

Telephones in Rural Districts.

This subject, along with rural mail delivery, is one of great importance to the farmers, and should receive a trial in some district in our Province as an experiment. There is no doubt but that it would prove a success, as in some of the Prairie States, with similar conditions to ours, it has become very popular.

Rural telephones and rural mail delivery should supplement each other. For instance, in case of a break in machinery, the farmer could telephone to his implement agent or hardware man, and the rural mail carrier brings a duplicate of the broken part to the farmer, perhaps only two or three hours after the break, thus saving the farmer a trip. Some of the benefits of the rural telephone would be as follows: If a physician is wanted the telephone saves much valuable time, perhaps a life, probably a fifteen mile ride on a stormy night. If the farmer's wife is lonesome she can take down the telephone receiver and visit with any of her neighbors for many miles around. If the farmer wants his neighbors to help him to thresh, he can summon them in as many minutes with the telephone as it would require hours without it. The farmer could keep posted on the markets every day. He could get the probs. through the weather bureau, letting him know if a blizzard was approaching, thus giving him time to prepare for it.

These are only a few of the benefits to be derived from it. If the instruments could be put into residences either on an associative or co-operative plan, at about one dollar per month rental, the majority of the farmers would put them in. The difficulty would be to get enterprising men to take it up and promote it. The capital stock would have to be raised among the farmers to a great extent, and at present it is too much of an experiment for the farmers to invest in it. It is like every other movement, the people will have to be educated along that line.

Brandon Elect. Dist.

J. E. TOLTON.

Telephones Increase Land Values.

Telephones in rural districts would benefit the farmer in much the same way that they would benefit other business men, by keeping him in closer touch with the markets, with his neighbors, and with the world at large. It would also benefit him socially, and for those who live far from town it would be a great saving in time and horseflesh. Often they could call a doctor or Vet. on short notice, and thereby lives might be saved that otherwise would be lost. It would also increase the value of farm land, and would help to make the farmer and his family take more interest in their work.

If farmers were sure that they would get full value for the money invested, and that the lines could be operated under some co-operative plan, they would be more likely to take an interest in the matter. As a class farmers are slow to move in matters of that kind, even if they were able to see that it would benefit them. As far as I am concerned, I am strongly opposed to granting a franchise of that kind to any company and let them charge what they like for their service, and I think that is the feeling with a great many. If some of the monopolies that now exist were abolished, and freight rates about cut in two, farmers would enjoy such prosperity that the cost of installing a telephone service or the risk of its not being a success would not concern them very much.

GAVIN STRANG.

Marquette Elect. Dist., Man.

Telephones Must Come.

I believe rural telephones would be a great benefit to farmers in their business and as a social medium with one another. They could keep posted on the markets without leaving home, and judge when to buy or sell, often saving valuable time in making enquiry about markets in the fall when very busy. Vets. could be called in case of valuable stock being sick, and doctors in case of sickness in the family, often saving time and a hard drive. They could be as early posted on local or outside, social or political news, as those living in cities. Neighbor could talk to neighbor, and make life in the country more attractive.

I think if the instruments could be furnished and connected at low cost, it would soon be well patronized by farmers, as they would soon see that it would pay, besides being such a social convenience. The companies at present operating seem to want too much for the service, and the business needs a good shaking up. If a place like Brandon had its own telephone service, it would be much easier for the farmers to get connection than now. I think it is one of the things that has to come amongst the farmers soon, and be considered a necessity.

H. NICHOL.

Brandon District.

Telephones in Ranch Country.

I believe telephones, if generally erected throughout the district in connection with Cochran and Calgary, would be of great value. Roads are bad, storms are bad, and a telephone would put a farmer in connection with the market and the railway, giving him almost as much advantage as living in the city, without losing the time going there.

The knowledge of when trains were expected would also be of great advantage, but as a means of communication one with another, it would not be of much value, and I am afraid there would not be many farmers willing to pay much for a telephone. They are of the class who prefer to use their neighbor's.

The chief difficulty would be the great distance of line between ranchers, making the cost excessive. Timber rots quickly here, and the renewal of poles would be a big item. I should be only too glad, however, to have a line erected.

G. E. GODDARD.

Grain Markets by Telephone.

I believe, most emphatically, that telephone lines would be beneficial to the farmers of this country. Day by day, and as often through the day as they wished, the farmers could keep posted as to the state of the different grain and other markets along the line, also which of their neighbors were delivering grain at certain points on certain days, and what days the elevators which they patronized would be best prepared to handle their grain. Repairs in seeding, harvest and threshing time could be ordered out from town, along the railway lines, thus saving money by saving time for the outfits at work.

In the case of sickness in families, much delay and valuable time might often be saved in procuring medical aid. Social intercourse among both young and old in the country, and between them and their town friends, would become more general, to the betterment of all concerned.

The farmers of this portion of the West are an intelligent, up-to-date, reading class of citizens, having numerous clubs, literary and debating societies in their midst, and it is my belief that, at a reasonable cost, the older settlers would patronize the telephone at the beginning, the later ones in the course of a short time. The cost of construction would probably be the largest obstacle in the way of rural telephones in districts where farm residences are far apart and no timber is obtainable except from a great distance by rail.

CHAS. J. GREENE.

Assiniboia.

Telephone Information Needed.

I certainly believe that if telephone lines were erected, connecting the farm homes with the towns and villages throughout the Province, it would be of great benefit to the farmers, as it would help to break up the isolation in which the farmers are generally living at present, and bring us in touch with the world's daily life, in both social and commercial circles, and give us the benefit of the market report at our home, thus often saving a trip to a blockaded market.

If the instruments could be purchased at a reasonable cost, I am of the opinion that the farmers would take advantage of them, and form circuits all over the Province, to place themselves in touch with the markets. The chief drawback at present is the lack of information to be had on the subject. With a good live factory for the making of instruments, etc., in Winnipeg, I fancy that there would soon be a boom in the erection of telephones for farmers' use. I am glad to see the "Farmer's Advocate" taking up this subject, as it will be a great benefit to the farmer.

G. S. MCGREGOR.

Macdonald Elect. Dist., Man.

Wire Fences Could be Used.

I have been trying to get my neighbors interested in the telephone movement for some years, and only the other day wrote away for quotations on instruments. As we have just got a branch line of the C.P.R. built through this section of the country, I am going to try again to get telephone lines to that point, and would be glad if you could give me any information as to prices of reliable instruments. Of course we can use the wire fences for the greater part of the distance, consequently cost of poles and wire will be almost eliminated.

The telephone would be useful for the receipt of market quotations, summoning a doctor, besides innumerable trips to town would be saved. The chief difficulty in getting lines started would be the want of initiatory movement among the farmers, and in many cases ignorance of the advantages to be gained. I was glad to see in your last issue that you had taken up the need of co-operation among farmers.

F. J. COLLYER.

Welwyn Dist., Man.

Back Numbers Required.

Owing to the heavy demand for back numbers of the "Farmer's Advocate" during the past year, we find ourselves short of copies of the issues of February 5th and April 5th, 1902, for binding purposes. Readers having copies of either or both of those numbers in good condition and clean, which they can spare, will confer a favor by kindly sending us a post card to that effect.



STATELY CITY (1362) (10466).

Clydesdale stallion. Winner of first prize and championship, Canadian Spring Stallion Show, Toronto, 1903. IMPORTED AND OWNED BY GRAHAM BROS., CLAREMONT, ONT.