

The Farmer's Advocate and Home Magazine

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EDITORIAL.

Taxes are going up, but the roads keep going down.

What sort of highways are you getting in return for the taxes you pay?

Wide implements save time and do just as effective work as narrow ones.

The loss and inconvenience to farmers through bad roads is beyond computation.

Practice rotation of crops in the garden with as much care as on the main portion of the farm.

Have you got your garden in? Growing vegetables for the table is an easy matter. Get them in early, as they do better and are more appreciated.

If no clover is handy to the buildings, sow some oats and peas for fodder for the calves and pigs. Green feed in season is necessary for these classes of stock.

Railway promoters have absorbed a large share of the public domain and revenue of Canada. Now, for a change, suppose we let the country roads in on the ground floor.

Last summer was an especially hard season on new seeding. Much of the clover seeding was plowed last fall, but some was left till spring to give it another chance. With a small acreage of new seeding for hay and clover seed, the price of the latter is almost sure to be high a year hence. In view of this fact, if the seeding is at all worth leaving, give it a chance. Cut it early for hay, and keep the weeds down, and make conditions favorable for seed production. The growing of clover seed should be a branch of every farmer's business.

While agriculture is a calling which gives its followers a large amount of independence, yet they, too, are more or less dependent upon their fellow man. The scarcity of labor serves to bring this fact home with great force. It should make farmers more neighborly. A prosperous farmer was once heard to remark, "There is no use having neighbors unless you use them," and what could be truer. If you cannot get hired help, what is the matter with exchanging work with your brother farmer? Try it, rather than neglect work which requires extra hands. This would be a good beginning for a great co-operative movement on the part of farmers.

Ontario now has, according to statistics, over three million acres of pasture, and the area is likely to increase if farm labor does not become more plentiful. Too many of these pastures are composed largely of timothy. A great many farmers sow timothy and common red clover when seeding down, take one crop of hay, and then pasture. Better results could be obtained if more grasses were sown—orchard grass, Kentucky blue grass, meadow fescue, meadow fox-tail, tall oat grass, and alfalfa, alsike and white Dutch clover, give an excellent list to choose from. A mixture containing a large number of these grasses gives better pasture over a longer season than one or two of them alone.

Solutions of the Labor Problem. University Agricultural Teaching

Probably on a par with poor roads, in many sections the most serious hindrance to the satisfactory working of the farms is the lack of efficient help. The condition this season is even more acute than it was a year ago, and unless righted ere long is bound to bring deplorable results. Want of men hinders the development of many of the most desirable branches of farming, and curtails production. Officers of experience in the Salvation Army immigration work find that they could place two or three times the number of men coming under their auspices from the Old Country, many of whom are from the cities and towns. In time, the reformation of the public-school system, and other influences, will tend to correct the townward drift of the youth, but meanwhile the area of good arable land laid down to grass is certain to increase. Even in districts not especially adapted to pasturage, it will carry a certain amount of stock and lighten the labor bill. It has been noted by the immigration officers referred to that the applications for help are much fewer from the grazing than from the dairy, fruit or mixed-farming districts. It should and probably will encourage the keeping of larger numbers of sheep, which, more than any other stock, give a good return, with the least amount of manual labor or trouble. Sheep are not only a profitable class of live stock, but are one of our best allies in the war with weeds. The next and more immediate remedy will likely be found in neighborly co-operation among farmers, on plans corresponding with suggestions recently made by a correspondent in "The Farmer's Advocate." Four or five neighbors clubbing together can do with less costly machines and horse-flesh, and can accomplish work in the fields more speedily and with greater pleasure than when wrestling away each on his own hook, with boy help or one man, when he really requires two. It will be a return to the good old days when "changing work" and "bees" were more in vogue than now. Sheep, grazing cattle on the pastures, and co-operation among neighbors, seem the most promising and immediate ways out of the labor shortage.

"Adequate" Protection.

The latest definition of "adequate protection," as promulgated by one of its Canadian exponents, is that the tariff shall be "sufficient that an industry pay a fair dividend on the investment and enable the industry to be doubled out of profits every three years."

What do Canadian farmers think of this elastic proposition? A fair dividend on investment—including, no doubt, water equal to three or four times the actual capital, and then double the business every three years, besides! Have prices for agricultural produce yet reached a pinnacle where you could take out of your business from five to ten per cent. per annum, and then buy a new farm as large and good as your own in three years; then, in three years more buy another as valuable as these two together, and three years later another four times the size of your present one, and so on, till you owned a township or county? Failing such a condition of opulence, is there any valid reason why you, as a farmer and consumer, should be burdened with a scale of prices for living and supplies necessary to insure your neighboring manufacturer such a smooth and rapid avenue to wealth? Is it not about time to speak up?

In our last week's issue, an article dealing with agriculture in the Universities, was published. This was composed largely of three letters from the heads of Toronto, McMaster and Queen's Universities, in which they stated that they were about to introduce agricultural courses in conjunction with the Ontario Agricultural College at Guelph. The proposed plan is to give the students the regular university course for two years, and then send them to Guelph for their third and fourth years, leading to the degree of Bachelor of the Science of Agriculture. The proposal has the concurrence or is at the suggestion of the Provincial Department of Education. The object, as stated by the several University Presidents, is to train high school teachers in agriculture.

The purpose is very commendable. The teaching of agriculture should be one of the important phases of our educational system, and any well-considered plan which the Department of Education puts forward to further this purpose should receive the support of the people. We are pleased to know that those in authority are gradually becoming familiar with the needs of our educational system, and are making an effort to remedy some of its defects. We cannot hope to evolve a perfect system in a year—not even in several years. A beginning is necessary. But the questions arise: Does the proposed scheme commence at the logical beginning? Will it give the men a sufficient grasp of the subject to make them proficient agriculturists? Can a student not knowing anything about agriculture when he enters the university, take two years in arts or science and top off with the final two years at Guelph and become an agricultural expert, fitted by practical experience and theoretical training to make him an agricultural expert in anything more than the mere name?

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Agriculture is the "backbone" of our country. Politicians and educationists have very little hesitancy in stating this fact—yet they have been very slow to grasp the importance of a thorough system of agricultural education. Gradually the accumulating pressure has been brought to bear upon them, and now they are trying to make agricultural teaching a reality. It seems, however, that, to rectify the educative system, they continually persist in commencing at the wrong end. The university is not the best place to mould the mind. The common school, where the minds of the youth are in the formative state, and where it is easy for the teacher to instil ideas into the child's very being, there to gain force and be a factor in his particular vocation in after life, is the one place where the need of agricultural teaching is most imperative. Commencing with the high school or the university is starting at the wrong end of the ladder. What is necessary is that each and every public school teacher have a thorough training, practical and theoretical in the underlying principles of agriculture by teachers properly equipped, and that this subject be given a prominent place on the curriculum and equipment of our public schools.

We are glad to see the Government and universities so eager to take up the work of agricultural education in the higher schools, but let us look into the proposed scheme. There is now in Ontario an agricultural college second to none on the American continent, from which farm boys can get a diploma in two years, or a B. S. A.