try to make young men drunkards and a disgrace to their families by treating them to whiskey or other intoxicating drinks. That man belongs to a class of men who think they can not go to a fair, a horse race, baseball game or dance, or go hunting or fishing without taking a jug or bottle full of whiskey with them. It is a poor way for a young man to start out in life. I once let a team to a man to go about nine miles to a dance. The man took his wife and two men with him. Each of the men had a bottle of whiskey, but were very careful not to let the woman see their bottles, but one of them told me that he was greatly surprised, before they arrived at the dance, to see the man’s wife take a bottle of whiskey out of her pocket and pass it to the men, saying she brought it along as she was afraid that some of them might get sick and need it. Such people are not fit associates for young men, and if you boys want to grow up to be honest, respectable men and able to secure good positions you must keep away from such company.”

When we went home from the fair, Mr. Philips went in a buggy and led me behind it. He said to me, “Queen, I will drive slow so it won’t tire you to keep up for old Fan will go as slow as I ask her to. A cow that is as well broke to lead as you are is worth five dollars more for it, and it is very little
trouble to learn any calf to lead if it is taken in time. And one of the best paying things in taking cattle to a fair is that it learns them to lead and be handled, and they never forget it."

The hired man led Sir Dandee, and my daughter and the other two cows followed close behind them, and my father was led behind the wagon the same as he went. All seemed to be anxious to go home. When we were going up the ridge a nice looking man drove up behind us and said to Mr. Philips, "I suppose you would ask as much for that cow and heifer as I could get for my team?"

Mr. Philips said, "They are not for sale, but it would take a very good team to buy the cow, and the heifer is worth about as much as the cow.”

"Well,” said the man, “If I owned them I wouldn’t sell them either.”

Mr. Philips then stopped his horse and let the man go by, as the road was narrow and he had two horses and no load.

The next day after we got home from the fair, there was a very exciting time on the farm for a little while. I was in the pasture near the house, and the boys, who had been picking apples, were coming to dinner. They had a big mare, called Maud, that hauled in many of the apples, hitched to a stone boat. One of the boys, nicknamed Hoxie, was standing on the back end of the stone boat and driving at a trot. Just then the front of the boat struck a stone and threw him off, and his head struck a stone with such force as to render him unconscious. The eldest boy, nicknamed Cody, came up to his brother and took him up in his arms and carried him some distance and laid him down and cried "O, Hoxie do talk!” His father and mother came running, and they worked over him for about fifteen minutes, when he opened his eyes and began to look around in a dazed way. They were the happiest lot of people I ever saw when Hoxie was able to sit up and talk. Mr. Philips said, "Boys, you must always be very careful how you
drive, for you see there is danger in careless driving, even when you ride on a stone boat."

One evening, a few days after this exciting occurrence, Mr. Philips told the boys that he had to raise some money to pay a loan that would soon fall due, and that he had decided to sell some of the cows and colts that he could spare to raise it, and that by selling some of the stock he would have some hay to sell too. In a few days I saw the boys looking at some printed bills, and when one of the boys read one of them he said to his father, "Why, pa, you havn't put Queen and Sir Dandee nor Yeksa's Queen in the bill. They would sell better than any of the rest of them, for everybody that sees them likes them."

"I know that is so," said Mr. Philips, "but they are worth more than we could get for them, and they and some grade heifers we have will make an excellent foundation for raising another herd of dairy cattle. We can grow the feed and have the necessary environments for nowhere, in Wisconsin, can better and stronger constituted cows and horses be raised than here on these hills. The grass and water are perfect, and the going up and down and along the sides of the hills has a tendency to develop every muscle and make them strong and healthy. I once talked with a stage proprietor, of the Black Hills, at Fort Pierre, South Dakota, and he said that the horses that were raised in the hills would last one-third longer than those raised on the plains. And there is old Frank, he is a good example. He was raised here from a good imported sire. I sold him when he was four years old, to a man in La Crosse, and he has drawn a heavy delivery wagon on those paved streets for eighteen years, and his feet and legs are still sound, and he has never been off his feed. These facts are well worth considering when buying a farm."

The day before the auction, a man, by the name of Kingman, came down from Sparta, to look the cows over. He seemed to know a great deal about cows, and Mr. Philips said he was one of the best Jersey breeders in the state. When
the boys and men were milking he kept watch of the cows, to see, I guess, how they behaved and how much milk they gave. He said to Mr. Philips, "I am short of milk and can't supply all my customers, and I want you to pick out two of your cows for me, that I can milk during the winter profitably and then sell them, as I have a lot of fine heifers coming in in the spring.

"Well," said Mr. Philips, "there is Old Nelly, she freshened last week. She is thirteen years old, but, with the care you give your cows, she will make you two pounds of butter a day all winter. Then, there is Lizzie, a grade Guernsey, not as old, but nearly as good, that will do you good work and sell well in the spring. You can have Old Nelly for forty dollars and Lizzie for fifty."

Mr. Kingman said, "All right, I will take them on your recommendation. I will start them under that price and run them up to ninety dollars for the two. But you had better hold them till the last, as people may think I am bidding them in for you, and by-bidding always hurts a sale."

The morning of the sale, Mr. Philips told the boys to milk the cows clean, and not do as he knew of a man doing. He let his cows go without milking the morning of the sale, so their udders would appear to be very large, and when they were offered for sale, that afternoon, their udders were so full that the milk began to leak out, and the people were afraid to bid on them, as they did not want cows that leaked their milk, so he lost money by it. There was a pretty little two-year-old grade heifer that, they said, had a calf when she was seventeen months old. The boys said, "Pa let us keep her, for she is making over a pound of butter a day, and is such a little thing she won't bring much, and will make us a good cow when she gets older."

