

# The Farmer's Advocate

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### EDITORIAL

#### CONTINUE PIONEER WORK WITH THE DRAG.

If ever the introduction of a new idea was vindicated by results, the split-log drag has been. It is a means of strengthening our road-improvement practice in what has been its weakest and most neglected phase, viz., maintenance. It is all right to use the grader and other expensive machinery to put our roads up into shape, but unless both the earth and stone roads are regularly looked after and repaired on the stitch-in-time principle, eternity would pass without bringing us good roads. Metalled roads require a caretaker on every fifteen or twenty miles to travel up and down looking after them, raking off loose stones, filling depressions, and so on. Earth roads require an application of the same principle. It will not do to let the road become cut up, mired and flattened by every thaw and rain, expecting to make it all good by annual grading. Such a practice wastes, by erosion, the good surface loam, and each year the grader has to dig down a little deeper into the red or blue subsoil clay in the ditches, and this, piled loosely on the center of the road, not only makes driving bad for that season, but defeats the very object of crowning by forming a loose, mucky surface, through which the water soaks into the roadbed, to form an engine of destruction under the effect of winter frost. Furthermore, as clay washes and cuts up worse than loam, the stickier the clay we have to use, the faster the destructive erosion proceeds. The way to have good roads is not to dig the crown of the road out of the ditches every year, but to prevent it from getting into the ditches, by using, early in spring, and after every heavy rain throughout the summer and autumn, when the surface is still moist, but not wet, a simple, cheap drag or leveller that will keep the road smooth, obliterate the ruts and hoofprints, and tend to draw up towards the center the settling mud, which wheels, hoofs, gravity and erosion ever tend to work towards the sod shoulder, and eventually into the ditch, or into some stream or hollow beyond. Even during winter thaws, it is probable that the drag may be used to good advantage in keeping the surface oval, hard and smooth. One of the competitors in our split-log-drag brigade put his mile of road into excellent shape for winter by dragging it one evening just before a freeze.

Yet, simple as is the drag, marked as are its benefits, and strong the testimony concerning its use, a great many hesitate, and, strangest of all, the people who have had some experience with the old single-stick, iron-shod leveller, with the pole front, have been the slowest to take up with the split-log drag. They think they have something better. As a matter of fact, those who have tried and observed both pronounce the drag, properly constructed and used, as decidedly more efficient. It fills the ruts better, is easier on horses, is more adaptable, and can be used to advantage at an earlier stage in the drying-up process, its use being, therefore, far less liable to be neglected. Of our 63 competitors, only one reported unsatisfactory results, and he evidently used it when the roads were sticky, whereas it should be used when they are MOIST, BUT NOT WET.

As illustrating the conservative attitude of mind adopted by many towards simple things, we cannot do better than quote a conversation between the writer and a bright young farmer in Quebec. "I think," he said, "The Farmer's Ad-

vocate' gave too much space to the split-log drag last spring. It's such a simple thing; any farmer could make one. In this district we have a leveller with a tongue and a shoe of iron on the bottom." "Yes," we replied, "the drag is simple. Did you ever make one?" "No." "Any of your neighbors ever make one?" "No." "Oh, then, simple as it is, none of you ever thought of it after all. Evidently, instead of devoting too much space to the drag, we didn't give enough, for results prove that it is a decided improvement over the old single-piece leveller, though the latter instrument has done an immense amount of good, and is not to be discounted. But we want the best." The split-log drag is the best means yet discovered for keeping earth roads in condition, and we propose to keep up the agitation until it is regularly employed by township municipalities throughout Ontario. There is need yet for more pioneer work. Make a light cedar drag, and drag the road from your gate to your neighbor's, towards town. When its benefits have been more widely demonstrated, township councils will take it up, and adopt plans to secure systematic dragging.

