

ROADS.—Though advanced as the present age is in civilization and christianity, yet the students of antiquity must acknowledge that we can by no means compete with the ancient Romans in one respect at least, namely, in the construction and stability of our public roads. Nothing can be more conducive to the health of a community than a good dry clean road. Why is it that we have such poor roads throughout the greater part of our State? It is not because we do not spend labor and money upon them. Far from it. But the trouble generally is in our system. We spend a few hundred dollars this fall, and a few hundred next, and so on, yet we always have poor roads. Did we at once lay out a few thousand on them, and, *if possible to find one*, give it to an honest man who would faithfully devote it to the intended purpose, we should soon experience quite a change in the condition of our roads. The following is taken from Dr. Anthon's excellent work on "Roman Antiquities;" it will show what kind of roads they had two thousand years ago:

"The public works were perhaps the greatest of all Roman works, and were constructed with amazing labor and expense. They were generally raised above the ordinary surface of the ground, and frequently had two carriage tracks, separated by a raised foot path in the centre. The centre indeed was always raised, so as to permit the water to run off easily.

"The miles were marked on stones. Stones were also placed at smaller distances for *travelers to rest on*, and to assist those who had alighted in remounting their horses, for stirrups were not used till a late period.

"The military roads were usually laid out in straight lines from one station to another, with little regard to natural obstructions, which were frequently passed by means of very extensive works, as excavations, bridges, and, in some instances, tunnels of considerable length. The solidity of their construction is clearly shown by the existence of many that have borne the travel of near two thousand years without material injury. The Roman engineers were very particular in securing a firm bottom; which was done, when necessary, by ramming the ground with small stones, fragments of brick, &c. On this careful prepared foundation, a pavement of large stones was firmly set in cement. When large blocks could not be conveniently obtained, small ones of hard quality were sometimes cemented together with lime, forming a kind of concrete, of which masses extending to a depth of several feet are still in existence. The most celebrated of the Roman roads, both on account of its length and the difficulties that had to be surmounted in its construction, was the Appian, leading first to Capua, and continued afterwards to Brundisium. It was hence called 'Regina Viarum.' Parts of it still remain, after a duration of more than two thousand years.

UPSILON.

EXCHANGE OF SEEDS.—It is a good rule in agriculture, to affect a change of seeds as often as once in every two or three years. Why is it that the seeds of most of our field crops or grains do better when cultivated on lands at a slight remove from those on which they were matured, a question which science has as yet been unsatisfactorily to solve; but such is the undeniable fact, and indeed is so obvious, and so clearly corroborated by all experience, as no longer to admit of doubt. The winter and early spring are favorable seasons for exchanging, as well as for procuring new and improved varieties of seeds, plants and scions.

Editorial Notices, &c.

QUARTERLY AND WESTMINSTER REVIEW FOR APRIL; AND BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE FOR MAY, 1862, American Edition; New York: Leonard Scott, & Co., 70 Eulton Street.

We have received from the publishers through Mr. Henry Rowsell, of this city, the new numbers of the Quarterly and Westminster; which, as usual, contain valuable articles on the most absorbing topics of the day. These masterly British Periodicals treat with great clearness and ability, all subjects which all well informed persons must seek to make themselves acquainted. The following articles constitute the numbers before us: QUARTERLY:—Dorset; Hymnology; States of Prosperity of Turkey; Training of the Clergy; Life of Turner; the Eastern Archipelago; Stanhope's Life of Pitt; The Merrimack; the Monitor. WESTMINSTER:—The Mythology of Polynesia; Endowed Schools; German Life during the last two centuries; Delaney; Caesar's Campaigns in Gaul; Life of J. M. Turner; The Fathers of Geography; Philosophy; Portraits of My Acquaintance; France and Napoleon III.; Lord Stanley; Contemporary Literature. The Contents of Blackwood are as varied and rich as usual. The article on President Andrew Jackson will read with avidity on this side of the Atlantic.

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE.

THE Office of the Board of Agriculture has been removed to 188 King Street West a few doors from the late location adjacent to the Government House. Agriculturists and others who may be so disposed are invited to call and examine the Library, &c., when convenient.

Toronto, 1861.

HUGH C. THOMSON
Secretary