"Well" said their father, "I will tell you what we will do. We will put her up, and if she don't bring thirty dollars we will keep her."

But some man had been looking at her, and talked to Mr.
Kingman about her, so the first bid on her was thirty dollars, and kept going up, a dollar at a time, until Mr. Philips knocked her off at forty-two dollars. I heard them say some time afterwards that she made a splendid cow.

The assessor and his son were at the sale, and the assessor wanted Mr. Philips to put my daughter, Yeksa's Queen, and me up, but Mr. Philips said he could not afford to do it. The assessor, however, got his eyes on the sucking colts and bought two at a good price.

Before the sale began, a rough looking man came up to me and made me stand over, in my stall, and began, in a rough way, to milk me. I was not used to such rough treatment and could not stand it, so I just politely kicked him as hard as I could, to let him know that I was not used to it, when he said, "I wouldn't buy that cow, for she is a kicker." "No, I know you wouldn't, said Mr. Philips, "for she is not for sale, and is one of the best and gentlest cows I have, but if she was for sale I would not sell her to you, as I think so much of my cows that I would not sell them to anyone whom I know would not be kind to them, and Queen is not used to your way of handling."

"If I could buy her I would soon learn her my way of handling cows. I don't believe in babying them," said the man. He then said, "I'll tell you what it is, Philips, if you would send to the corners and get a couple of kegs of beer your stock would sell better."

In reply to his suggestion Mr. Philips said, "I like my cattle and horses, and I prefer to sell them to men not under the influence of liquor. I will give the crowd plenty to eat and milk and water to drink, that is the best I can do. If I brought beer here, and treated the crowd, it might be the first lesson in learning some young man to become a drunkard, and that is a crime I never will have to answer for. The La Crosse Chronicle, of last week, said there was no place now in the business world for the "boozer," as business men, in all branches of
business would not employ him. Neither does the railroads want him."

One man bid five dollars on a half-blood Guernsey bull calf, and when he went up to fifteen dollars he said, "It beats all how calves from a good bull and a good cow will sell."

Mr. Kingman told the men that it was the cheapest in the end to buy a thoroughbred sire, but if they would not do that it was far better that they buy a good grade than to use a scrub sire. He greatly surprised most of them by saying, "I am now using a thoroughbred sire that is ten years old, and am now raising the best heifers I ever raised. I sold a two-year-old heifer last week for one hundred and fifty dollars."

After the sale closed, Mr. Kingman hired a man to lead Old Nelly and Lizzie to Sparta. Mr. Philips said that all who bought stock paid cash, and took them home with them; so there were no notes and no trouble to get signers to them, and that he realized about twelve hundred dollars from the sale.

The new bull calf, Sir Dandee, was kept tied up all winter and the next spring, after my father, Puck, was sold to a farmer, he occupied his stall. Unbeknown to Mr. Philips, the hired man used to go into Sir Dandee’s pen and play with him. He learned him to chase him, and then he would run out of his way. Mr. Philips had him dehorned, so the boys were not afraid of him. The next year a Mr. Herron, at Viroqua, wanted to buy him, and the price was agreed upon, but Mr. Herron was taken sick and died. But after his death the executor sent the money to pay for him. In the meantime, not knowing of the trick he had learned, Charlie, the eldest boy, went into the pen, one day, to look for eggs, when Sir Dandee came to him and knocked him down. The hired man drove him away, so Charlie escaped injury. Mr. Philips, at once, wrote the executor that the bull had become cross, and he was afraid he might hurt the Herron boys, and that he would return the money. But the executor wrote and told him to send him along, as the boys were all men, and had rather have a cross bull than a
gentle one for then they would be on the lookout for him.

So, Sir Dandee was sent away, and the Herrons used him two years. They turned him out to run in the field with the other cattle. When he was three years old he was a large, fine fellow, and was running in a pasture at one side of the highway, when one day two men came along driving some cattle. Sir Dandee was ready for a fight, and followed along the fence, until he found a weak place when he broke through. One of the men tried to drive him back, when Sir Dandee attacked him and came near getting the best of him. The men drove him along with the cattle until they came to a house, when the man who was attacked by Sir Dandee, said he did not want to be conquered by a bull, and went to the wood-pile and got an axe, and while his companion attracted the attention of Sir Dandee he slipped up behind him and cut both his ham strings, so they had to kill him for beef. That was the end of Sir Dandee, and Mr. Philips said, "Although he had lost his life he taught the world two lessons; first, that it is a bad plan to fool with a bull and learn him bad tricks when young; second, that it is a dangerous practice to let an old bull run in a pasture with other cattle, especially when it is along the public highway."

After Mr. Philips had made a bargain with Mr. Herron to sell him Sir Dandee, he bought of H. D. Griswold, of West Salem, the four-year-old Guernsey sire, Vidette, his registered number was 1,874. His dam was an imported cow, called Rose Martin. Vidette was bred by Mr. Gordon, of Koskonong, Wis. And most of the people, who saw him, said he was the handsomest Guernsey bull that had so far come to West Salem. He resembled my father, Puck, but Mr. Philips said he did not consider him as perfect a type of a dairy sire as my father was. After Sir Dandee went away Vidette occupied his pen, and was very gentle and easy to handle. Mr. Philips said Mr. Griswold had always handled him carefully.