#### CO-OPERATION IN MARKETING HONEY.

Quoting from an editorial in our Nov. 21st issue, drawing attention to the marked benefits of co-operative organization in the packing and marketing of Ontario fruit, J. L. Byer, in the Canadian Bee Journal, raises the question as to what benefits might accrue from co-operative organization of apiarists. "While the two industries differ very much, both are confronted with somewhat similar difficulties in marketing their products. The honest and careful apple-grower has had to contend against the badly-packed and poorly-assorted product of the irresponsible or dishonest grower, just as the good-honey producer is up against the purveyor of green goods (unripe honey). In this part of the deal, the honey producer is, aside from co-operation, in a worse position than the fruit-grower, as Government supervision has, in the case of the latter, stepped in and helped to regulate matters to a great extent. The writer, while in sympathy with the aims and objects of co-operation, has doubts as to whether the system will, just at present, sufficiently interest the rank and file of the honey producers to the extent that it could be made a success."

Mr. Byer concludes his comments by reiterating and emphasizing our point that the co-operative fruit-shipping associations were first organized as the possible solution of well-nigh hopeless conditions. "While," he adds, "it may seem contrary to good business ethics, yet, in all cases where co-operation has been adopted, just such conditions have been the why and wherefore. While I may be greatly mistaken, yet I venture to make the assertion that, as regards co-operation in the bee-keeping industry, history will repeat itself."

This subject of co-operation was discussed at the annual convention of the Ontario Beekeepers' Association, and it will in future undoubtedly be very much to the fore. The present winter season would be opportune for an exhaustive discussion through "The Farmer's Advocate," as to the aims, scope, method and feasibility of co-operation in the marketing of honey. Correspondence is invited.

"Education is a better safeguard of liberty than a standing army. If we retrench the wages of the schoolmaster, we must raise those of the recruiting sergeant."—[Edward Everett.

#### KEEP THE WAR SPIRIT OUT OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL.

An Ottawa correspondent of the Toronto News recently recounted, in a somewhat commendatory spirit, a plan which is being tried to introduce military drill in the public schools of the Maritime Provinces, beginning with Nova Scotia. The avowed objects of this move are to improve the physical stamina of the people, and add to the military strength of the nation. Deeply interested in whatever affects the educational future of this country, "The Farmer's Advocate" desires to call attention to the far-reaching significance of this proposition, and of the suggestions which are made for giving it effect. A survey of the situation in different Provinces indicates that educational policies are at present passing through a transition stage, and it behooves every man and woman concerned for the future of the country to acquaint himself and herself as thoroughly as possible, before we are committed to the initial steps, with the tendency of proposals like the one under review. Those who are promoting the Nova Scotia experiment will no doubt want to see it extended to the other Provinces of Canada.

As outlined by the correspondent of The News, the Nova Scotia arrangement takes the form of an agreement between the Dominion Militia authorities and the Provincial Department of Education, whereby drill will be included in the school curricula, and the Militia Department will provide the instructors, who will be competent, to enable teachers, in turn, to qualify themselves to impart such instruction. In the second place, the inducement is held out of an annual bonus of from \$50 to \$100 to teachers who will (a) instruct the pupils, and (b) join the Militia. Foreseeing difficulties likely to arise at this point, provision is made for the two classes of certificates ("A" and "B"), the former for men, and meaning that they are capable of granting military instruction; the latter for women, who are presumed to be able to rise to the standard of being able to impart physical instruction, and drill and teach the youth how to sit, and stand erect, and move in order. But the Militia Department grants them no bonuses, which are for the men in possession of the grade "A" certificates, which they obtain by taking courses at military centers. As a consideration favorable to the carrying out of the scheme, it is thought the bonus will be some inducement to the return of men to the teaching profession, who, in Ontario and elsewhere, have drifted out because of low salaries.

In support of the propaganda, the case of Japan is cited, where children from six to ten are given physical and squad drill; from ten to twelve, company drill; and from thirteen to eighteen, the care and cleaning of arms, rifle exercises, and so on, as a preparation for efficiency in war. But Canada is not lying alongside a besotted despotism like Russia, and these kindred Anglo-Saxon nations should proceed upon the peace and arbitration theory, and not upon the theory of the unspeakable horrors and waste of a fratricidal war. In North America, the surest way to bring on war is to prepare for it by raising the military spirit; the surest way to avoid war is to turn the people's thoughts and aims towards the arts and triumphs of peace. The pretence is made that the objects of military drill in the public school can be obtained without subtracting from the energy and working time of the people—an absurdity upon its very face.

To this military propaganda among the youth of our land, we must enter our protest, for two reasons, one that the war spirit is wrong, the other that it will divert the educational energies,