

Editorial.

Look to the Public Roads.

Now is the time to find any defects in our roads and where repairing is most needed. At the time of the year—mid-summer—when statute labor is performed, often gravel is misapplied for the want of just knowing where the bad places are, and when wet weather and winter sets in the work is found to be only half done. On the whole sufficient attention is not paid to keeping up good roads. The statute labor system is sadly deficient, and the work every year is almost thrown away, and leaves the roads in about as poor a state as if nothing had been done. Good roads are everything to a farmer; and just when the heaviest part of his work has to be done, when he markets his grain and other produce, and draws cordwood, the roads are in the worst condition. Those who live any distance from a market are compelled to wait until sleighing sets in, or dry weather comes again, before they can turn their produce into money. Besides this, look at the loss to the community at large in horse flesh, wear and tear of wagons and harness, in travelling on bad roads. Money can never be better laid out than for the improvement of public roads; and we do not think that farmers would object to paying higher taxes in order to have clean, dry roads. But to have dry roads better drainage must be had—this is essential to all road making—and this is where our roads are mainly deficient. In some sections of a road efficient drains may be dug, and in the next there is no connection. There is no use digging drains along our public roads unless provision is made for an outlet, and this probably has to be made through personal property, the owner of which may not feel inclined to dig a ditch to let off this surplus water. The consequence is it stands in the ditches without any outlet. Again, there are places where it is better to have no water course, and along other roads where the drain should be only on the lower side. To level all roads on the same principle will not do, and hence competent engineers, or experts, should be employed to superintend our roads, and not leave it to the hap-hazard and unsatisfactory judgment of pathmasters. The great fault in our roads is not supplying the proper material, and at the proper time. What would be the use of, say, tumbling a lot of clay on a road during the fall rains, when it would stick to a wagon wheel like glue, and never get compact? There is not much use anyway of piling up on the centre of a road large heaps of clay, unless it is covered by a hard deposit of sand and stone. The tenacity of clay can never make a road fit to travel upon when moisture comes in question; the weight lifted in, say six inches deep of clay, by a span of horses weighing twenty-two hundred pounds, followed by a lumber wagon, would be four times that which could be drawn on a smooth, gravel road. Since horses are so dear, good roads should form an important factor, and should be allied with good horses. Sandy roads will take care of themselves, with regard to drainage; clay is where the trouble comes in, and besides having them properly drained and levelled, there does not want to be only a top-dressing of sand and muck, which is generally found, but a first-class gravel—or broken stones; this is essential to make a hard bed. Good roads are what we want, and they will pay, and it should be recollected that as there is increased travel there should be a consequent enlarged outlay of public money; and we should certainly recommend, instead of the antiquated system of pathmasters we have, a competent supervisor to attend to our roads, culverts and bridges.

One of the greatest drawbacks even to our macadamized roads, is that they are allowed to run in ruts and deep holes in the centre, no matter how efficient the side drainage may be. The centre of the road should be kept level, and the ruts filled up. For the want of this every rain makes a slushy road. At a small outlay the roads could be kept level by the use of say a heavy roller, and continually filling up with good screened gravel.

Farm Work.

There is an endless round of farm work. It appears never to be done—that is, on a well regulated farm. But on a great number of our farms the minor details are often sadly neglected, and the work done in a slipshod manner. There are plenty who will rush through harvest, and dash off their fall plowing and suppose then that all the work is done, forgetting that there are an infinite number of small jobs that require to be done. There are farmers who make a boast of getting through seeding sooner than their neighbors and of always being ahead of somebody. This is laudable, but at the same time these fast men are often found woefully neglectful of small things. It is an old saying—"Take care of the pence, and the pounds will take care of themselves." So with work—attend to the details, the smaller jobs and larger ones will take care of themselves. There is always a quantity of spare time on the farmer's hands, which can be profitably employed in fitting up—such as repairing fences, barns and out-houses, getting fields into shape and gathering stones, looking to drains, &c., &c. In consequence of neglect in these matters, farms soon assume a shabby appearance, and things go to wreck for the want of a little work. On the majority of farms in Ontario, the fencing and the shape of the fields are anything but good. The old fences that were first laid when the country was cleared, are rotten and are tumbling down, and the way the woods have been cut down there is no rail timber left, or not sufficient to re-fence a farm. From year to year the fences have been allowed to go down, without any attention to repairs, until they have nearly all fallen down.

