EVENING SESSION.

The Institute met at 7:30 P. M. Conductor H. C. Taylor in the Chair.

WHY I LOVE THE FARM.

MRS. ADDA F. HOWIE, Elm Grove, Wis.

The history of nearly every country can unfold page upon page of notable incidents in the management of farms and herds while the stalwart members of the family were engaged in warfare. In short, the annals of our own land are so replete with stories evidencing the stability of character acquired by the pioneer women of our agricultural districts, that one ceases to wonder that when the mettle-laden steeds of government, strong and saddled, were frenzied beyond control of plausible rhetoric or terrifying threats, that an All-Wise Providence selected the firm, sinewy hands of a farm-bred boy to grasp the trailing lines and guide in safety the coach of state. Indeed, in every critical period of our nation's existence the farm has not only yielded its stores of provender, but has ever stood ready to supply brain, brawn, and courage, and the farm women have as quickly and courageously taken their places in field and barn while the herds and flocks have continued to multiply and flourish, notwithstanding the change in management.

Woman in Colonial Times.

In the early struggle of our colonies it required the possession of a higher standard of valor and skill in the heroic women who unhesitatingly assumed the care of lands and cattle, the tilling of the soil and cultivation of crops, while their natural protectors, the sterner sex, engaged in the all-absorbing contest for liberty.

Many a tale indicative of strength of character has found its way through a blur of busy years to the present time. We listen with pleasure to narratives that tell of stately dames and aristocratic belles who bandied wit and sentiment with renowned statesmen of that period, who danced the minuet with courtly grace and made themselves so attractive and popular that select American society of to-day is supposed to still bear the regal impress of distinguished courtesy.

A Pointed Story.

Yet it is interesting to find that the settlements did not give shelter to all the noteworthy people, and a little story showing the quality of our countrywomen comes vividly to mind. It was during the most trying time of that historical conflict when the army was reduced to such sore straits that orders had been issued from headquarters to confiscate all the horses and cattle to be found within a certain radius. A captain and squad in search of animals to be used for transporting guns and ammunition chanced, while passing a field, to see a handsome span of large gray horses pulling a plow that was guided by an old darkey. The captain's eyes fairly sparked, for it was by all odds the best team he had seen for many a day, and he at once notified the driver of his intentions to put them into government service. The old darkey gravely shook his head, saying respectfully, "I don't think we can spare 'em, sah; you'll have to see the boss." "Where is the boss?" asked the captain, thinking it might not be bad policy to at least inform the owner of his plans. "You'll find the boss over there," was the darkey's reply, as he pointed to the dwelling and went on with his work.

A knock on the farmhouse door brought no less a personage than the boss herself. "Madam," the officer politely began, "we have come to take
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Your horses." In vain she explained that every other horse on the place had already been given over to the army, and that this team was a necessity to aid in cultivating the land and harvesting crops on which so much depended. The captain insisted while the woman endeavored to convince him that the team could not be spared. "I have orders to take them, nevertheless," said the captain, whose practiced eye had noted their qualities. "And by what authority do you demand my team?" questioned the woman with flashing eyes. Somewhat nettled by her resist-

Agricultural Education.

Our government has recognized the dignity and importance of this vocation, and at the present time in nearly every State University the department of agriculture is given an honorable and prominent place. Stock judging, the feeding of domestic animals, horticulture, care of soil, together with every known science pertaining to dairy interests and plant life, is intelligently taught and demonstrated on experimental farms by competent instructors.

This department is open to women as well as men, and with the knowledge thus acquired, supplemented by the actual experience that must be gained in every other line of human effort, there is ample opportunity for one who so desires, to become a master of the art.

Some of Mrs. Howie's Jerseys.

Choosing a Vocation.

