

Do Not Neglect the Ruts.

Never, in the experience of Ontario, has so much work been done upon the roads, as during the past season. It is an exception now to find a township without at least one grading machine, and it is not uncommon to find three or four in a township. Drive where you may throughout the Province and the work of these machines will be found.

The amount of grading done during the past season is a matter of surprise. It shows clearly that the people can do the work and will do it, and it further proves that the question of roadmaking will be solved in a very short time. The necessary implements have been manufactured and have been provided by the municipalities, but one would not believe, without examining the work, how great is the difference between the plans employed by the various townships and even road beats, and how apparent the difference in the character of work performed. Much remains, however, to be done.

Although the question is a simple one, and although it is easy to lay down one common plan for the government of all concerned, yet in driving along a road subject to the same kind of traffic, requiring the same treatment, as many different plans will be found, and ideas expressed in doing the work, as there are divisions upon the road. Widths differ from eighteen to forty feet and the amount of crown ranges from almost a flat surface to a dangerous mound. Some grades are located in the centre of the allowance, others to one side, others zig-zag, following the location of a half century ago.

Surely municipalities in the older portions can see the absurdity of allowing this work to be done in such a haphazard way, (every year's work making it more difficult to remedy), and will adopt business methods. They will lay down a simple plan and specification determining the width, amount of grade, etc., so that each superintendent, pathmaster, or whoever may have charge of the work will have something to guide him, and make the roads straight, of uniform width, with safe and efficient crown.

Much gravel of very good quality, clean, some of it screened, and much broken stone has this year been placed on these roads. Dirty gravel will readily consolidate, and with the summer's traffic, become smooth and compact, but broken stone and clean gravel shifts under the wheels and is now rough and rutted, much of the best material being worked off to the roadside. The statute labor has been expended, and apparently no provision is now made for raking in this stone so as to fill the ruts, and place the roads in proper shape for shedding the fall rains. If neglected, the result will be that on flat grades this water will rest in the ruts, penetrate the roadway, and the traffic of fall and spring will cut through and ruin it.

On steep grades these ruts form channels for the water, which, running in rapid volumes, wash out the fine particles which bond the stones, leaving nothing but the large round stones for the wheels to travel over. The water travels for some distance to the bottom of the hill, leaving two channels in the road, and washing away the bank at the bottom. Surely when the people go to the expense of providing this material, and hauling it on the road, if no roller is used, some provision should be made for keeping it in shape, at least for the first year until the traffic has consolidated.

This is a simple and inexpensive work, for where grading machines are used, it simply means one round, or two at the most, on the road, passing up one side and down the other, scraping the loose stone or gravel into the ruts and smoothing the surface. This would not cost more than a couple of dollars per mile and would practically be the salvation of all the rest of the work. A little expenditure, a little labor, if now properly directed, will be the best investment many townships can make.

Civic Reform.

The approach of the municipal elections in Ontario is in several sections of the province reviving the question of the best method of representation in the councils of town and cities.

As Galt was about the first town in Ontario to adopt the law which abolished wards, a law that reduced the number of our councillors from fifteen to eight (including the mayor), its evidence, based on experience, should count for something. Galt, after careful deliberation, voted for civic reform, because its council had become unwieldy, and by long sustained ward methods had committed itself to a policy that cut up the town into divisions, to the detriment of the general good. One year's trial of the new system has convinced a large majority of the ratepayers that it has the elements of wisdom, strength and permanency. The ward politician has disappeared, his place having been taken by a representative, who, by the force of circumstances, is compelled to take a much broader view of public affairs than when serving a section of the municipality.

The elector now feels that every man in the council is directly responsible to him for the administration of our civic affairs. That position is much more satisfactory to him as a taxpayer than when inimical legislation was passed by members who could snap their fingers at him because the complainant voted in a ward other than the ones in which they lived. It is but the truth to say that the taxpayer in Galt, after a trial of the new system, favors it on grounds of economy and directness of responsibility.

As Galt is one of the most progressive towns in Ontario, perhaps our opinion should count for something with people in other sections, who are open to con-

viction respecting the advisability of the continuance of the ward system in towns.

—*Galt Reporter.*

Effective Cattle Guards.

Mr. Joseph Wrigley, clerk of North Dumfries Township, is sending out circular notices to the clerk of every township from Windsor to Montreal, and up to Owen Sound on the line of the Canadian Pacific Railway in this Province, calling for representatives from each of these township councils to a meeting to be held in Fraser's Hall here on the 12th of December next, at which the question of what action shall be taken to compel the railway companies to construct effective cattle guards at every public crossing is to be discussed. It is quite likely that every council will send at least one delegate, so that the meeting will be a representative one. The cause of the step on the part of the farmers is the destruction of such a large number of cattle which stray on the railway tracks and are killed by passing trains. The contention is that if the C. P. R. had proper guards at each road crossing, the cattle could not gain access to the track. Reeve Jas. L. Robson has been appointed to represent North Dumfries council at the meeting.—*Galt Reporter.*

Cement-Concrete

The use of cement-concrete has been so great during the past summer that the manufacturers of cement have been unable to meet the demand, and a considerable amount of work has been delayed until next season in consequence.

Cement-concrete in walks, culverts and other structures of a like nature, is lasting and serviceable, and when properly mixed and rightly put in place, is in the best sense economical. But defective work shows itself quickly. Wherever there has been careless or "scamped" work, it is very likely to show itself after exposure to a winter's frost and dampness. Work which stands for two years without signs of cracking, shaling or crumbling is likely to be permanent, its life conditional chiefly upon the actual wear which it receives.

Mr. Joseph Gabourie, for some years past clerk of the township of Hungerford, died at his home about a mile north of the village of Tweed on the 31st day of October last. Mr. Gabourie was 49 years of age, and was born in the Township of Hungerford.

Many municipalities have been deluded into the belief that in a multitude of taxations there is increased revenue. The city council of Los Angeles, Cal., has decided to tax all vehicles. It fixes the yearly tax on bicycles at 50c cents each, single rigs \$1, and double rigs \$1.50 each. It is estimated that this will give a total income of \$13,000, sufficient to keep hand-sweepers steadily employed and leave a surplus for aiding in the repair of streets.