



As They Do it in Scotland.

seen. To encourage the spread of this better farming is my ambition. And if others have my experience, they will find in the tilling of the soil a life of abounding healthfulness and unfailing interest, a field for energy and intelligence, full of satisfaction, of dignity, of independence, and of peace."

The Apple Problem.

This would be fine weather for studying the young ducks—if it were not so wet. For several weeks we have been living between showers, and the ducks are the only things on the farm that are thriving. They are in their element. The hens and turkeys look bedraggled and discouraged, but the ducks are growing like weeds, and they are busy all the time. They find puddles everywhere and the creeks are full of water and life is just one round of pleasure. I have promised myself the pleasure of making a careful "nature study" of the ducks, but I shall have to put it off until I can do it dry shod. If I tried to follow them in their rounds, to observe their habits and listen to their inspiring conversation, I would need to wear a diver's suit. But I am determined to do it, because the ducks are about the only things on the farm that I have not studied at one time or another. Besides, I find that ducks have been neglected by the poets and historians and writers generally. Milton has celebrated the hen—tame villatic fowl. The goose saved Rome on one occasion, and have not the turkeys held the place of honor at many a lordly feast? They have their place in every Christmas and Thanksgiving poem and story. But the humble and succulent duck has waddled through life "unwept, unhonored and unsung." At the present writing I can remember only two places where they are mentioned in song. All singers of college songs are aware that Clementine drove her ducklings to the water every morning just at nine, and those of us who learned to read in the old primers can remember that:

There was a little man
Who had a little gun
And his bullets were made of lead, lead, lead.
And he went to the brake
And he shot a little drake
And he shot it through the head, head, head.
But in spite of this neglect the duck must have been an object of affection, for it seems to me that I have heard "ducky" used as a term of endearment. Undoubtedly the ducks are a promising subject, and when the weather dries a little I shall take a pencil and pad and get after them.

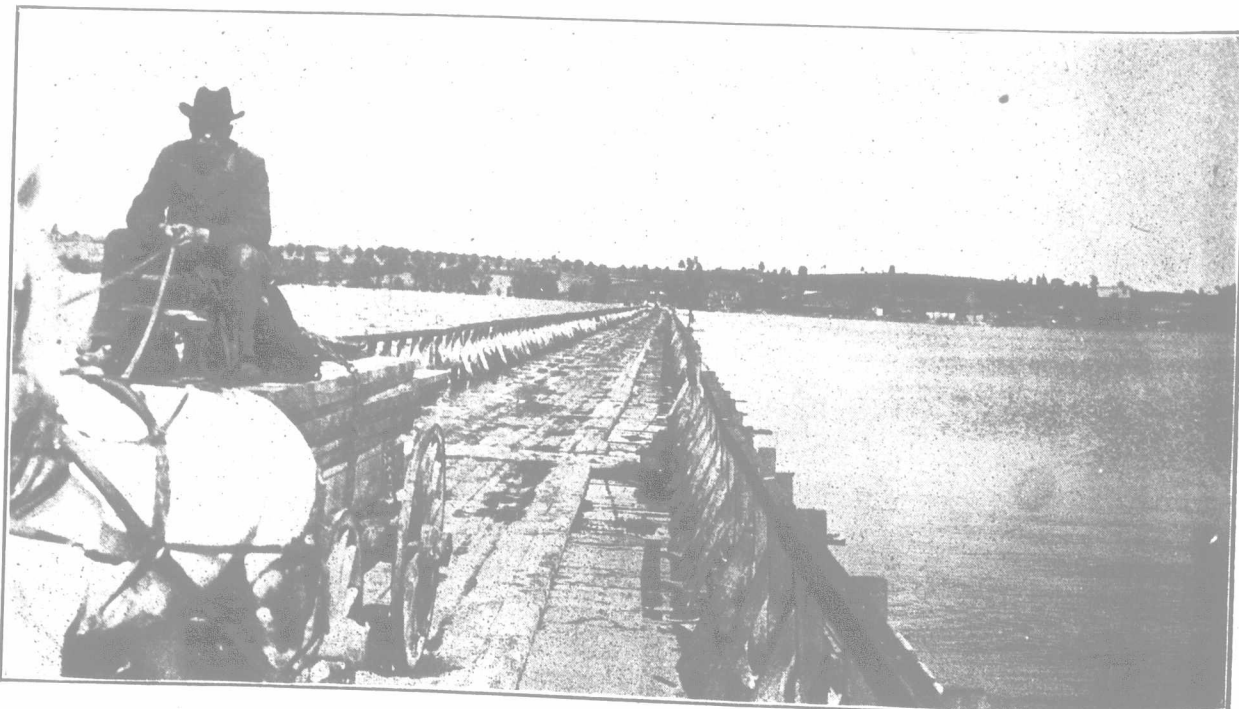
Almost every day I am hearing of apples being sold for a dollar a barrel, and I am wondering about it. The latest reports from Ottawa say that the prospects are that there will be a strong demand for Canadian apples in the British market, and the indications are that if anything the price to the consumers will be higher than last year. A correspondent who is trying to work independently on the Toronto market and has been doing so with some success has written:

