

tain on the field of battle, say: "Come on, men!" not "Go on!"

When the grain was mostly all sold, and less stock kept, there was less to do in the winter, but selling grain is soil robbery, and that could not continue, so it is absolutely necessary now to feed stock of some kind to retain fertility on the farms. It is thus plain that the present-day farmer has to keep at it all the year round; any relaxation on his part means loss. His best plan is to put up such an effective fight whilst he is at it that he can afford to enjoy the result of his labor afterwards, not fight all his days, and leave no time for enjoyment of his work.

It is not so easy for the farmer to save money, as there are so many wanting to rob him in one way or another. Just now, glowing reports are seen in the papers of the promise of good crops—wheat yield of 40 bushels per acre, etc. Well, I have been travelling about a good deal, and it makes me feel bad to see such poor crops. There may be some fields of wheat that will yield 40 bushels, but there are many that will not yield 15 bushels. A farmer here has just threshed his wheat. When he cut it, I asked him how he found it, and he said, "Very good," and it did look better than much I have seen, yet the actual yield is less than 400 bushels from 27

acres. This spreading of glowing reports is simply playing into the hands of the dealers and speculators. When the farmers have the grain to sell, every effort is made to knock down prices, but when it passes into other hands, it will be the other way about.

The bold brigand held up people at the point of the revolver, and took the risk of getting shot, instead of money. The cowardly brigands of the present day rob by combination, manipulation, and by act of Parliament—and this is called civilization. GEO. RICE.

Independent Rural Telephone Companies.

The rural-telephone question is one of increasing interest to farmers generally. "The Farmer's Advocate," believing that information on the subject would be welcome to its readers, especially to some who may be thinking of having a telephone system installed in their districts, sent out to officials of rural-telephone companies, whose addresses it was able to secure, a list of questions, as below. We publish correspondence received from four companies, and would request any others who have had experience that would be helpful, to send in replies also.

Ques. 1.—What steps did you take to organize a rural telephone company?

2.—Would you advise others to begin as you did?

3.—How is your company organized and managed?

4.—About what does it cost per family service for complete outfit—poles, wires, instruments, etc.? What system do you use?

5.—How much, and in what way, do you charge your patrons for use of telephones per year?

6.—Give some idea of the mileage of your company's lines and the number of telephones in use. How many telephones do you have on one circuit?

7.—Is your business increasing?

8.—Do you have connection with other independent companies, or with the Bell Telephone Co.? If so, on what terms?

9.—State briefly some of the advantages to farmers of having telephone privileges.

Fifty Miles of Poles.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

If I can give any information on the telephone question I will gladly do so, realizing that it has become an interesting topic among farmers and others of the rural districts.

Organization of a company was begun by a general meeting of farmers and others, being called by a few of the most interested parties. After some delay a company was organized, as a Co-operative Association. But only nine men took hold of it, contemplating only to connect themselves with two neighboring railway villages, seven miles apart, and also to accept any other party only as subscribers or renters. We became a registered company, at cost of \$5.00, not including lawyer's fees, which may be from another \$5.00 to as much as his conscience would allow him to put on. It cost us \$17.50 for everything.

This way of organizing answers well, unless it be for convenience in raising money if needed, and unless the company means to go into the telephone business as a speculation.

The policy of our company was to own everything, and charge an annual rental, costing the renter \$12.00 per year. If it were a mutual system, and each renter a shareholder, outside of the cost of switching, etc., which will amount to \$2 or \$3 per phone—unless, as in our case, an operator is engaged at a salary—the cost per family would be the cost of line, which for a metallic system would be about \$70 per mile, not including instruments, at about \$15 per set; so it will be seen that one mile, with four instruments, would cost \$130. Cost of material always varies, though. For instance, poles have cost us, for 25 ft. x 5-inch top, from \$1.14 for Michigan cedar to \$1.45 for Canadian cedar. The Canadian cedar is better. Wire costs in the neighborhood of \$3 per cwt. in Toronto for the best telephone wire. It takes 320 lbs. per mile for metallic or two-wire system, which is the better plan.

We have in the neighborhood of 50 miles now, as the people seemed to realize the convenience of the telephone, and came to us with petitions, asking us to extend our lines; and we nearly always did build or extend when there was a prospect of three or four phones to the mile. Some districts failed us, so we have but an average of a little better than 2 telephones per mile so far, or in all about 108 sets in 50 miles.

We have some light circuits, and some heavy ones of about 25 families on a line. This is plenty heavy enough, but answers well, as our instruments handle that number easily, and it is an advantage to be able to call up anyone without going through a switch.

Our business is increasing rapidly, but not being able, through lack of laborers, we do not extend as fast as we might. There seems to be a great demand for lines all through Middlesex County.

We are connected with every rural line we come in contact with, having free service over each line. We are also connected with the Bell system, having free service with their town subscribers.

The advantages to farmers are many, giving them town connection and keeping them posted as to markets, and in touch with the veterinarian or doctor at all hours. Besides, there are many advantages in being connected with all your neighbors socially, as well as from a business standpoint. We use the selective or push-button system, which calls our switch or Bell Central GEO. L. SHIPLEY.

President Falkirk Telephone Co.
Middlesex Co., Ont.

