

THE ROCKWOOD REVIEW.

pail was the test of the cow, and other points were nowhere. Beef wasn't King. Butter was the magic wand with which the good housewife filled her tea caddy, replenished the sugar bowl, secured her bonnet, or renewed those store clothes which it was so often the darling desire of her heart to possess. Nearly every "boughten" thing owned by her came from the churn, or the plundered products of the hennery. If cows were "mixed," swine, the pork factors, were as ugly as their famous possessor, who, we are told, once drove them pell-mell into the sea, and they wore manes as do wild boars you may yet see in a menagerie. Sheep, in the majority, of the merino breed, were small, and seldom approached even the doubtful beauty of their progenitor, an animal of no value for mutton and as ugly, when poorly bred, as a camel, a sunfish hog or a kangaroo. Cattle were sometimes large when, at four or five years old, they reached maturity, but even then, they were bony, coarse, and more of active than of adipose tendencies. There were but few men known as breeders of thorough bred stock, and importers of such animals could have their names counted upon less than the fingers of both hands, and it may be added that where they did exist they were regarded as "lunies." The Provincial Exhibition had not yet begun its work of instruction, and "book farming" was at a fearful discount. Horses, spry and active, and manageable, were the best and most valued product of the farm, for every farmer was more or less a horseman. Here was one of the chief redeeming features of rural life, and I often think that for general purposes, the farmer of that long ago knew better what suited Canadian requirements than his successor of the present time. In other words, the average

horse, of fifty years since, came more closely to one's idea of fitness of things than his more pretentious and it may be better pedigreed successor. People didn't seek to drive "Clydes" over country roads half a century back. partly, it may be, because no heavy horses had found their way to Canada, but largely because there was no common use for them. We hadn't "Clydes," or other heavy weights, or "twenty" speeders in the ring, or racers, worthy of the name, but we were justly proud of a patient, lively, useful, fair sized animal, an all round equine friend, in every young horse we saw; and if he didn't fetch fancy prices he was worth more money than the average horse of to-day, could do quite as much if not more work, and was as hardy and useful upon the road as on the farm. I don't sigh for him, but would welcome his return, and would willingly trade off some of the lumbering, clumsy, heavy weights for his more active frame and firmer muscle. But in Roads our up-to-date style of doing things has every advantage, while even better highways are promised. Talk of mud, with a big M—, why you don't know the meaning of the word, unless you go into the wilderness, and attack a slough, or attempt to cross a swamp. And what can you tell of corduroys, cross-ways, and culverts, and jolting bridges, of mud holes, wide and deep, of ditches ever absent where most needed, and huge stumps round which wagon wheels or sled slipped or bumped, of sticky clay piled into yawning chasms, or of big boulders dumped into a hole only to make jumping, groaning, creaking, squeaking wheels work a wider margin of sloppy, slushy, indescribable confusion? Think of the weary drive—nay tramp—to mill or market of fifty years ago, if you can