

roads than these same municipal officers. They are the parties who control the funds for the time being, and their co-operation means an earlier realization of the blessings of good roads than if the appeal had to be made through the people to them. Where councillors are lukewarm on this question of road improvement, farmers should bring pressure to bear next New Year's.

The greatest advance towards permanent and efficient good roads was the creation of the million dollar road fund a few years ago by the Ontario Government. Already eight counties—Lincoln, Kentworth, Wellington, Oxford, Simcoe, Hastings, Lanark and Victoria—have secured about \$250,000 from the Government for road improvement, which means that about \$750,000 has been expended in these counties alone upon the roads within the past two or three years. Several other counties are now planning to take advantage of the Government's wise provision and a few more years will see the majority of the counties of the Province working upon a comprehensive and permanent scheme for road improvement.

The essential feature of the Government scheme is leaving roads controlled and maintained by the county instead of the townships. A county application for a grant must be accompanied by a plan showing the roads to be designated as county roads and giving reasons why such roads have been chosen. The government engineer then goes over the roads in the county thus selected, making a detailed report of the approximate cost of improving them, etc. If this report is satisfactory, a government grant is given equal to one-third of the total cost of the work, which usually will average about \$1,000 per mile. In this way the roads thus improved are practically under government supervision and to a certain extent provincial roads.

There has been some little friction between township and county councils over the matter, the former, whose consent has to be secured before any roads can be set apart for county purposes, objecting because they have no control of the expenditure and patronage resulting therefrom. Besides, the system of electing county councillors provides no connecting link between the two bodies. This will be remedied when Mr. Monteith's bill comes into force constituting the Reeves of the townships as county councillors. But whether this be remedied or not, the scheme for road improvement under the act can only be successfully carried out through the counties. To allow the townships to receive the grant and to expend it upon local road improvement would be neither conducive to permanency nor efficiency. Some larger body must do the work, and the only one available is the county council. There is also a distinct financial gain in having this body do the work, as all incorporated towns and villages have to pay their share, which they would not be called upon to do were the money expended by the townships. This share of the towns and villages towards the work will average about 30 per cent., no small contribution on an expenditure of several hundred thousand dollars.

Though the original intention of the framers of the government act was that the grant should be given through the county councils, there

has always been a feeling that after the time limit had expired the money would be available for township purposes. This has prevented progress, and township officials, feeling that sooner or later they would have control of their share of the grant, refused to co-operate with the county officials in a general road improvement scheme. By an amendment to the act, introduced last week by the Minister of Public Works, all this will be changed and the county councils made the official medium through which the government grant for road improvement will be made. This will, no doubt, have the effect of bringing many townships into line, and though their consent will have to be secured as formerly, refusal to give it will mean that no government money will be expended at all in their district.

Horse Judges Unfairly Criticized

The recent Canadian Horse Show has come in for a lot of one-sided criticism at the hands of one or two of Toronto's daily papers. In a manner that would show to any horseman their utter unfitness to deal with the question, these journals have blindly gone at the job of calling management, judges and horses down, without regard for rhyme or reason, cause or consequences. Criticisms have been made, which, if made by a man with the least knowledge of the question he was handling, would make him ashamed to ever look an honest horse in the face again. In one case a very valuable and high class mare was shown which had, on the inside of one hock, a small patch of white hair, left from an old cut. This mare, in common with the other entries, was examined by competent veterinarians, and pronounced sound not only in this, but in all other particulars. Probably while the "Smart Alec" representative of one of these journals was standing at the ringside while this class was being judged by the most capable and reputable judges procurable, some stable boy from the barns of an opponent near his elbow, pointed to the mark, and asked the newspaperman to look and see the spavin on the horse getting the money. This mare is then branded as unsound, and the judges scored for awarding the prize to an unsound horse. If all horses are examined for soundness before being permitted to enter the ring, then there would seem to be no further responsibility resting with the judges on that score, for they are to presume that all are equally sound. If they were to do otherwise they would be still more liable to criticism from these same sources.

No useful purpose can be served by a technical criticism of an event of this kind. If the work is done by incompetent, or incapable writers, and such is most palpably the case, then only harm to the best interests of the horse, and all horse lovers, and the show itself, can result. It is a simple "sneak" from some sore-headed exhibitor, then surely no self-respecting journal should undertake to criticise a judge of good reputation, merely on his miserable little account. There is no surer way to get a whole lot of corruption inside the show-ring, and of doing a great deal of damage to the show itself, than by making the position one which a respectable

horseman will refuse to occupy, and the choice will be narrowed, and the end to be sought will be farther away than before. A crowded ringside is, at the best a very poor place to judge the merits of a horse from; and a very excellent one indeed to hear all sort of stupid ignorance aired as horse knowledge.

Thinks We Should Have Dead-Meat Trade

Speaking at a dinner in his honor at his own town, Mr. John Ross, of Meikle Tarral, Scotland, who judged the champions at Chicago last December, and afterwards visited Guelph, made the following comment upon his visit:

"He reluctantly left Chicago and entered Canadian territory, and, as they approached Guelph, they came upon more friendly looking farms, larger and with more stock at home about them. Referring to the production of beef on the other side, he said, strengthened very considerably by what he had seen and heard on the other side, he believed he was not singular in thinking that an all dead-meat trade would, in the long run, suit both countries best, and could be so regulated that the mixing process, which is now going on to the injury of both, could be stopped, to the great advantage of both consumers and producers."

Coming from a representative Scotchman, his opinion on the dead-meat trade is worthy of note.

Farmers' Institute Development

At the annual meetings of Farmers' Institutes which take place this month, the work of the institute and plans for future activity should receive special attention. It is a question whether it would not be better to dispense with set addresses and to devote the time of the annual meeting wholly to the business of the institute, and to discussing ways and means of making its work more effective in reaching the farmers of the district. At any rate a good live discussion on this topic should be an important feature of the program.

The institute has undoubtedly reached a stage in its development when a branching out into new lines is necessary if interest in its work is to be retained and increased. What new lines of work shall be undertaken the officers and members should in a large measure determine. Just as speakers versed in various subjects are required to meet the needs of the different localities where the winter meetings are held, so no district may wish to take up one new line of work, and another something different. A new feature that institutes might well add to their present work is the plowing match. It could be conducted by every institute with profit to all concerned. Then there is the seed fair, live stock judging schools, circulating libraries, etc., which might be added up in addition to the present program.

While advocating development along new lines, we do not think that the present system of meetings should be discontinued. New features will add renewed interest to the meetings and make them more effective.