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"Persevere and
Succeed."

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EDITORIAL.

Roads Need Dragging in Autumn.

Autumn is the season when country roads need most attention and get least. Usually traffic and the elements wreak their disastrous effects, no effort being made, as a rule, to minimize or repair the ravages until the following spring. Consequently, clay roads, softened by November rain, become worked up into a horrible mess, filled with ruts and impressions of horses' hoofs. These collect rainwater to complete the destruction of the crown and soak down into the subsoil, there to be frozen during the winter, and, by its expansion, disintegrate the roadbed into prime condition to be wrought up next spring into a bottomless mire.

The fundamental principle of roadmaking is drainage, particularly in autumn. The most important object of drainage is to keep the road subsoil dry and firm, to sustain the weight of traffic. Ruts and footprints defeat the purpose of the most beautifully-shaped crown. More attention is required to the work of smoothing the roads in autumn. For this purpose, those who have tried the split-log drag recommend it highly. The common road-leveller is useful at times, but a drag may be used in the mud, smoothing down the corrugated surface. Every rut holds water to help make worse ruts; every effort to smooth and compact helps to shed surplus water to the drains. Wheels alone are beneficial to a road; wheels and water are destructive. Eliminate, so far as possible, the second factor, and the result will be protection of the subsoil from heaving frosts and a marked betterment of the highway this fall, next spring, and even the following summer. Let us get back to the simple secret of drainage, which means first tiling, then judicious grading, preserved by attention to open ditches, and frequent use of the leveller or drag.

Now is the important season to attend to bridges and culverts, taking particular pains to see that no water has a chance to lie in ditches without outlets. Pent-up moisture will be sure to soak downwards into the subsoil, and work the same injury as seepage from a rutted, hoof-punched track.

The Manufacturers' Ruse.

"Moderate Tariff a Necessary Evil," is the way we epitomized our views on the tariff question in an editorial heading last spring. We still hold to that view, but wish to add that we regard existing schedules as none too moderate, and some of them might well be lowered somewhat in the coming revision. We do not want to see Canada's natural resources exploited to be manufactured for us abroad, neither do we wish to see ourselves in the position of a one-industry nation. Symmetrical development of all lines of activity is to be desired, but we do not want and will not endorse any attempt to augment tariff tolls for the sake of making a few manufacturers rich at the expense of the general consumer. Most strongly of all, we repudiate the gold-brick suggestion that farmers should join in demand for more protection, which, in the nature of the case, can do us little good, and is only desired in order that our friends, the manufacturers, may have a show of justification for requesting increased duties on their products, to enable them to squeeze consumers the tighter. Manufacturers are weakening their case and alienating fair-minded support by employing chaff arguments to cover their snouts while reaching greedily for the bin of grain.

Direct Taxation Better than Federal Subsidies.

Will the recent increases in Provincial subsidies from the now buoyant Dominion treasury have any effect in reducing Federal expenses? Will it result in any permanent betterment in the state of Provincial finances? Will it be wisely expended in behalf of the people, or will it be simply a bone to the political wolves, who will presently come back clamoring all the more insistently for another joint? What will be the effect on Provincial statesmen of the prospect of helping themselves out of a hole by joining other Provincial statesmen who have got into the same predicament in a demand for more money from the common pool? The system of Provincial subsidies is pernicious in principle and results. From the public standpoint, it can be at the best but a transfer of money from the right pocket to the left, with the disadvantage of doubling the chances of leaks through holes in the lining. As a matter of fact, we in Canada, with our Dominion, provincial, county and township lawmakers, are open to the charge of being overgoverned, and the more funds we place at the disposal of each particular body, the more temptation there will be to recklessness of expense and to overlapping of legislative jurisdiction in order to find excuse for utilizing the wherewithal. The one thing for which legislatures display unflinching ingenuity is dissipation of surplus funds. The value obtained is often a doubtful quantity, and the influence of the money is sometimes sinister enough, as witness the disgraceful election-trial revelations. We believe the increase of Provincial subsidies is a grave mistake which should be never repeated, and Sir Wilfred Laurier would have earned the devout gratitude of patriots if he had set his foot down square and firm in opposition. If there is any Province in Canada face to face with the alternative of increased subsidy or direct taxation, then direct taxation is the thing. Not only is it the most economical way to raise money, but it will prove a forcible annual reminder to citizens of the amount of money they contribute for expenses of government, and thus, through the Parliamentary representatives they elect, would prove an effective check on extravagant governmental expenditure. That is why politicians dread it. That is why their constituents should welcome it.

