

THE MARITIME PATRON,

AND ORGAN OF THE

Maritime Provincial Grange—Patrons of Husbandry.

"In Essentials Unity—In Non-essentials Liberty—In All Things Charity."

[All communications intended for this column should be sent to the editor of the Maritime Patron, EDWIN S. CREEB, M. D., Newport.]

The regular annual session of the Executive Committee of the Maritime Provincial Grange will be held at Truro, on Wednesday, 22nd inst., commencing at 9 o'clock, a.m. Arrangements will be made for free return tickets on the Intercolonial Railway for Patrons attending the Session.

We recently visited the home and farm of a worthy Brother and Sister Patron, the boys and girls of whose family, who are old enough, are also Patrons, and in whose house the regular meetings of the Grange to which they belong are held. It need scarcely be said that they are all good Patrons; that they appreciate the true objects of the Order; and are earnest, zealous, and even enthusiastic with reference to the Order and its objects. Nor need it be said that this is a well-ordered family—this is a matter of course, and is included in the assurance that the farm, a large one of three hundred acres, including a fine lot of dyke, is well ordered. The eldest son rents from his father an adjoining farm, which he is stocking as he is able. The home comforts which he is accumulating prove that he is preparing a nest for his future mate and co-worker. It is the principle with the father to be boss of his own farm, but not in any way or degree to interfere with the boys in the management of their speculations or undertakings. In the morning the boys came, alert and cheerful, for the orders of the day. A field of potatoes was showing signs of disease—it must be dug and fed to the stock. The eldest son was directed to cross plow a piece of stubble land—"plow deep is the motto of the Patron;" and in reply to our inquiries, the father explained that he believed in plowing a little deeper each succeeding rotation.

We invite discussion of this "motto of the Patron," without expressing any opinion at present as to its applicability or wisdom. There must be a limit to deep ploughing. Many farmers never cultivate more than four inches of the surface soil, and do not think it wise to encourage roots to go deeper. Other farmers cannot get the plow down deep enough and break up the subsoil besides. Other farmers again say it depends upon circumstances and conditions of crops, soil and situation how deep the plow should go, and whether the subsoil should be broken up. The columns of THE CRITIC are open to farmers for the discussion of this and all professional subjects.

The family of which we have been speaking—a model family in many respects—model in the sense of being worthy of imitation by other families in the ways mentioned, but being human, not perfect—is also worthy of imitation in that it is a loyal and patriotic family. Two sons and a daughter are "in the States," but there is no danger that they will become "white-washed Yankees," for they have been taught to love their native land; to regard it as the best of all lands; our government as the best of all forms of government; our federal association as loyal British Colonies, as being not only politically and commercially desirable, but actually essential; and a closer federal union of all British Colonies around and with the mother land, as a consummation dear to the heart of every loyal British subject, as it is necessary to the best interests of the Empire. We have used the slang expression "white-washed Yankees," not on account of its elegance or expressiveness—it is as far as possible from being either—but because it is universally employed and understood as being descriptive of renegade Canadians, who have forsworn the land, the allegiance, the patriotism, and the loyalty of their fathers. The people of the republic of the United States of America, be it said to their praise and honor, never forsake their allegiance; and to their patriotism and loyalty is largely due their prosperity.

Among the many subjects that should be discussed in our Granges, few, if any, are better worthy of careful consideration than that of the use of commercial fertilizers, which term, we understand to include fertilizers that are not of home production. We every year use more or less superphosphate with barnyard manure. Last autumn, we had about an acre of meadow plowed up that had been yielding not more than half a ton of hay to the acre. This spring, it was very lightly top dressed with barn manure, which was harrowed in by a wheel harrow, or cultivator harrow, invented and made by Mr. Oliver Dodge, of Upper Newport, and about 450 lbs. of Neily's superphosphate was sown in furrows. The potatoes grown upon this land are large, and a large yield, free from disease as yet, and of unusually good quality. The beans are a luxuriant crop, and of good quality; as are also a row or two of dwarf peas. That this superphosphate was a profitable investment there can be no manner of doubt. That farmers generally believe the purchase of superphosphate to be a profitable investment is proved by the enormous quantity that is annually purchased; but whether it would not be better economy to purchase feed and make more manure, or to use bone ground fine with plaster, instead of superphosphate, remain open questions. Certain it is, that it is folly for any farmer to allow half at least of his manure to go to waste, and supply the deficiency by purchasing commercial fertilizers. These are matters concerning which we invite discussion in our Granges, and in the columns of this paper. In quoting our own experience, we have used the word "about" in a very inaccurate way, which we cannot recommend to others. Precision and accuracy are essential in conducting experiments and in reporting results.

