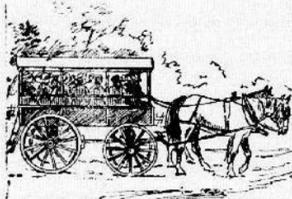


ROAD & FARM IMPROVEMENT.

CENTRALIZED SCHOOLS.

They Will Eventually Solve the Question of a Better Education for Farmers' Children.

"It was an early spring morning. Cold, misty rain was falling, interspersed with snow squalls. The wind was strong from the northwest. Underfoot the mud and water were having a spat for supremacy, yet in the midst of it came the school wagonette, drawn by a span of stout horses, while inside, protected from storm, wind and mud, were 19 children, bound schoolward, and all singing 'Coming Through the Rye.' Two youngsters were added to the load, the boot was again buckled up, the song went on, and the little company finished its trip of a mile to the centralized school. Our township has had centralized schools on trial and



COUNTRY SCHOOL BUS.

as a permanency now for over five years," writes John Gould, of Ohio, to Rural New Yorker.

"To my mind one of the greatest benefits of the centralized schools is in abolishing the class-ship incident to the division of rural schools. Each neighborhood thus becomes a class, with but little interest in the community at large, and the matters of acquaintance of children in different parts of a town are slight. Now all the children of the town are of one community, and merit wins. One scholar is as good as another, and talent and deportment are the only avenues to merit.

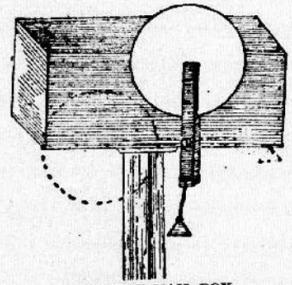
"It is not here contended that the centralized school is yet perfect. It is in a state of evolution, but each step seems the better move toward solving the question of a better education for the rural boy and girl. In average attendance the new plan far exceeds the old. In some towns the attendance is 25 per cent. better on the average. It is fully that in one township. Then it promises to add at least two years more schooling to the school life of the pupil. To be taught along ever unfolding and new lines in study inspires, where the ever going back to re-traverse old study byways causes listless and lifeless ways, even to desertion of school life.

"The cost is less in most instances. The transportation of a school district to a central point is less than the cost of its separate maintenance. In some towns the centralized plan saves hundreds of dollars. In some the cost is about the same. In a few, where causes have been beyond the board's control, the cost is more, but in all cases the instruction vastly compensates for slightly increased cost."

ROADSIDE MAIL BOX.

Signal Disc Attached to It Indicates When Mail is Deposited or Delivered.

We who live in a hill country and are compelled to travel on very poor roads (with but little prospect for improvement) must probably be content to go to the cross-roads post-office and get our own mail for several years to come. Neighbors can be of great benefit to one another in this respect if the proper arrangements are made. Some of my neighbors and myself carry one another's mail, and for their convenience as well as my own, I have put



ROADSIDE MAIL BOX.

up a mail box at the roadside, as shown in the illustration. One end of the box is left open to receive the mail. The round disc is a signal to denote there is mail in the box; it is held in its upright position by the weight attached to the lower end of the handle. Whoever brings the mail, puts it in the box and drops the weight which raises the signal, which can be seen from the house. When we get the mail out the weight is hung up on a nail driven in the side of the box near the bottom edge. This allows the signal to drop down by the side of the box as shown by dotted lines. Our box is made of roofing tin, except the bottom end, which is wood. The signal should be painted a different color from that of the box to render it more easily seen.—E. E. Higgins, in Ohio Farmer.

ROADS OF AMERICA.

Progress in the Building of Highways Has Not Been as Slow as Many Suppose.

The influence of the mechanical steed on our civilization is best exemplified in the growth and improvement of the country highways, which, in a country that stretches between two oceans, and includes within its boundary nearly all the climates and physical characteristics of a mighty continent, have been slowly evolved from the almost indistinguishable trail of the pioneer settlers into roads of high engineering skill and achievement. American country roads have lagged in the development of the nation's material growth and expansion until within the past few years. With the exception of the few old post roads, established in colonial days, when the stage coach was the only vehicle for comfortable travel, there were not more than two or three country highways of passable physical condition, summer and winter, a score of years ago in the United States.

Military roads were the earliest in existence in all countries, and the protective necessity of having different parts of the empire joined together by highways over which an army could be quickly moved inspired most of the great engineering feats in road building in the past. This factor had little or no influence in American industrial life. Our boundaries did not about those of other powerful nations with whom we might at any time wage war. Consequently no thought of establishing lines of fortifications, connected by military highways, ever entered the head of our most warlike legislators or presidents. Military roads were not features of our national development, and though potent factors in the growth of many European states, they were almost nil in American history.

The modern road building movement is attributed to the bicycle and automobile; but it must be said that it was rather the conditions of the times, which were ripe for the change, that made the popularity of these mechanical steeds. Railroad construction had almost reached its limit; important trunk lines were already paralleling each other so that they cut disastrously into each other's profits; and the most important parts of the country were joined together by the ribbons of steel. Railroad stocks were declining in value; profits were being reduced, and capital was chary of investing in new enterprises of this character. What the country needed was more feeders—country roads leading from farms, mines and producing lands. For months in the year the great agricultural sections were shut off from the railroads by almost impassable country roads. Mills and manufacturing plants located on streams of water that furnished excellent motive power could not market their products in winter. The logging camps and the mining companies were likewise helpless in winter. Thus for a good portion of the year the country's commerce was paralyzed, and the producing centers were cut off from the world.