Now that women have successfully invaded nearly every known field of

ance, the officer replied, "Madam, by the greatest authority, that of our commander, Gen. George Washington." Then asserted itself the masterful dignity of a nature nurtured by wholesome country environments, and the woman farmer, stretching forth her hand, said "Go back to your commander and tell George Washington that his mother says he can't have her horses." The message was delivered and it was reported that the general bent over his papers and smiled, but
industry, the question, from a controlling force of circumstances, is, which will prove the most desirable, rather than the old one of how to gain admittance to either profession. And, strange as it must appear to one who has already made a careful survey of the ground, the very vocation that affords so many superior opportunities for acquiring health, wealth and an ideal mode of living and that for centuries has been indebted to the wisdom, skill and sympathetic qualities of women for much of the renown of its achievement, should be so conspicuously unfamiliar in its every phase to the numerous clear-sighted, energetic wage-earners and ambitious business women of the present time. For while a few may be prominently quoted as attaining an enviable reputation as breeders of choice cattle and promoters of farming interests, they are at this period so rare as to be regarded by some almost in the same category as freaks, or, possibly, in the still more repulsive light of one possessing a coarse, masculine nature, that would boldly seek to gain notoriety for eccentricity; when the truth, if told, would simply reveal a shrewd business instinct judiciously coupled with the desire to lead a quiet and unpretentious life amidst sincere and soul-helpful influences which has been the all-potent factor in the selection of a vocation that can offer innumerable possibilities for study and permanent advancement. For when one has become proficient in the several branches of this line of business, neither age nor more modern innovations will be likely to startle her with the humiliating realization that her services are no longer available. In short, she is “just behind the times;” that years of devotion and experience must now be made to pay for the attractions of a more vigorous and “up-to-date” youth, at the clamoring demands for a flippant and restless change that is doing so much to unsettle the stability of this age.

Stock Breeding.

If the woman whose choice falls on stock breeding and dairy farming is by nature and education adapted to her work, each year of experience will increase both the value of her knowledge and the bulk of her coin, for while she undoubtedly must from the start rely on more brawny arms to execute many of her carefully formulated plans, nothing short of a weakened brain or a total physical collapse can compel her to lose interest in her surroundings or become less valuable to the welfare of the business. This condition of itself must present a favorable and exhilarating influence in marked contrast to the certain ultimate destiny of nerve-exhausted nurses, clerks, stenographers, lawyers, doctors and teachers, and while it will require much study and a patient, conscientious performance of manifold duties to become a capable and self-reliant director in this vocation, the wholesome environments, variety of labor, together with the constant daily changes, are a harmless stimulant to exertion and a forceful preventive to settling down to an aimless monotony of action, thought and aspiration. The student and lover of nature may readily find and recognize art and science in every branch of farm life.

Requires a Good Brain.

It is only the ill-fed imagination of a cramped and woefully undeveloped mind that can conceive nothing but the erroneous idea that intellectual forces are unnecessary or wantonly wasted in the occupation of a breeder or farmer, for he has doubtless formed his impressions from coarse caricatures and witless quotations, rather than from a personal contact with a class of people whose sterling merits if better known would undoubtedly tend to cause at least a brief reflection if they did not serve to temper with mercy many a rudely unjust criticism that springs from a shallow soil over-fertilized with ignorance. For in no other calling is there greater need of a keen and unwavering discrimination; not only must one be quick to take advantage of the conditions of season and weather in the planting and harvesting of crops that will affect to a marked degree the amount of her yearly loss or gain, but one must plan intelligently with a view to the temperament and many essential requirements of domestic animals if they would insure a profitable compensation for time and labor.
And while both exalting sentiment and practical common sense may be wisely utilized in the accumulating and breeding of a superior race of cattle, the provisions for their numerous wants must be regarded of no less importance in the calculations of a successful manager. All this may appear somewhat formidable to one unaccustomed to the expanding influences of broad fields and roomy farm buildings. Still, the woman with sufficient physical strength and brain capacity equal to the strain of supporting a family on the revenue derived from a well-ordered and cleverly-conducted boarding house need harbor no fears in assuming the responsibilities of this independent and certainly more lucrative vocation.

Are Staples.

One pleasing feature, from a financial standpoint, is the fact that dairy products are a staple that without regard to style or season are always in demand and usually grade in price according to merits that are largely due to painstaking care in the handling. Who, then, is better qualified than a dainty woman of refined and artistic instincts for an occupation bearing so weighty a consequence on the health and cultured taste of delicately-nurtured patrons? Who better fitted to anticipate the needs or more skillfully provide for the care and comfort of animal mothers than the compassionate human mother, for, in dairy farming, it is the natural functions of maternity that are artificially developed in order to produce a wholesome nourishment for members of the human race. And when one pauses to consider of what vital bearing such a calling may have in regulating the life and death statistics of a community, it is readily apparent that no greater or more laudable field of missionary work has ever appealed so clearly or pathetically to those whose impulse is to be of benefit to fellow beings.

