

responsible governments, to form intercolonial federations, nay even to set up tariff walls against the mother country, to enact immigration laws that excluded from their territories subjects of the Empire, and to begin to build baby names of their own." This discloses a spirit utterly incompatible with that autonomous spontaneity of action which is now the glory of the Dominions and the salvation of the Empire in the world conflict. In fact, towards the close of his thesis, the writer is compelled with admiration to concede the "singular and inspiring" unanimity with which the great confederation of nations, kindred peoples and tongues who live beneath the British flag rallied to the side of the Mother country in the struggle wantonly forced upon her and her allies, realizing intuitively that their own destinies, the future of freedom, the development of democratic self-government, the maintenance of independence, the possibility of progress along lines of their own choosing, all depended upon the defeat of the German conspiracy.

Possibly the most salutary lesson ever learned by British statesmen was the breaking away of the American colony in 1776 through the fatuous application of centralized taxation. And if object lessons in the genius of empire management are required we need only look upon South Africa, Canada and Australia. Re-adjustments in national and international relations will assuredly follow in the wake of the war and in accord with its lessons, but their nature and extent it is idle to formulate until the supreme folly of systematized and perfected Prussian militarism has been demonstrated and laid low. Meanwhile, the perhaps well intentioned architects of empire had better withdraw their feet from beneath the "Round Table" and plant them in the trenches or in the furrows of untilled farms, leaving, as "The Farmer's Advocate" has wisely advised, responsible statesmen and the people in the nations comprising the Empire to determine under what manner of constitution, written or unwritten, the destinies of the future shall be wrought out; and may we not hope to what measure Great Britain, as one in the community of nations, shall lead in realizing the aspirations of her greatest statesmen. Having rid the Jerico road of thieves, then let the world's highway be made a safer one for the future travel of humanity.

Middlesex Co., Ont.

ALPHA.

Early Spring Work on Country Roads.

It is quite common for many of the country roads to be deeply rutted each spring; even town and city streets are not immune. They are frequently in as deplorable a condition as the earth roads in the rural districts. Spring after spring the man who is obliged to traverse the public highways to market or depot, is forced to wallow through mud axle deep. Where stone or gravel has been applied the ruts do not become so deep, but only a comparatively small mileage is what might be called good in early spring. Frost is a relentless enemy of our highways. If the roadbed becomes water soaked, King Frost gets in his work, and in so doing causes an upheaval. When warm weather forces him to vacate, he seldom leaves the road in the condition he found it. The bottom apparently drops out and bog holes are left in the centre of the road. We have seen such places that required a couple of yards of gravel or stone to fill them. When the road is soft every horse and rig which passes over tends to flatten out the surface, resulting in a place to hold water instead of a crown to shed it. The shoulders of the road prevent drainage to the ditches. If the water did get there, some ditches would hold rather than carry it away. All have seen, if not travelled over, highways that were anything but a good advertisement for the community. However, the sun and wind in time dries up the moisture and a track is leveled down with traffic, leaving holes and ruts on either side to hold what rain falls. If the spring is reasonably dry the roads are not bad; if heavy rains are frequent, they continue almost impassable until early summer. Something should be done to improve conditions early in the season.

Most roads are kept in repair by the system of statute labor. The work is usually done in the month of June, and done conscientiously by most ratepayers, although it is to be regretted that some are so short sighted and disloyal to their community that they are inclined to "slink" whenever possible. Why cannot some of the statute labor be done in April as well as in June? Commission two or three men, or as many as are needed, to use a drag on the "beat" as soon as the snow is off and after heavy rain, if necessary. It may be advisable to use field stone to fill some exceptionally deep holes. A man with a shovel may drain low places and so prevent the bad ruts and holes from forming. A day's work will cost no more in April than in June, but as much good might be done as in two days at the later date. There are districts where this system of keeping the roads in repair is followed and the results are quite evident to the traveller and, incidentally, speaks well for the ratepayers living along these roads. It is regrettable that the spirit of jealousy creeps in even in regard to road repairing. Last spring in a certain locality one ratepayer used a split-log drag a time or two on a couple of miles of road. The ruts were filled, the surface smoothed and the water drained off. This strip of road was better all summer than that on either end. However, the remark was made that he was doing this because he had an automobile and the pathmaster would not allow anything for such time spent, when in reality it benefited all living on the line to as great an extent as the gravel hauled late in June.

