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The Rural Canadian.

EDITED BY W. F. CLARKE.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1st, 1882.

A LINE OF USEFULNESS FOR THE PROVINCIAL ASSOCIATION.

Now that the above-named organization is anxiously engaged in trying to prove its title to existence, and to that end is mapping out for itself new work, it may not be amiss to suggest the holding of Farmers' Institutes as one way of promoting the agricultural interests of this Province. These institutes are becoming very popular in the United States, and are doing a large amount of good. They are simply conventions of farmers held from one to three days, at convenient central points, at which papers are read, addresses delivered, and discussions had on various matters connected with agriculture. Under the auspices of the State Board of Agriculture, six of these institutes were held in Michigan during the winter of 1879-80. The last annual report of the Board gives a full account of these meetings, comprising the papers and addresses in full, also a digest of the discussions. Much interest is awakened among the farmers and their families by these institutes. They are a kind of travelling school of agriculture. The Professors of the State Agricultural College take a leading part in them. Practical farmers who have been successful in particular lines of husbandry, give their experience. Some of the papers are by ladies, who discuss matters of home convenience, adornment and taste. The six institutes distributed over the State, gave the entire farming population an opportunity of attending at comparatively small expense. Each winter the localities are changed, so that in the course of a few years there will not be a district of any considerable size that will not have been reached by their influence.

There is no good reason why a similar plan should not be put into effect in Ontario. The Professors in our Agricultural College could well assist in carrying it out, and would thereby make themselves and the institution in which they teach, more widely known. Other gentlemen can be found, able and willing to take part. Practical farmers of experience are not wanting in all sections of the Province, whose knowledge and skill would contribute to the interest and success of these meetings. The expense would not be great, and would be money well invested in the promotion of agricultural improvement.

We have already something of the sort in connection with one of the specialties of farming. Our Dairy Associations, east and west, hold annual meetings which are very similar to these Farmers' Institutes. They last three days, and the proceedings consist of papers,

addresses, and discussions. It is admitted by all capable of forming a judgment, that the development and prosperity of dairying in Ontario is largely owing to the yearly impetus given by these conventions. The Association Boards, with true business sagacity, have secured the attendance of the best dairy lecturers from the United States, who have from time to time given our factory-men the latest results of experimental methods adopted on the other side. The result has been that the dairymen of Ontario have been able to hold their own with the dairymen across the lines, in the cheese markets of the world. What has thus been done for one of the farm specialties may also be achieved for the interests of agriculture at large, and we earnestly hope that it will be, at an early day.



Wm. F. Clarke

EDITOR "RURAL CANADIAN."

We have much pleasure in presenting our readers, in this issue, with an engraving of its Editor, which those who are acquainted with him will, we have no doubt, pronounce an excellent likeness; while those to whom he is a stranger, except through his writings, will obtain from it a pretty correct idea of his personal appearance. Mr. Clarke is an Englishman, and was born in the city of Coventry, March 31, 1824. Before going to college, he spent a couple of years on a new farm, near London, Ontario, and there contracted that love of agriculture which has been with him a strong if not a "ruling passion" ever since. When the agricultural department of the *Montreal Witness* was started, about twenty years ago, Mr. Clarke was for some time its editor. He subsequently edited the *Canada Farmer* for five years, and the *Ontario Farmer* three years. For some years past, he has edited the agricultural department of the *Western Advertiser*, and been a weekly contributor to a similar department of the *Montreal Witness*. He has also supplied articles on agriculture from time to time for various other journals, and is the author of the chapter on "Bees," contained in the *Live Stock Encyclopædia* lately issued by the World's Publishing Company, Guelph. Failure of health requiring mental rest and an out-door life, he purchased a farm near Guelph in February, 1877, on which he spent three years, in

comparative seclusion, engaged in the peaceful pursuits of husbandry. It speaks well for agriculture as a healthful vocation, that these three years on the farm, completely recruited and rejuvenated the subject of this sketch, so that he was enabled, in the spring of 1880, to resume work as the minister of a congregation. Having rented his farm, he settled in Listowel, where he now resides, dividing his time between the labours of the pulpit and the pen.

HOUSE-WARMING IN WINTER.

The use of close, hot-air stoves is becoming well nigh universal, even among residents in the country, where fire-wood is yet comparatively abundant and cheap. Open fire-places are seldom to be seen. "The hearth," and the "fire-side" are fast becoming obsolete institutions. Few people now can say in the language of one of the old prophets, "Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire." We don't see the fire now-a-days. We only see a hot surface of black iron, with some ornamental devices and lettering upon it. The result is a great loss of sensible comfort, and no small detriment to health. Our apartments are almost unventilated, and we sit in an atmosphere of dry, heated air, that makes us feeble, tender, and liable to take cold on the least exposure. Dr. Dio Lewis, who has published so many sensible things in regard to healthful habits of living, speaks of the open fire as that "good, old-fashioned blessing," and gives the following wholesome advice in *The Golden Rule*:-

"Let us go without silks, broadcloths, carpets, and finery of all kinds, if necessary, that we may have this excellent purifier and diffuser of joy in all our houses. In my own house I have ten open grates, and find the expense is frightful, and if it were in any other department of house-keeping, I should feel that I could not afford it; but in this I do not flinch, so important do I deem the open fire. Next to an open wood-fire, the open coal grate is the best means of warming and ventilating. And if, with a good draught, the coal used be bituminous, it is a very excellent fire. If you would have good throat, lungs and nerves, sit by an open fire and keep as far as possible from stoves and furnaces. If you cannot escape those evils, wear more clothing, especially upon the feet and legs, and keep the doors and windows open."

NAPHTHALINE AS AN INSECTICIDE.

Prof. Taylor, of the American Agricultural Department, announces an important discovery he has made, and which will be of great benefit to farmers, nurserymen, and to commerce—that naphthaline could be used most successfully in the destruction of insects, vermin, etc., especially pea weevil.

"If seeds, grain, dormant plants, vines, etc., be placed in any tight vessel, and a small quantity of the naphthaline be introduced into the vessel and it then be covered, in a few hours any insect that may infest them will be asphyxiated."

The professor exhibited a jar containing some Egyptian corn, which two years since had been received from California, and which, when received at the department, was alive with small beetles. The noise of their gnawing was distinctly heard. Of course the seeds would be destroyed unless the insects were. A small quantity of the naphthaline was mixed with the seed, and very soon the noise ceased, the vermin were destroyed by its action.

To test the question whether the seeds had been injured, he recently had asked Mr. Saunders to test their vitality by planting a small quantity in some of the propagating houses. They grew nicely. Thus showing that this