"This season I have been working out an economic experiment in buying for some of the big consumers in the city, with the result that I have brought down on myself the usual monopolistic efforts to stifle competition, but the experiment is a commercial success and it is likely to have important results in breaking up the monopoly. I hope to have an opportunity of going into this more fully with you later.

"I hope that not many of your growers are selling at a dollar a barrel with trimmings. They must be less sophisticated than ours. We outgrew the boarding swindle years ago and often bargain for the buyers to pick as well as pack the apples. I gather from the crop reports that the outlook is not at all unfavorable for a good demand, and there is no need of accepting such a low figure—certainly not half of last year's price."

This is all very well, but how are we to get the proper prices? One farmer who had sold his orchard for a dollar a barrel told me of his last attempt to act independently. With a few neighbors he shipped a carload of choice fruit to the British market and when the returns came he did not get enough to pay for his barrels. I do not wonder that he sold for what he could get. In his opinion the orchardists who are not able to form an association for handling their apples are in a worse position than ever before. They are absolutely at the mercy of the buyers and commission men.

Here is a bit of conversation that occurred in the village a few days ago. It shows the attitude of the average farmer towards his orchard better than anything I have yet heard. A man



Floating Bridge Across Lake Chemong, Peterboro Co., Ont.

asked another if he had many apples this year.

"Yes," was the surprising reply, "and I haven't got any pigs." He wasn't joking either. As he has no pigs the apples on the trees will probably rot on the ground. In his orchard there are thirty thrifty Spies and a lot of other standard trees, but it did not seem worth while for him to spray them, and as he lives about eight miles from an evaporator factory, he could not make wages by hauling them to town.

From what I read in the bulletins, I supposed that apples would be about the most profitable crop that a man could possibly raise, but we shall have to have some demonstrations in selling before I will be convinced.

There is another matter in connection with this problem of marketing farm produce and the high cost of living that is causing me some surprise. I was wondering why the consumers do not take some action in the matter. They certainly pay high prices for what they buy, and I cannot help thinking that they should take some action towards buying direct from farmers. If they did this they could probably afford to pay us better prices than the regular buyers, and at the same time get their products more cheaply. It is easier for city people to get together and I cannot see why they should not do it, instead of expecting the producers to do all the work of marketing and carrying their products to city doors. Last summer a visitor from the West told me how the women of the church which she attends got together, and ordered fruit in quantity from British Columbia, and got good fruit for less than half they would have to pay to local dealers who handled them through the commission trade. But in this part of the world the consumers seem to content themselves with grumbling about the high cost of living. If they would make an effort to meet the producers half way it would be better for both.

It seems to me to be about time for the farmers of the country to reverse a joke that I remember reading some time ago. A witty epicure had just dined lavishly at a good restaurant and on the street was accosted by a beggar, who whined:

"I must live."

"I do not see the necessity," said the well-fed witty one, as he passed on his way. At the present time the business-man world is so organized that prosperous people seem to be saying to the complaining farmer:

"I must get rich."

Is it not about time that the producing farmer answered:

"I do not see the necessity," and proceed to arrange matters so that he cannot be held up at every turn.

Speaking of ducks a letter has just come to hand in which my correspondent writes: "This is a great day for ducks and they seem to be making the most of it. We have quite a number of ducks—Indian Runners—great layers of white eggs. They are laying yet. I stood talking to a neighbor one day last week when they hurried past in single file to get into the wheat field and as we looked at them one dropped an egg, actually on the run. Maybe that is why they call them Indian Runners."

I think I shall have to try to get a setting of those ducks next spring. My correspondent writes further:

"The other day I noticed a teamster working his horses near here. One of them had a bob-tail, flies were very bad, but the humane man improvised a tail out of raffia and attached it to the bob-tail. The way in which the horse used it was