

Travelling Agents.

No one will pretend to deny the fact that travelling agents have done much good in facilitating business, in advancing progressive measures, and in educating the people. Good agents are generally well-informed, polished, and gentlemanly or lady-like personages. Their business has been to introduce improvements, such as railroads, etc.; also to introduce improved machinery and wares. Much good has been done by them. In fact, to such an extent has this travelling agency grown that it is almost useless to attempt to do business without it; but like all good institutions, corruptions creep in, and the whole mass of agents, good and bad, are too often condemned unjustly.

It appears to us that some check in some form should be put on those unprincipled men who are too often found travelling through the country under the name of agents. The check should properly come from the agents themselves, as they have Associations and rules and by-laws. They receive great privileges from the railroads and from hotels. In fact many hotels are principally supported by them. But whether the public should decry the travelling agency, and Legislature should interfere, is a matter for discussion and deliberation. Farmers have long complained about the swarms of this class of pests that continually bother them into purchases of goods they do not really require or something that is entirely useless. The old sheds and fence-corners testify to the glib-tongued agent's work. But there are worse tales than these. The paper has been signed for some patent right affair, and despite proofs of deception and fraud, all are of little avail. The farmer signed the paper, the note-shaver must have his money, and the duped farmer must pull-up stakes again, as that farm is gone sure. Can there be no certificate of veracity or utility? Should there not be a protection of some kind? Are there not too many of these travelling vendors? Are they of benefit or injury to the established business men in town or country? Are they too numerous or not? These thoughts are brought out from having a little conversation lately with two of our leading manufacturers. They say they are compelled to employ lots of agents because others do; they say the system is wrong, and that a change of some kind is required. The present system is injurious to the manufacturer and to the farmer, and the farmers have to pay so much extra for their implements. Many a farmer is left poor by the glib tongues of the agents, who always have something to sell that he could do without. Has any one a plan to suggest?

When in New Denmark, in New Brunswick, last year, we found that the whole settlement of these poor, industrious Danes had been foully duped. They, with laudable intentions, attempted to plant out fruit trees and raise orchards. The ready tongue of the agent, with his plate-books of fine fruit and fair promises, secured numerous orders; trees were delivered to the parties and carefully planted and watered, and watched for signs of life, but only a very few of them ever showed a bud. No doubt but the roots of these trees had been frozen before they were delivered. But who ever heard of a note being cancelled by an agent? The cash must come. Farmers are literally robbed of thousands of dollars every year by tree agents. Dead trees are often sold, and at high figures; good fruits are mingled with those of inferior quality; four times more than the real value is often paid, and sometimes four hundred times more. So persistent are some of these agents that "no" cannot be taken for an answer; they will stop a team, or even a machine, to

secure an order. Their cheeky, cunning, deceptive ways are past description. We have known hundreds of instances where their acts were nothing less than legal robbery. Thousands of farmers can corroborate these statements. In what way can we reach them? Would a tax be of benefit, or would a heavy guarantee for the honorable fulfilment of proper agreements be of any avail? In what way can we separate the sheep from the goats? Really good, honorable agents, who disseminate useful wares, are often of great benefit, and have to submit to abuses caused by the nefarious practices of the unprincipled ones. Not only is there danger from those travellers who sell goods that are worthless, but there has apparently been organized plans to dispose of really good wares, and then some other person claiming much more than the cost for a royalty afterwards. This has been the case with dairy goods, wire fencing, etc., etc. Perhaps fixed establishments should be the only places from which sales or orders should be taken—establishments that could give the Government or country ample security that fraud should not be practised. Perhaps some one may extend on these hints.

Township Exhibitions.

STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL.