A drag can be made by splitting or sawing in two a seven or eight foot log, which is a foot or fifteen inches in diameter, and then having the cut surfaces to the

front, one three feet behind the other, fasten them by means of mortising scantlings into the logs. A chain is attached to the cross pieces in such a way that one end of the drag will pull a little ahead of the other. A team, or better, three horses are required to draw it and the loose material is dragged towards the centre, thus tending to give a crown to the road, and in so doing the ruts are filled. If this is used on roads when they are wet, it puddles the clay which hardens when it dries and is not so easily cut up by travel. Another good time to use the drag to fill ruts is just as the roads are drying. Ordinary traffic is bound to gouge the best roads a little, but a level surface may be maintained by use of the drag after heavy rains during the summer, as well as in the spring. Drags are made by using two heavy planks, or one plank can be used with a tongue attached to it. Steel drags are also on the market, and excellent work can be done with them. The roads could be greatly improved by the systematic and proper use of even so simple and inexpensive an implement as the split-log drag. One ratepayer on each beat could use his team on the drag at the proper time, and be exempt from hauling gravel. We believe this arrangement would ensure better roads at no increase in expense. The pathmasters should be required to see that approaches to the bridges were kept in proper repair, and not permit the six to eight inches' drop off the bridge, which is common on some roads.

Water and frost work havoc with the best-built roads. Remove the water and the effects of frost are slight, consequently drainage is the first essential, not only in the construction of a road, but in keeping it in repair. The mud splashing off the road, the dust, and growth of grass and weeds, all tend to decrease the flow of water in the ditches. These require cleaning occasionally. If the water stands in the ditches it naturally seeps into the foundation of the road and weakens or undermines it. If the water could get away readily in the fall there would be less trouble with frost heaving and breaking the road structure.

In some cases it might pay better to have statute labor computed by cleaning ditches rather than drawing gravel. There are places where tile should be laid in the ditches. Highways which were bad every spring have been greatly improved by tiling the centre of the road. While the first expense of tiling may be considered high, it will be a gain in the end by saving in cost of repairing.

When gravel is put in the centre of a wide, flat road, it soon disappears and the road becomes as impassable as ever, while if a little grading had been done and the ditches cleaned, the gravel would have lasted probably for years. Better go to a little expense and have something to show for the money, than to spend a lesser amount and obtain no lasting results. The road grader operated by an intelligent man will do effective work, but in the hands of some men harm instead of good is done. What little gravel is on the road should not be covered, nor is it good practice to leave the sods on the edge of or in the ditch. Yet both are commonly done, and there is less chance than ever of water getting away quickly. The gravel does get spread out, and after the sod shoulder is removed the mixture of gravel and soil may adversely be drawn towards the centre of the roadway. There should be no obstruction between the road and ditch, but we have seen the sod left just on the edge of the ditch by the scraper. We do not know why any roadmaker would do it, but nevertheless it is done and the water soaks into rather than runs off the road. Once the sod is removed the regular use of the drag will prevent grass from growing.

The sooner rural roads are properly and sufficiently drained, the better it will be financially for the ratepayers. As it is now, money is practically wasted in hauling gravel and putting it on low, flat, wet roads with little semblance of a ditch on either side. Clean the ditches and if necessary put in tile. Have a drag for every concession, and arrange to use it at the right time. The common split-log drag is serviceable and might well be used more than it is. If possible prevent the roads from getting impassable by repairing them in time.

Review of "The Farmer's Advocate."

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

Not long since I made an inventory, and found that no less than thirteen periodicals, consisting of news, papers, magazines, etc., regularly visit our home. Sometimes in the busy seasons I simply read the headlines and mentally vow that I will read the most likely articles at a leisure period. These days of leisure are about as plentiful in the life of a farmer who is trying to farm as non-partizan voters at the ordinary election.

So the articles I lay aside for future perusal, pile up until the wife carries them away to the attic and I begin again.

A stormy day not long since gave me the opportunity to go through some back numbers of unread Advocates, and as a result I have a lot of clippings that some day may materialize into discursive articles for the Advocate. Some of them I would like to make concise, especially when I write my opinion of such as Mr. Ayer.

Reviewing over a number of issues in this way, however, serves to give one a sort of birdseye view of the paper as an educator. I have been accused of being fond of destructive criticism and I don't remember of ever being accused of dealing in flattery, so you can take for honest opinion what I am going to say of the Advocate; the more so since no one can very well say that I am looking for a government job or a position on the staff.