Large Rural Telephone Co.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

In organizing our company, we only talked up the matter with friends, and got them interested in the telephone business.

The company is financed by sales of common and preferred stock, held by about 112 stockholders.

Our charges are: For private residence, \$15 per annum; business places, \$25 per annum.

Rentals are paid six months in advance; first payment due when telephone is installed.

We have about 385 miles of poles, and about 600 miles of wire. We have single line in town, and country or farm lines have from one to twelve and fifteen on one line.

Our business is extending very rapidly. We have connections with four other independent companies, but have none with the Bell Telephone Co.

The telephone is an advantage to farmers in many ways, by keeping them in touch with the city market, with the butchers, the grocers, and making farm life nearly as pleasant as living in the city. PEOPLES' TELEPHONE CO.
Sherbrooke Co., Que.

Rural Phones Need Good Material.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

Rural telephones are deservedly, we think, commanding great and increasing attention, and we are always glad to be of benefit to others through the experience we have gained by a little over two years' work in a rural company.

In the inception of our company, a number of farmers in the neighborhood decided that a rural-telephone line would be in the best interests of the farmers. The question was then agitated, a meeting of all interested in the building of such a line was called, and the company was organized. We would advise others to begin as we did.

The management of the company is vested in a Board of Directors, composed of the President, Vice-President, Sec.-Treasurer and Manager, and one other member of the company.

The company, after organizing, as before stated, became incorporated as a joint-stock company.

It is impossible to estimate the cost per family of a complete telephone service, as it depends on the length of line to be erected between each, but for good poles, counting thirty to the mile, the cost to us is about forty or forty-five dollars a mile; brackets are about \$1.80 a mile, while four-pin cross arms are nearly \$3, and six-pin cross arms correspondingly more expensive. Wire, supposing only a pair of wires were run on the poles, costs about \$10 a mile. We know that there is a general impression that a rural-telephone line can be built at a merely nominal cost, but we find that we cannot build a good line for much less than \$90 a mile, counting in the cost of digging holes, stretching wire, etc. Besides this, the approximate cost of each instrument installed is \$18.00.

We use the metallic circuit system. We charge our patrons \$12.00 a year rental for the use of our own line. When they use other lines connected with ours, they, of course, pay the fee, if any, charged by that line.

We have about 75 miles of line, carrying from two to ten wires. There are 148 telephones in use.

We do not carry more than twenty telephones on one circuit, as we find the service with more than that number on one circuit very unsatisfactory. Our business is increasing very decidedly.

We have connection with two other rural lines, the connection up to the present being free. We also have connection with the Bell Co. at two points.

A telephone line is, we think, specially advantageous to the farmer. It brings him into touch with the commercial centers of the country, and gives him many of the city man's advantages, without his disadvantages.

In the saving of time, the telephone is especially useful. Take, for instance, the farmer who, amid the rush of haying or harvest, suddenly finds he must have a man from the city to repair some implement. Instead of driving all the way to the city and back again, he walks into the house and telephones, and the man is sent out at once. Or, perhaps, it was only the repairs that he needed. They would be sent by next train to the nearest railway station, and would be at their destination in a very short time.

As for the saving of lives of both human beings and animals by the saving of time in securing veterinary or medical aid, the advantages of a telephone are too well known to need comment, as are also its advantages socially.

There is one thing we would advise in connection with the building of a rural telephone line: Get the best quality in everything. There is no greater mistake than in trying to make cheap, or, in other words, inferior material "do." Good service, the best of service is the life of a telephone line, and it is impossible to get good service with anything but the best material.

We would advise anyone thinking of starting a rural-telephone line, and wishing information regarding the building, working, etc., of such a line, to write to some telephone supply company, which will be able to give him much of the information he will require.

We would also advise him, if possible, to get in touch with some man or men who have had experience in successfully running a rural-telephone line. In that way they will be able to help and advise him just as he goes along, for there are always such a number of small perplexities and difficulties arising, upon which it is very difficult to give advice, except just as they arise. Middlesex Co., Ont. A. B. TELFER, Sec.

A Vigorous System.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

The old adage that "experience is a great teacher," was evidenced in the organization and construction of the system of the Leeds & Grenville Independent Telephone Company, Limited, of which I was Secretary up to the date of my departure in April.

We called a public meeting, appointed delegates to canvass the several sections to see how the people felt on the question, and had these delegates report at a meeting one month later as to results. At this latter meeting we decided to go ahead and form a joint-stock company with a capital of \$40,000, divided into 1,600 shares, of \$25 each. We got our charter from the Ontario Government, and then proceeded to build. We did not allow anyone to hold stock who was not a telephone subscriber. For the use of the telephone we charge \$10 a year, payable quarterly in advance, and the company supplies everything and keeps the line in repair. This appears to us to be the better plan, for each subscriber then knows just exactly what his 'phone is going to cost him a year, and he is not liable for anything more than the amount of stock he has paid for.

We have a board of nine directors, and they appoint a managing director to look after the construction work and the collection of rentals, and also all repair work.

As mentioned above, all its costs for the use of the 'phone is \$10 a year. Of course there is the share capital which a man purchases, but on that he may expect a fair dividend after the company is thoroughly organized and running smoothly.