

THE FARMING WORLD

Devoted to Canadian Country Life

Published on the
1st and 15th of each month

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FARMING WORLD, LIMITED

Publishers
Rooms 506-508 Temple Building
TORONTO, CANADA

Eastern Agency of The Nor' West Farmer

The Automobile Nuisance

It is said the automobile has come to stay. This may be true. But if so, along with it under present conditions have come to stay much of restraint, inconvenience and hardship to every farmer and country resident who drives horses on the highway. It is not merely the danger to life and limb when a trip is undertaken as formerly, but the entire destruction of the comfort and relaxation which driving behind the horse on a country road furnishes, on account of the fear and nervousness lent an automobile should be encountered.

Formerly the automobilists selected only the leading highways, but latterly they are taking possession of the side lines also, so that no road is safe from their presence. Women can no longer drive in safety during the busy season to the village or town lest they encounter one of these "fiendish monsters" and are driven into the ditch

with the danger of an upset or runaway or both.

In considering the situation one is forced to enquire who are these who thus take possession of the highway? What percentage of the population do they represent? How much do they contribute towards the up-keep of the roads they use? It will be found that many of them are mere tourists, who have no interest whatever in the country through which they pass. As for the rest they represent a small percentage of the population, but having money and leisure they choose to spend both in this form of pleasure, although it may prevent the residents of the neighborhood from the ordinary use of the highway which they have helped to build and for repairing which they are annually taxed.

Some automobile owners are of kindly disposition and do all they can to avoid accidents. If all were of that character less complaint would be heard. But they are not. Too many are perfectly regardless of the rights of others on the highway and act accordingly. A funeral procession is treated the same as a load of hay. Automobilists claim that horses ought to be trained and under control and if they are not the owner can take the consequences. Horses are like men—of different dispositions. Some are perfectly quiet when under conditions familiar to them and to which they have been accustomed from their youth up. But when they are asked to face this smelling, puffing, dust-flying machine they become crazy and have but one aim, which is to get out of sight and hearing as rapidly as possible. When they are once badly frightened they probably never forget it. It is doubtless true that horses that begin life with these machines about them may become accustomed to them, but unless something is done the present generation of people and horses must withdraw largely from the highways they have built with their own labor. Farmers cannot purchase automobiles for their own use because they are too expensive and too short-lived and too costly to maintain. They are not a business proposition, but designed largely for the use of wealthy pleasure-seekers.

Something must be done to lessen the friction which is most intense in some districts. We propose that township or county councils be empowered to deal with this question and de-

signate what particular highways can be used for this mode of travel, leaving the balance for the horses. Councils should be prevented from allowing automobiles on impassable highways. We believe, however, that in most municipalities an amicable arrangement could be made which would relieve considerably the present tension between the chaffeur and the country resident. Some have suggested separate days of the week when the automobile could only lawfully use the highway. We fear this would be out of the question and might work hardship to both parties.

The restriction to certain highways seems most reasonable and would not prevent the use of horses there also, but those who are fearful would still have a place of safety from the ever present danger. If automobiles became numerous on the designated roads the occupants would have the extreme pleasure of tasting and smelling the clouds of dust created and so often left as an unpleasant legacy to the ordinary traveller. We shall be glad to hear what our readers think of our proposal.

Interesting Facts about Irrigation

The Irrigation Convention, reported in last issue, sheds much light on a greatly misunderstood subject. There is a widespread idea that irrigation is simply an artificial means of making arid soil produce crops, and that irrigation projects are injurious to the agricultural reputation of a country. Nothing could be further from the truth. Other things being equal, the country that has irrigation facilities is safer and more productive than a country that is without them.

Irrigation is essential to the most successful agriculture. It means water when most needed, and in the quantities required—applied where needed and withheld when not desired. It is not only crop insurance, but a most important factor in crop production. It means diversity of crops and density of population, with all the advantages which those conditions entail.

Among those who have not studied the subject many erroneous opinions are held regarding irrigation, not only in the East but in Western Canada where irrigation has been practiced with great success for many years. The general opinion appears to be that it is "not needed,"

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