Surely it must be one whose eyesight cannot have penetrated beyond the brick walls and smoke-impregnated atmosphere of a densely-populated city who believes the boundaries of a farmer's existence to be of too limited a compass for a soaring ambition and commendable achievement, wholly for getting to count as gain a busy, useful life wherein the teachings of God's Golden Rule may be as fittingly applied to His lowly creatures as to men; where one may see from day to day the gratifying results of conscientious labor and loving influence, and where nature and art may be so happily blended that one never for an instant could feel like questioning the wisdom and judgment of Him who after creating man in His own image, with fatherly solicitude selected the Garden of Eden as the most fitting place for his abode; where one untrammeled by the dictates of conventional ethics may look beyond the formalities of a stilted etiquette and with unpressed emotions of joy and gratitude go about the necessary tasks that fall to her lot, strengthened in the thought that her lines have fallen in pleasant places and that it lies within her power to accomplish a noble and useful work in the span of what may be made a happy and elevating life.

No Dreaded Isolation.

There need be no dreaded isolation, even in a sparsely-settled locality, for she above all others may select the wisest and most steadfast companions. Her regular calling acquaintances can come in the current literature of the day, while her heart may freely and safely go out in full confidence and sympathy to many old and trustworthy friends, the brain children of Charles Dickens, Sir Walter Scott, Thackeray and many other beloved and appreciated authors whose well-thumbed volumes are to be found fondly cherished in the home of numerous refined and intellectual farmers.

Nor have the country women of the past been found lacking in the elements to excite coveted admiration. The charms of the milkmaid have been for ages a fruitful theme of inspiration to more than one poet whose verses have won merited distinction and who no doubt has eagerly offered the sparkling, ruddy wine of his muse in exchange for the invigorating oxygen of picturesque hills and vales and the harmless, soothing draught received from the fair hand of some attractive, unaffected country maiden.
Indeed, for centuries women have taken so prominent a part in the development of dairy cattle and in raising the standard of dairy products, that it might not be amiss to call attention to the fact that this profession has had its representatives of women from all ranks and conditions in life from the hapless Queen, Marie Antoinette, who found relief from the nerve-taxing etiquette and political intrigues of a corrupt French court in the simple tasks and peaceful atmosphere of her beloved dairy, to the peasant of lowly birth and humble aspirations, who willingly permits herself to be yoked to the family cow and patiently trudges along the furrow beside this dual-purpose beast while her husband contentedly holds the handles of a primitive plow, and all along the line in a meager history of one of the greatest and most ennobling callings may be traced the indelible imprint of woman's work and influence.

In the year 1734 one Philip Falle was so impressed with the beauty and meritorious qualities of a breed of cattle to be found on a small island in the English channel, near the coast of France, that he considered it worthy of especial comment, and we are told by this able historian that centuries of gentle care under the management of women had wrought this marvel of excellence.

A little later this same writer mentions in a calm, matter-of-fact way, without the least suggestion of a desire to wink or smile at the maudlin sentiment of these simple-minded managers, that "at time of calving the cows are regaled with toast and cider to which has been added a little powdered ginger." Surely this is but a brief description of the care accorded these little bovine mothers, and yet one may read between the lines and the entire secret of a remarkable record of successful breeding stands out.
clear and strong, unaffected by time or change, and by that sign we of a later day may infer that the women of this now famous isle, instead of placing their affections upon an unremunerative poodle or parrot, being of a more practical turn of mind, had expended their best energies in developing the finest breed of dairy cattle in the world. In their devotion to the cause they had given more than gold and silver and precious jewels; they had poured out upon the altar of advancement the wealth of loving hearts and kindly natures. They guarded their cattle with the tender impulse of a true friendship.

Humane Treatment.

Some of a more stern and less refined organization may have laughed loud and heartily at the mere suggestion of offering a cow toast and cider, and yet the alert, shrewd dairyman of to-day might quickly recognize a practical value in this unusual diet, for who can deny that spiced cider at such a time might not stimulate the enfeebled action of the stomach and thereby tend to ward off that to be feared monster, milk fever. At any rate, whether or not this mode of treatment meet the approval of persons versed in cattle ailments, one can but admire and respect the sympathetic qualities that would prompt an owner to provide her pet with what no doubt was the rarest delicacy of her own liking. More than an hundred years have passed away since that dim insight into the method employed in developing this renowned breed was noted in a world's history and blazed upon the sturdy trees bordering a faint trail that has steadily led onward to a type of almost perfection; and yet the sentiments carried by those womanly hands may still be seen clearly defined beneath the prominent ridges of a many years' growth of the bark of Progress. We look back with a feeling of awe, not unmixed with envy, on the wondrous skill of breeders long since passed away, and yet it is simply the "old, old story" handed down with accumulated experience from generation to generation, and all successful dairymen and women of the present time may trace their prosperity to certain gentle methods that are in part but a repetition of the means employed in bygone centuries.