When I finished my review I called out to my wife: "Say we've taken this Advocate for fifteen years and we've got a lot of sane, sound, helpful reading matter from it. I don't remember of having read in that time anything mean or questionable."

When the magazine comes I first read the editorial page. Sometimes the editorial paragraphs contain whole agricultural sermons in a few lines—The other editorials, though always written in the farmer's interests are not sharp enough to suit me, especially dealing with persons of the Ayer class. And right here let me say the most unfortunate phase of any refutation of misleading statements made about the farmer, or defence of his position, reaches only the farmer when appearing in these farm papers and not those who are misled by the unfair attacks from the public platform or in the city newspapers. In other words the explanations and defences of the farmer's position are read only by farmers and not by those who have gained a distorted idea of his supposed prosperity in the newspapers.

If those unfair attacks and criticisms could be answered at once by well qualified advocates of the farmer, city consumers would not wrong the farmer as they are doing to-day.

To get back to my subject. I often wonder if some of your writers appreciate commendation from their readers. I know that if I were a regular contributor I would feel sometimes that it would be encouraging to know whether or not my articles were helpful. In this regard I have read with interest and profit the articles on nature by A. B. Klugh since they started, and have never seen any reference to them by any of your subscribers though I have intended for some time to express my appreciation of them. In fact they, together with the excellent veterinary tables you have lately published are the only articles I have ever clipped from the Advocate for my reference scrap book. They are valuable, not only for the information gained of the nature world about us, but they are written in such plain and popular style that my young people can read, understand, and enjoy them. The articles on the development of the animal mind in the late issues are especially instructive and interesting.

I hope Mr. Klugh will continue to give these popular articles. A lot of the stuff that Peter McArthur writes is worth reading and it's all interesting. I have often wished I could read his private political thoughts. I have seen so many men rave about the curse of partyism, and when election day comes being submissively led to the polls by the party heeler to vote for the "grand old party" that I grow skeptical when I hear a man now talk "independent". However, I feel that he is a true friend of the farmer and as such I hope some day to give him the handclasp of gratitude. I was very much impressed with his letter in the issue of March 8th. As a farmer I know he will do his best to produce this year, as a writer I hope he will devote the money received for his writing to war purposes. I always read Sandy's letters aloud to the wife. His homely philosophy is restful and helpful although he is not Scotch.

"Whip's" articles are always good and carefully read. His article on Persistent Urachus last year saved me a foal and I shall always be grateful to him.

I suppose the Home Magazine is all right. I do not get time to read it.

N. S.

R. J. MESSENGER.

[Note.—Coming from a man known to excel in destructive criticism this review is appreciated by the editors and surely will be by readers. Possibly our editorials are not "sharp" enough for some but we know others who feel their cutting edge.—EDITOR.]

Silage and Hay For Feed.

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

I would prefer a farm of about one hundred and fifty acres, containing ten acres of bush, or at least sufficient to supply firewood from down timber. With a farm of this size, a person would be able to grass his own stock and keep the profits of winter feeding, instead of being forced to sell in the spring even if the prices were at their lowest. On a well managed farm of this size, larger profits can be made with less labor than on a smaller farm.

Supposing the farm was part heavy clay loam, and the rest muck soil, I would drain the higher land and keep it for cultivation, while the rest of the farm I would pasture. One of the crops I would specialize in would be alfalfa. It is great feed, and the stock are very fond of it, and it would also help to make a balanced ration with silage and timothy hay or straw. I certainly would not be without a silo, if it were at all possible to build one. It might be out of place to state here that we have planted corn both by drill and by planter and find the former method by far the better. I would grow a much smaller acreage of grain than hay, as it takes hay and corn to make both quantity and quality of feed.

Among the varieties of grains we have found to give the best results are: oats, O. A. C. No. 72 and Banner barley, O. A. C. No. 21. I would grow Longfellow and White Cap Yellow Dent corn for silage. I would branch out a good deal in my farming so as not to be dependent on any particular part of it. If I were content to a cheese factory, I would keep a small dairy herd. I would also keep a few hogs and some poultry but would go in for beef cattle, more than anything else. Manure would be hauled during the winter and spread directly on the land.

Huron Co., Ont.

FARMER'S SON.

EDITOR

The ad largely on soil that is thickly sown late sown ear

My so and some of it is just bushels of of oats, o to the ac four pound are the pr my soil th a good ave chance to oats is use I believe i does not c the ground too dry. to the red grow where with the c

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Pleas

EDITOR "TH

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Champion E. This team incl were trained b owner. Th champion