We rapidly grew into a nation of cities as a consequence. There was little attraction in the country except in the summer season. Impassable muddy roads made rural life disagreeable in the extreme. Even the small villages suffered and dwindled in numbers and population. In the midland storms of winter; and thither our population flocked, building for themselves habitable places where they would not be shut indoors for months at a time.

The bicycle, and later the automobile, spread a propaganda of good road building at a time when conditions were ripe for a mighty change, and the fire that smoldered for a time soon broke forth into flame. There was need of better highways to improve trade, to develop the country and to add to our appreciation of country life. With the new movement there commenced a counter-current in the trend of our population cityward. The country was improved by good roads so that people who had been shut up in the city now longed to return to the less artificial life in small towns and villages. Rural existence suddenly received new charms, and with the extension of good highways there sprung up handsome rural homes and estates. The love for country life has suddenly developed so that it marks a new era in our existence. It is not that our cities are less prosperous, or that they will cease to grow in size and wealth; but that the country is better appreciated as a place of residence, and that it has been made so by the better roads.—Guntton's Magazine.

Look After the Hog's Swill.
Sun-baked swill in filthy barrels; swill that is fermented into the sharpest acid and putrefied into a disgusting mass; swill that attracts myriads of carrion-loving flies, is not fit for the hogs. It is full of miasma and disease germs of various kinds and hence it is dangerous to feed it. Pleasantly soured swill, swill that is mildly acid is all right, but it should not be allowed to pass that stage before it is fed; and in hot weather it gets past that stage very quickly. It is not easy to look after such things carefully in the rush of all kinds of work, and some cannot receive such suggestions with patience, which is not surprising, but for all that it will pay to give some thoughts to the pigs. It will not be regretted at their harvest time.—Theo. Louis, in Farm, Stock and Home.

It is better to pull four teats than eight for the same amount of milk

Reflections of a Bachelor.

"Money can't buy happiness, but it can buy a first-class imitation of it. Also the sins of the second and third generations are visited on the first. We repeat so as to be able to do the same thing over again with a clear conscience."

It is a wise man that never praises the beauty of another woman to his own wife. In taking a hand in straightening out love affairs the best way is to take your hands off.—N. Y. Press.

Wrenched Foot and Ankle Cured by St. Jacobs Oil.

Gentlemen: A short time ago I severely wrenched my foot and ankle. The injury was very painful, and the consequent inconvenience (being obliged to keep to business) was very trying. A friend recommended St. Jacobs Oil, and I take great pleasure in informing you that one application was sufficient to effect a complete cure. To a busy man so simple and effective a remedy is invaluable, and I shall lose no opportunity of suggesting the use of St. Jacobs Oil. Yours truly, Henry J. Doira, Manager The Cycles Co., London, England. St. Jacobs Oil is safe, sure and never failing. Conquers Pain.

The difference between a man who has money and a man who hasn't is that the one is judged by what he is; the other by what he appears.—N. Y. Herald.

America Leads.

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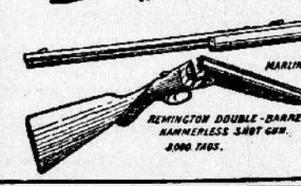
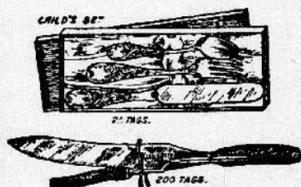
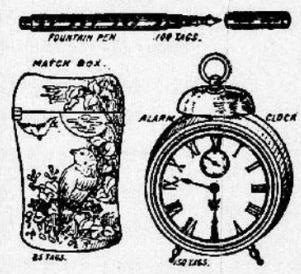
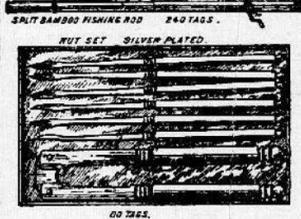
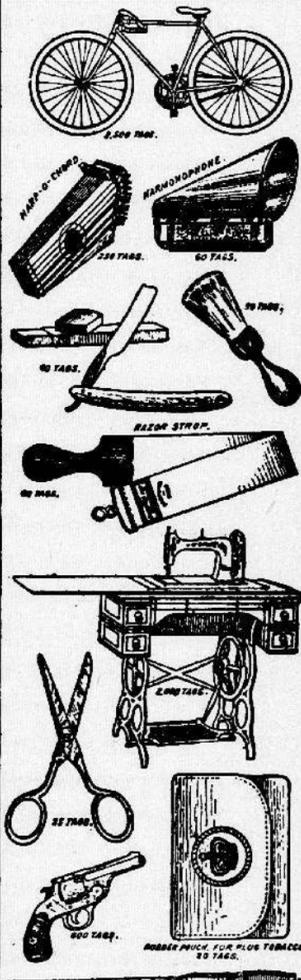
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