were frightful. When the round-up brought the survivors back no man could possibly identify his own stock and the first man there with the branding iron, so the story runs, got the stock.

And Old Timers recalled that the year of the great flood in Winnipeg, 1881, if memory does not play me tricks, there was three feet of snow in certain parts of the Western States somewhere along about the twentieth of May or later. And it is remembered that they had good crops.

When it comes to that, I personally remember seeing a flurry of snow in the Niagara fruit belt in June. It thawed as it fell and did no harm, but how formidable these stories can be made to sound when repeated a few thousand miles away with due theatrical accentuation.

A summer snow-storm is attended by a few discomforts but it is not really so miserable to experience as to think about, and in a cereal country brings a bounty of prospective crop increase that makes it decidedly welcome, However, enough is as good as a feast and I could not help reminding a new neighbor who had been complaining of this being a dry country, of the prayer of a trustful old darky. He was short of food, having only a scant bowl of milk. Some one told him to set it on the stove and pray for more. The milk commenced to boil over. Up jumped the suppliant, exclaiming: "O Lord, Massey, 'Nuff, Massey, 'Nuff, 'Nuff, 'Nuff!"

Grande Prairie, Alberta. W. D. ALBRIGHT.

An Experiment in Education.

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

The best teachers, and those who most loved their work, whom I have heard speak on professional matters have been dissatisfied with the education they were forced by government regulation to give their pupils. They could see that at least for country children the training was not on the right lines, nor were they at liberty to modify it in any way to suit the conditions under which they were working. Books and learning are good things. The being subjected to tests and passing or failing to pass more or less severe examinations from time to time is perhaps unavoidable. But when children leave school having acquired considerable learning, which as a rule they very soon forget, and very little knowledge of how to apply it to any practical use, we cannot help feeling that something in our educational system requires amendment.

Some standard, of course, is necessary, but possibly a better class of teacher who could be trusted to act in accordance with his own judgment and with some regard to the peculiarities of the district he is living in might improve matters. Brains follow money it is said, and surely it is a poor economy not to make every effort to make this profession one in which socially and financially it is worth while for the best brains of the country to engage in. It is natural that in all schemes of education there are difficulties. The clever child is, in a measure, sacrificed to the children of average ability. There are also children mentally gifted whose development is slow. It is a difficult matter even for the superior people at the head of the Board of Education, many of whom seem to have forgotten their childhood if they ever had any, to realize the wants and the capacities of little country boys and girls. As a rule these children are more self-reliant and observant than town children of the same class, though their wits have not acquired the superficial sharpness of the city child.

I am naturally more familiar with the methods under which I have myself been taught what I know. When the regulations were less stringent and the fear of the Inspector of Schools was not so much before the eyes of the schoolmaster, it was possible to give the most of the children a good general education, and for the teacher to specialize a little with the cleverer boys and girls. Now every moment of his time is taken up by a routine, so that no specializing is possible in any direction whatever. To those people who are able to send their children to secondary schools this does not matter so very much. And it is fair that seeing we are a social body—a great whole—it is only right that while we enjoy the privileges of our social system we should bear our share of its burdens. On the whole the elementary schools of Great Britain are, in my opinion, better than those of most other countries. This opinion, of course, is not of much worth as I am no expert, but it coincides with that of the Scottish schoolmasters sent across the Atlantic to learn what they could of education here. When asked if he had acquired any useful knowledge in his travels one of them replied: "Yes, a great deal, what to avoid." This we may take to be an example of prejudice and bigotry, which latter is not by any means confined to the clerical or any one profession.

On the edge of the Chiltern Hills, Buckinghamshire, about forty minutes railway journey from London, a little experiment in education is being tried. It ought to interest readers of an agricultural magazine, as well as the increasing number of people who believe in the gospel of out-of-doors. This experiment is a private enterprise, and though it is only a couple of years old may already, in some sense, be called an achievement.

Miss Isabel Fry carried on a school on the old lines before the war, but she became profoundly dissatisfied with the educational methods. She lived in the country surrounded by the sights and sounds we see and hear there, but so far as the education the boys and girls in her care were getting they might have lived anywhere. The gaining of the highest class marks and being first in athletics are both good things, but surely not the best. The practical ability to utilize knowledge and strength she considered is what we should desire for our children. In the air there was a constant talk of the production of more food. The English and the Germans seem to be in every way the opposite of each other, for while the German press and people continually talked of restriction in the consumption of food, the English always urged production of more food. As a rule much energy is wasted in theoretical demonstration before anything is materialized. Great men seem to take themselves up with larger issues, and smaller folk think "all that I could achieve is not worth while." It seems to need the goad of necessity to drive most of us forward.