The members of the Dorchester Township Agricultural Society, desiring to liquidate a debt on their Agricultural Hall, got up a strawberry festival on the 23rd of June. Mr. James Armstrong, the Warden of the County, occupied the chair. Mr. Weld was present, and in addressing the audience he asked for a vote from those who were in favor of retaining Township Exhibitions, and from those in favor of amalgamation with the county. Every one present favored the retention of the Township Exhibitions. After the vote had been taken Mr. Weld continued his remarks, which are embodied in the following:—

Agriculture is said to be the mother of nations. Let us look back to the time of our forefathers, and trace our history. Look at the fertile plains of Egypt and that once favored and blessed land Palestine. Perhaps there never existed, naturally, a finer or more fertile land than that of Turkey. Agriculture in the most prosperous days of Egypt, of Palestine, of Turkey, of Rome and of Greece was in a flourishing condition when these nations were respected; but the rod of the oppressors—or of the tax collectors, as we now call them—oppressed the farmers on these beautiful lands to such an extent that the last handful of seed and the last morsel of bread was forcibly yet legally taken from many of them, and and much of those once most favored of all lands now lies in utter desolation. No roads, no houses, not a vestige of a crop, not a live animal, is to be seen for miles and miles. The fact is, every other business preyed on agriculture and killed it, and the same result will attend all countries that do not protect the farmers. We must look at our own country. We doubt if there is any part of the world where better opportunities for farmers and men in general can be found than in Ontario at the present day. Wealth is evenly divided, poverty is unknown, and the farmers are now living in better style and enjoying more comforts than many kings have. Yet we find in this great and fine country, which we have but recently taken possession of, that already signs of oppression to farmers are beginning to be manifest; and the first and plainest manner in which you may be able to discern it has been the attempt to suppress or destroy the Township Exhibitions. You must have heard of the cry which has been raised,

namely, that these agricultural exhibitions are too numerous, take up too much time, &c., &c. Just enquire who are the parties that have raised this cry. Are they the plain country farmers, or are they agents or salesmen, or city or town men, or are they politicians? Is their policy selfishness, or is it for you? Ask any one of the advocates of abolishing Township Exhibitions why they do not begin right, if they mean what they say. Let them talk first of abolishing their day schools and their ministers, because there are so many schools or so many churches. Question: is there a better school than the Township Exhibition. We say no. Therefore let us express ourselves, and use our influence in every proper manner, and fight against this, one of the innovations on our rights. Let us have our hearts resolved and hands prepared the blessings we enjoy to guard.

The Township Agricultural Exhibition we look on as the most beneficial school held. Its advantages are increased to the highest pitch where the officers are most honorable. It is at these gatherings that the inhabitants are brought together for one united and beneficial purpose, to which no one can object. The exchange of thoughts, the opening of fresh ideas, viewing the products of the season's crops, and the handywork of the artisan, all tend to call forth remarks or awaken thought in those who are daily toiling at their regular avocations. The youth of our country have thus learned most important beneficial lessons. This is where the germs of stimulation and progress are imbibed, and a strong desire to improve, to compete and to surpass is often implanted in the little boy or girl, not yet in their teens. Even the grey-headed often leave with a determination to improve.

We believe we are doing our duty in attempting to maintain and improve our Township Exhibitions. The officers of these exhibitions deserve much more of your thanks and gratitude than they generally receive; they devote much valuable time and even their money in the endeavor to make your exhibitions attractive; their only pay is often your gratitude or your thanks. Every one should try to aid the township officers in their laudable undertaking, not only with the voice of praise, but with something more tangible. The cost of membership is but one dollar, yet how often do we find some old miser, perhaps owning 400 or 500 acres, who will not subscribe one cent, and in whose opinion \$1 is too much for a Township Exhibition. There are some few so parsimonious that they will not give as they ought to such an improving school, which must tend to increase the value of their property. We should like to see greater power given to the directors of these exhibitions and to the Township Councils to enable them to collect part of the funds from those who do not voluntarily subscribe or aid the exhibitions.

It is our impression that the whole plan of selecting or appointing members to represent the agriculturists should be changed. As it now stands, any person can, with a little money or a little influence, be elected. So little intellectual information has been imparted at any of the meetings held for the election of the officers, that very few farmers care about wasting a day to attend, and would rather leave the labor of preparing for the exhibition to others. In fact, the election of officers in this county have merely been a rush for about one hour. Agricultural discussions have not occupied the attention of the members as much as they should have done, and to this fact may be attributed the apathy of farmers concerning the meetings; consequently a very few