

## FARM AND FIELD.

FOR THE RURAL CANADIAN.

## WALKS AND TALKS AMONG THE FARMERS.—NO. XIX.

Thanksgiving Day has come and gone. The religious observance of it is not very general, especially in the country. In towns and cities, it is mainly kept as a holiday. Union services are becoming common, chiefly, I think, because only a small minority of each congregation is disposed to attend public worship on that day. It is to be lamented that there is not a more general recognition of the obligation which rests on us all to acknowledge the care and bounty of Providence, by attending at least one public service on the day specially set apart for the expression of individual and national gratitude to Almighty God for His many blessings. Of course, we can be thankful every day, and we ought to be, for there is abundant reason why we should. Praise also forms a prominent part of Sabbath worship. But ingratitude is one of the besetting sins of humanity, and a day once a year set apart for thanksgiving, if properly kept, cannot but aid in the correction of this evil tendency. I was enquiring of a prominent member of a country congregation why there was no service in his church on Thanksgiving Day. He replied that the weather had been very wet and unfavourable for doing fall work, especially getting in root crops, and it was thought, if the day was fine, people would be too busy in the fields to attend meeting. This suggests whether our Thanksgiving Day is not appointed too early for general convenience. The Americans have theirs in the end of November. Ours occurs in the beginning of the month. It was a few days later than usual this year, owing to a postponement. The first days of November are not a leisure-time with farmers. The last of the month would suit his large class of the community much better. Indeed, I do not see why the same day should not be observed throughout Canada and the United States. It would be a pleasing spectacle to behold the entire North American Continent engaged simultaneously in the discharge of this becoming duty.

I HAVE been reading over again a very useful and suggestive little book, entitled "Farm Talk," which was kindly sent me by the author, Mr. George E. Brackett, of Belfast, Maine, in the spring of 1882. I gave it a brief notice in the April number of THE RURAL CANADIAN for that year. It claims to be the only book upon farming subjects ever written in every-day-talk style. I am not sure that this claim is well founded. "The Marvels" entertaining book, "My Farm of Edgewood," contains a large proportion of colloquial matter. Anyway, Mr. Brackett's volume fully answers to its title, and is a very entertaining and instructive work. I have been so much interested in a chapter entitled, "The 'Ologies," that I think I will transcribe it. To abbreviate it would spoil it, and I am sure it will well repay perusal in full.

Jerry called into Smith's the other evening, and found him in quite a state of excitement, consequent upon reading an article in an agricultural magazine he had lent him. In fact, Smith had "got his dander up" in regard to the doctrines and language contained in said article, and was willing to own it. He was sputtering away about "humbugs," "nonsense," "'ologies," etc.

"What's the matter with the 'ologies, Smith?"

"I don't believe in 'em, and never did. What's the use of so much 'flummy-diddle?' Plain common sense is enough for any farmer's paper. I'm a practical farmer, none o' your

science about me; and your 'ologies may go to grass for all me. I've no use for 'em."

"Wait a bit. Don't get excited. Let's talk the thing over a little. Nothing like keeping cool to enable a fellow to understand the gist of the matter. Now, I believe you are as much interested in the 'ologies, as you call them, as anybody."

"No, sir, I'm dead set agin 'em."

"Let's argue the point a little."

"Wall, arger away; but just try an apple, to clear your throat."

"Thank you, I will. Fine specimens these, What variety are they?"

"Spitsenburghs; some of my own graftin."

"Sure they're Spitsenburghs?"

"Sartin. I took considerable pains to study 'bout apples, and I guess there ain't many kinds raised hereabouts but I can tell their names as quick as I put my eyes on 'em."

"I've no doubt of it; and your knowledge on the subject proves that you are not only interested in, but pretty well acquainted with one of the 'ologies."

"How do you make that out?"

"Why, *Pomology* is the science that treats of fruit, and you have shown that you know a 'thing or two' about apples; so there's one of the 'ologies."

"Well, you've got me there."

"I think I have. Hand me over that wormy apple. Do you know what made the hole in it?"

"A worm, of course, an apple-worm."

"Very well; but do you know the history, habits, name, etc., of this worm?"

"No: though they say the worm comes from a miller."