Miss Fry was not one of the believers in the doctrine of *laissez faire*. She started a school for boys and girls on what she considered lines suited to the necessities of these strenuous times in which we live. Attached to her school at Mayortorne Manor is a farm, with pigs, poultry, a small herd of cows, which forms part of the school life of the boys and girls under her charge. The children spend half their time on this farm. They are taught to milk the cows and make butter, to clean the sheds and do all the work of dairy farming. In the kitchen garden they are growing their own fruit and vegetables. They are also, as we would say here as a side-line, rearing rabbits and sending them to France. Indoors they wait upon themselves, make their beds, lay the table and wash the dishes.

The children like the life immensely. Their days are fuller than those of most children, but the one form of work never makes them too tired for the other. The contrast between each seems to prove the truth of the saying that a change is as good as a rest, an experience most workers have already proved. As the children themselves say, "This seems much more real." Their parents express themselves as favorably impressed with the children's increased intelligence and mental alertness, and say they find them a good deal more resourceful than children trained exclusively on the old lines.

As I said, Miss Fry had long been dissatisfied with the ordinary school routine. When the war came she felt that the time had come to unite the practical with the intellectual. She saw that while children were learning the usual things from books it was really leading nowhere, for what they were learning had very little practical value. The way seemed open for making children capable and useful. There are many ways in which they may be taught the practical things of life, but at the present time farming is of national importance. At all times it must ever be the most healthful and natural of occupations.

So successful has Miss Fry been with her experiment that during this summer the children at Mayortorne, besides doing their own work, will be able to help at least one of the neighboring farmers in hay-making.

These boys and girls are healthy and happy, which after all is the main thing. The sense of responsibility, even the self-reliance that the knowledge that they are useful members of society gives, were dearly bought if we robbed our little children of any fraction of that joy of living which is their birthright.

Middlesex Co., Ont. MARGARET RAIN.

Statute Labor on Country Roads.

Owing to the dry fall the frost was not able to wreck the roads this spring to the extent that it has in past years when the ditches were full of water when cold weather set in. There are fewer deep holes to fill this year than usual. This should be an object lesson in favor of improving road drainage. It is an established fact that frost must have the assistance of water in order to break up the road surface. If ditches were cleaned so that water could run freely to a good outlet, there would be less difficulty in keeping country roads in repair. In some cases it will pay to lay tile in the ditch bottom, at the shoulder of the road, or even underneath the road proper. So long as water lies on or near the roadway there will be a considerable amount of repair work necessary each year. While the expense of tiling is rather high, it will pay in many cases. Good roads the year round are an asset to any community, and it is rather strange that some localities that are handicapped by lack of road-building material in the immediate vicinity have better highways than some which have an abundance of gravel close by. It depends a good deal on the men in charge of road construction and maintenance. Drainage is one of the first essentials.

June is the month when a large portion of the statute labor is done. One man is appointed by the township council to superintend the work on a "beat" or area covering about one mile. It is his duty to select the place requiring to be repaired, to arrange for the gravel or other material, and to notify the men when the work is to be performed. Sometimes a grader is used a day or two to put a crown on the road, and then the gravel is put on top. This practice is oftentimes justifiable, but too often inexperienced men handle the machine and destructive in place of constructive work is performed.

There should be no obstruction between the road centre and the ditches, and the latter must be kept clean if they are to work effectively. Not only should the soil scraped from the road be removed from the ditch, but the grass ought to be cut and removed. Anything which prevents the flow of water is detrimental to the road. It is not enough to haul so many loads of gravel and dump them on the road; there is a certain amount of work required at regular intervals throughout the entire year in order to keep the highway efficient. In too many districts the roads are left to look after themselves the greater part of the year, unless, of course, the council condescends to do some special work. Why not have one or perhaps two men work out their share of road work in filling holes, cutting grass and weeds, opening ditches, etc., as required throughout the season. A few hours' work at the proper time may save considerable expense later on.