Instead of trying to aim at too much in repairing and putting things in order, the work should be done by piecemeal, and done thoroughly. Let a field, for instance, be taken hold of and put in proper shape and fenced this fall, and some other work the same way, such as repairing buildings and out-houses. By this system of doing work well, everything about a farm will have a presentable appearance, and the work will not have to be done twice.

There is very little economy practiced with regard to fencing, as a general rule, and this should be looked at more than it is by our farmers. If you look at the majority of farms you will find the same division of land into fields that was a quarter of a century ago, and even further back; and as far as can be made convenient, the different fields should be composed of a uniform quality of soil. A field that is partly heavy and partly light soil, or some of which is on high and some on low ground, is rarely the best for any crop, and the different parts, if not fenced off, should at least be cultivated and cropped by themselves. There is a great amount of money lost every year, in the shape of valuable land and productions, by not having proper and conveniently fenced fields. It is not unusual to see corn in shock, turnips, fall wheat and aftermath in the same field at this time of year, and the pasture in this field is completely lost.

There is no better time of the year for remodeling, repairing and doing small jobs than the pres-

ent. "A stitch in time save nine," so goes the adage, and certainly no better outlay can be made on a farm than keeping things in order, and not despising the day of small things.

Harvesting and Storing Turnips.

It was contended by a prominent English agriculturist that the success of stock feeding in that country depended upon the turnip crop, and when it is considered the acreage that is grown every year compared with the other productions, there is a great deal of truth in this assertion—although objections have been made by prominent agriculturists in this country to the effect that the percentage of solid or feedable matter is so small compared with the amount of water (100 lbs. of turnips contain 88 lbs. of water) that they are not worth growing. This is the argument. Now, grass, which is considered to be the best of all feeds for rapid development, contains 90 per cent. of water, so it is evident that the substances which contain the largest supposed amount chemically of carbo-hydrates and nitrogenous substances, are not practically the best feeders, or give the best results.

Under certain conditions of the human system lettuce may prove to be more nutritious than beefsteak, and so on with the rest of feeds. Turnips at once act as a tonic laxative and diuretic, and contain a proportionable amount of starch and gluten. For a country like Canada there should be a greater preference for this crop than there is, when we consider the great advantages resulting from feeding stock, and the accompanying benefit resulting from a thoroughly cultured turnip crop. This year the crop is far below an average; there was not a large acreage sown, and owing to the unpropitious season of early continuous wet, and subsequent drouth, the crop is not good. Indeed 40 cents per bushel is asked on our markets for a respectable looking Swede turnip; and prominent breeders and feeders are advertising for wholesale lots, thus showing that the cultivation of this crop has been neglected. It appears that the cultivation, harvesting and storing of this tuber has been looked upon as too much work at the present rate of wages and labor; but this is false economy; there is no crop that can be more easily handled if proper measures be taken. Of course, in England and Scotland, the great centres of turnip-growing, they have machines which effectually top and root them, and prepare them for putting into the cellar or winter quarters. The machine works admirably, and a crop of turnips can be harvested with the same ease that a crop of hay can be got in. The only means as yet adopted in this country for harvesting a turnip crop, is either to use manual labor, such as topping and rooting by hand with knives, or using a hoe or mattock for the same purpose. Outside of a root and topping machine, of which we have none in this country, hand pulling and topping—throwing four rows in one and the tops in the centre, is the expeditious and clean way; your windrows are all ready, and you make a gain in drawing in.

Storing turnips is an easy matter. They are hardy, and it takes a severe frost to permanently injure them. The starch and saccharine matter contained yield slowly to chemical action. Turnips may be frozen hard, and by proper attention to temperature—not suddenly thawing—no injury to the tuber is perceptible. Pitting turnips and dragging them out during winter months is a doubtful expedient. It don't pay. However well they may be secured from frost at the start, by continual draughts and opening the pits they will be frozen. Roomy cellars are the places where