"Yes, a little moth or miller lays her eggs in the calyx, or blossom end of the young apple, just as it is beginning to grow, and from that egg the worm hatches which troubles the apple so badly. After this worm grows to its full size, it changes to a chrysalis, in which form it remains through the winter, and from which the moth comes the next spring, and lays its eggs again for some more apple worms. The scientific name of this insect is called the *Corpeccapsa pomonella*, and its common name is the apple-worm."

"But I don't see where the 'ology comes in."

"Yes, you can; for the science that treats of insects is termed *Entomology*. So there's another 'ology in which you, in common with all other farmers, are deeply interested."

"You're doing well; go on."

"Well, let's go into the subject a little deeper. What's the soil of your farm?"

"Hard and rocky, mostly; some sandy loam in the low ground and flats."

"Any sand or clay?"

"Yes; there's a sand bed, and quite a clay bank over in the corner. There was a 'brick-kiln' down there a good many years ago."

"Any large stone?"

"Some boulders—granite; and the ledges crop out a little over in one corner of the pasture lot."

"Very well; there's another 'ology—*Geology*, which treats of the formation and structure of the earth, and of what it is composed."

"Well, I'll give up. Looks a little stormy out, don't it?"

"What makes you think so?"

"Because there's heavy rain clouds rollin' in from the water, and the wind is 'out' strong."

"That's another 'ology, *Meteorology*, which is the science that treats of the weather and the condition of the atmosphere; a science with which every farmer is more or less practically acquainted. These are only a few of the 'ologies in which every farmer is directly interested, and the principles of which are so frequently brought into his every-

day practice. It's no use for you, Smith, to be down on the 'ologies."

"Can you name another?"

"Certainly, there's *Physiology*, both animal and vegetable; the former treating of every thing that relates to animals, and the latter of plants. So you see, it is absolutely necessary for a farmer to know something of this 'ology. The sciences are intimately connected with the farmer's operations at every step of his progress, and he is not a wise man who persistently opposes whatever seems to him to smack of science, or is comprehended under the heading of an 'ology."

The race of anti-'ology farmers, though by no means extinct, is becoming "small by degrees and beautifully less," and a generation of more intelligent tillers of the soil is rapidly coming to the front. It is well that this is so, for our lands, impoverished by anti-'ology treatment, can only be brought up by a persevering application of scientific principles in the way of manuring, rotation of crops, stock-feeding and thorough culture. It is encouraging to any one who has watched the history of agriculture during the past half century to note the signs of progress on every hand. These are numerous, and among them, one of the most conspicuous and significant is the large and increasing number of those who not only read but write for agricultural periodicals, and in competition for prize essays. The necessities of farming will compel a higher standard of intellectual attainment in order to succeed. Competition gradually becomes more close, and as the different parts of the earth are brought nearer to one another by improved modes of communication, the markets will put supply and demand into such proximity with one another as to call for more forethought and better management as the years roll on. Yes, farmers must study the 'ologies with increasing diligence.

I AM glad to see that the Ontario Government is taking steps to multiply farmers' institutes. These furnish a most valuable school for those who cannot go to an agricultural college, or bestow much time upon study. They are especially fitted to stir up young farmers to self-improvement. It is to be hoped that the efforts being made will be encouraged in all parts of the country, and that the institutes, which must necessarily be infrequent, will be supplemented by farmers' clubs, Granges, or any permanent local organization that is preferred. All winter long there should be a monthly, or still better, a fortnightly meeting in every neighbourhood, for the discussion of practical subjects connected with farming. There is no lack of talent, if it were only brought out, but organization of some sort is needed. Beside the benefit of these meetings in the direct promotion of agricultural improvement, they are of great value in training "the young idea," not only how to "shoot," but how to express itself. Such meetings are the best possible training school for the public speakers of the future in municipal councils, political and other conventions, and even in Parliament.

W. F. O.

The common lilac, if kept headed down for a few years, makes a dense hedge, and behind a low stone wall makes an excellent fence. There are many other shrubs, such as the snow-berry, the buckthorn, the elder, the strawberry tree and the barberry, which make fine screens for the concealment of unsightly objects about one's premises. Climbing shrubs, such as the prairie rose, the clematis, the Virginia creeper, and the deciduous ivy, look well on porches and arbours, but exhibit their graceful foliage to the best advantage on trees, which are their natural support.