It is customary to draw a cubic yard of gravel to the load, at least this amount represents one day's statute labor. A box nine feet long, three feet wide and one foot deep holds this quantity. If the box is more than three feet wide the length or depth can be reduced accordingly. While the majority of men draw honest loads, there are a few who use a box which will not hold a cubic yard, while others do not have a tight box and lose part of their loads between the gravel pit and their destination. The pathmaster should insist on full loads being hauled; in fact, it is to the interest of every ratepayer to do his duty towards keeping roads in repair. An extra load or two of gravel is neither here nor there to the average farmer, and it might be the means of completing the gravelling of a certain piece of road which is out of repair.

One man should be responsible for levelling the gravel on the road. Gravel soon spreads out, consequently it should be fairly well rounded up and no depression left where the loads are dumped. Failing to drive far enough up with the load, or driving too far, results in humps and hollows on the road surface, which are hard on vehicles. Coarse stones ought to be raked off the road, or else buried in the roadway. If the gravel is of the proper grade it will pack and a solid track formed. Where gravel is not available, crushed stone is used and is considered to be more lasting than gravel. If stone is plentiful in a neighborhood, a stone crusher may be secured and the stone broken right on the road.

Bridges and culverts are a source of trouble in some districts, although concrete is now taking the place of lumber, and tends towards a permanent structure. Lumber is continually rotting out, or the soil falling away from the approach, making it a dangerous place for horses and rigs. There is a direct rise of six or eight inches at some culverts, and evidently no effort is made to repair them until a buggy or auto spring is broken and damages have to be paid. A good deal of trouble might be saved if someone on every line was commissioned to make small repairs and so avoid the necessity of large repairs. What is everybody's business is nobody's business; consequently, some roads gradually become impassable and then a large amount of the ratepayers' money must be paid out for reconstruction or repair, when a "stitch in time" might have avoided a heavy drain on the treasury. Remember that good roads benefit you as well as the general public. Don't be above taking a shovel and letting the water out of a hole, or opening the ditch outlet, even if you are not paid cash for it. Returns come in in other ways besides cold coin. The country cannot do without roads.

New Ontario Conditions.

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

New Ontario or Northern Ontario as a field for agriculture has been demonstrated as much beyond a doubt as have the mining operations which are not only valuable but very extensive.

I have often been asked: "What do you think of the clay belt? Is it going to be a successful farming proposition?" About five weeks spent in seed inspection work in the north, quite recently, gave me an opportunity of not only seeing for myself but securing some first-hand information. If the quality of the seed demanded and being used in that country is any indication, then I will say unhesitatingly that Old Ontario has nothing on New Ontario in that respect. In fact, the general quality of the clover seed used averages better than what is being used in some parts of Old Ontario. Mostly number one grades of red are in evidence. It may be information for some to learn that carloads of red clover, alsike and mixed seeds are now being shipped from that part of our province yearly. This is true of Dryden, Kenora and Temiskaming Districts. Some farmers in the Thunder Bay District had as much as a ton of red clover seed last year. In the Rainy River and Soo Districts quantities of seed are being produced. Of course, the red clover seed comes from the first growth, which is usually quite luxuriant, blossoms well, and only for weather conditions would probably grade No. 1. As it happens the general appearance of the seed is affected by too many brown, lifeless-looking kernels which lowers the grade to No. 2. In the Temiskaming District they produce too much mixed seed to have it grade up well. For some time the early autumn frosts will discolor some of the seed, and consequently affect its appearance.

New Ontario has demonstrated its ability to produce a good quality of merchantable potatoes, and this industry is a growing one. Last summer the season was more favorable for potato growing than it was in Old Ontario, and last autumn car loads were shipped out at $1.50 per bag from the Thunder Bay District, where only five years ago, when Mr. Collins, the District Representative of the Department of Agriculture, was located there, potatoes were imported into the cities of Fort William and Port Arthur. There is no doubt but Messrs. Collins and Davis have been able to give impetus to the movement for potato production. Owing to lack of suitable storage facilities most of the surplus crop was sold last autumn. This spring some car lots were picked up around the district for seed at $3.25 per bag. Rainy River, Kenora, Temiskaming and Algoma Districts all had a surplus crop and reaped a good reward for the labor expended. In all those districts the farmers are planting largely again this year, as they had the seed. This should pay them well if another good crop results, as there will be a shortage again in Old Ontario in all probability. The high price