The fences on a farm cost more than the farm itself is worth. The principle upon which fence laws should be made, is that every man should take care of his own stock, and that no man should be expected to protect his field from another man's cattle. The effect of just fence laws would be to save an immense amount of fencing material, capital, and labor, for really profitable uses; to induce farmers to provide enclosed pasture for their stock, which would save wear and tear on cattle in driving, and wear and tear and time of farm hands also; to provide better pasture, and the really wise farmers would be led to adopt the soiling system, or some modification of that system.

THE COAL INDUSTRY.

To the Editor of the Critic:—

SIR,—It is very seldom I take the trouble to notice attacks made upon myself or my sentiments by newspapers. The remarks, however, made in the Mining Notes of your last number, in regard to my recent article in the Week, are so unfair and misleading, that I must do myself the justice of disabusing the minds of your readers of the entirely erroneous and unfounded impressions sought to be created.

The only inference to be drawn from your observations is, that I had complained of the present coal duty, and desired to rouse the people of Ontario to ruin one of our most thriving industries. The most superficial reading of the article in question would demonstrate that no such idea was presented. I was speaking of the real difficulties of the present Confederation, and pointed out that nature and geography were against any and all attempts to foster trade between Nova Scotia and the Upper Provinces. I claimed that the natural market for the leading products of Nova Scotia was the New England States, and to illustrate this idea, I pointed out that it was not the interest of our people to buy their flour from Ontario, neither was it the interest of Ontario to buy our coal. The result of the existing system is, that a large flour tax is paid by the people of the Maritime Provinces, and even that portion of our flour which is brought from Ontario is obtained at a disadvantage, inasmuch as it is paid for in cash, and not in kind. Equally striking is the effect of the coal duty. The people of Ontario are compelled to pay a heavy tax upon coal, and yet they scarcely buy any from Nova Scotia.

Is it not plain, therefore, that in the natural course of trade, Ontario would buy her coal from Pennsylvania? The proof of it is found in the fact, that with an adverse duty of sixty cents per ton, the people of Ontario practically import all their coal from Pennsylvania, while Nova Scotia coal, with the advantage of a protective duty of sixty cents, has been unable, after seven years, to gain any foothold in the markets of Ontario.

I yield to no one in a sincere and earnest desire to promote the coal industry of Nova Scotia, and I am ready to support that policy which will best secure its permanent prosperity. I am not convinced that trying to force a market in defiance of natural laws in the Upper Provinces is the best means of obtaining this end. I take the full responsibility of saying that the Nova Scotia coal industry must ultimately find its success in supplying the markets of the New England States, or else it is doomed never to succeed. Perhaps the United States will never concede us a free market, in which case we must be content to accept the existing condition of things; but this does not say that it is wise or satisfactory.

I am not unaware that many gentlemen prominently engaged in the coal industry are under the impression, that even with free access to American markets, our coal could not find a market in the New England cities. They point out that the Pennsylvania mines are sending coal to both Boston and Portland at prices which preclude successful competition. But after investigating the matter somewhat, I am induced to believe that the present condition of the coal trade in the States is abnormal, and cannot last. The coal mines of Pennsylvania are largely in the hands of Railway Companies, and the present exceptional competition in carrying over the various lines has reduced prices below the natural and proper limit. This much is clear. There are fully twelve millions of people in North America lying north of the Pennsylvania coal fields; and if Nova Scotia coal mines cannot get a share of the trade with even chances, then we must conclude that our coal mining industry is a failure.

I cannot admit that there has been anything like a satisfactory "revival" of our coal mining industry as a result of the coal duty. It is true "we" are producing more than before the duty was imposed, but the present output is but trifling, and scarcely a mine is making even fair profits. The output is, I believe, about one and a quarter millions of tons. In order that there should be anything like satisfactory activity in coal mining, there should be an output of at least five millions a year. Coal mining property is to-day at the very minimum of value, and there has got to be a "boom" before the money already invested can be realized. We shall never have this "boom" by the agency of the markets of the Upper Provinces—never in this world.

It must not be assumed that those who hold sentiments such as I have expressed are in any sense hostile to the coal industry. Quite the reverse. It is because we are tired of the present most unsatisfactory and unprofitable condition of affairs that we seek a change in the system. What more any patriotic Nova Scotian can have in wishing to injure one of the most vitally important industries of this Province, I am at a loss to understand.

I trust I have made my meaning clear on this point, and that you will see the justice and propriety of withdrawing imputations which are entirely unwarranted and grossly unfair.

J. W. LONGLEY.

Halifax, September 6th, 1886.