What Farm Buildings are Worth.

In the October number of the O. A. C. Review is a suggestive article by L. H. Bailey, who shows the element of error that creeps in from the common tendency to value farm buildings by what they cost, even after they are out-of-date. Because a certain farm is not worth the cost of the buildings, is no indication that the land is worthless, nor does it argue such a wonderfully low ebb of agricultural conditions, as might appear at first thought. "Very many of the old farm buildings," he says, "have long since outlived their usefulness. They should have paid for themselves long before this. It is sad when farms will not bring the price of the buildings, because we sympathize with the persons and regret the personal changes that follow; but when considered as a living economic and business question, divested of its personalities, it may or may not be cause for discouragement and regret. It is never safe to regard the cost of buildings as a criterion of the value of a farm for more than twenty-five or thirty years after they are built."

Bound Volumes Can Never Supplant Current Literature.

A friend of "The Farmer's Advocate" some time since told of having met a man of very economical turn of mind, who had kept all his back numbers indexed and on file, and thought he would be able to find therein sufficient good reading matter to last him for several years at least. We believe there are few, indeed, of our readers who would ever think of anything so short-sighted. While it is true that we find it necessary to repeat much seasonal advice year after year, still it always comes at a timely date, so that the paper serves as an opportune calendar of recipes and reminders. As one opens the paper and finds there, in fresh, attractive form, some helpful suggestion just before he expects to need it, he is impressed and profited as he never would be by a library of books, bulletins or old issues. The man who depended on a bundle of old papers would get tired of perusing, from year to year, advice couched in the same language, consequently he would read them less and less, and thus miss the benefit of this great office of a farm paper, viz., that of a weekly reminder and incentive. Indexed volumes are useful for reference, but they can never take the place of current issues.

Then, too, as our oldest subscribers know, there is always much coming up that is new. Our friend will miss all that. In fact, he will shortly become, like the volumes he cherishes, a back number.

The day a man reaches a point whence he deems further progress unnecessary, that day he begins taking backwater. The world is progressing unceasingly, and whoever fails to maintain the pace is put to the rear by mere advance of his fellows. It is so everywhere. In school, the brilliant student is almost invariably distanced by his less-clever classmate who realizes the necessity of pounding steadily ahead. It is the same in commerce, industry, professional life and farming. Stagnation is retrogression. The fullest knowledge of last generation is ignorance, compared to the demands of to-day. We must keep learning or become out-of-date.

Moreover, we must continue learning to renew and make good the loss by brain rust. The best memories lose facts rapidly, and most of us lose them with amazing celerity. Wherefore, unless we are ever supplying our minds with new information and new ideas, meanwhile refreshing our memories about the old, we speedily lose from our little stock of knowledge, and the brain either contracts or is occupied with facts and thoughts of another bearing. A farmer, for instance, who ceases to read, converse and think upon agricultural topics, soon feels a waning interest in the complex and manifold problems connected with his calling; he becomes less alert, more indifferent, and a less successful farmer. Knowledge is like seed. Continually replanted, it multiplies; hoarded up in a granary, it is subjected to inevitable loss by vermin, insects, fungus and decay.

Read, therefore, to retain what measure of knowledge you have, as well as to acquire more. The wisest investment a farmer ever makes is in supplying himself with one or two first-class agricultural periodicals. Every farm home in Canada should have "The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine," not merely for the pecuniary advantage that comes of being abreast of the times, but for the growing pleasure it affords oneself and family. If "The Farmer's Advocate" won't help to keep a boy on the farm, nothing else will. Persuade your neighbor to give it a trial.