



Agricultural Tour in Bruce and Grey.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER :

SIR,—I have recently had the pleasure of spending a few weeks in the north-western section of the Province, including, principally, the whole of the county of Bruce and a part of Grey.

In Bruce public meetings were convened at the following places: Kincardine, Tiverton, Lucknow, Teeswater, Balaclava, Walkerton, Paisley, Port Elgin, and Invermay. The meetings took place in the evening, and considering that it was in the midst of harvest, the attendance on the whole was as good, or better, than I expected. The limits assigned to a communication of this nature will not admit of my recording the names of the great number of people with whom I had personal intercourse, and to whom I am indebted for kind attention and much useful information respecting the country. I must, therefore, be content, in a general way, to express my obligations and thanks to the officers of the various agricultural societies for the willingness they displayed in enabling me to get a good view of the country, and of acquiring an amount of valuable information which I could not otherwise have procured.

Bruce is the youngest county of Ontario, the commencement of its settlement only going back to 1848, but in a few years afterwards settlers went in rapidly, so that the whole of the land got into private hands, and was mostly owned by actual settlers, who bravely commenced the work of clearing the forest. The county contains 639,000 acres, of which above 200,000 are now cleared, and the stumps rapidly disappearing. It is estimated that this county exports from three to four hundred thousand bushels of wheat per year, and as clearing and better tillage proceed, this amount will become largely augmented. Indeed, it is to the rear and newer counties we must chiefly look for the production of wheat. In these sections the soil has not yet been exhausted of the ingredients necessary to the healthy growth of that crop, and a sufficient amount of shelter yet remains from the natural forest to afford needful protection. This question of shelter is a vital one to the Canadian farmer, as many of our cleared farms, denuded of almost every tree, but too plainly indicate. In a climate like ours especially, the preservation of portions of the forest is essential to the success of cultivation; otherwise the droughts of summer will inevitably become more frequent and severe, and the cold of winter intensified. The fact is, many of our farmers in some of the old settled districts will be obliged shortly to raise plantations for the purpose of shelter, and the necessary supply of wood for fuel and economic uses; and the art and science of forestry will have to be studied and practised in these parts of the American continent, as they have been for centuries in the older countries of Europe.

This matter then of protection, and the prevention of exhausting the soil by over-cropping, were among the principal topics which I thought it my duty to bring under the notice of the farmers of Bruce. Prevention in these, as in most other cases, is much easier than cure, and infinitely less expensive. Starting with a rich virgin soil, any man with an ordinary amount of good sense and practical experience can readily prevent the fertility of his land from running down. But to restore land that is already exhausted is a far more difficult and expensive matter—especially in a country having but a sparse population, and few manufactories, and where artificial manures are consequently scarce and dear. I trust that these and other topics, such as the improvement of live stock, dairy products, &c.,

which were all, more or less, freely discussed at the meetings I attended, as well as in private conversation, will not be wholly void of some good and lasting results.

In going through Bruce I was almost everywhere struck with the remarkable progress made in so short a period of time. The villages in which my meetings were held afford ocular proof of the rapid strides that have been and are being made in all the leading features of material progress. I cannot individualise; some places, of course, have gone on faster than others; but looking at the country as a whole, I must repeat, its progress has been astonishing, and probably unprecedented in the history of Canadian settlements. Here is a fine, gently undulating country, well drained by nature; no considerable tracts of second-rate land, with roads opened up and running straight at right angles, in both directions,—there being no hills or extensive swamps to occasion a diversion from a direct course; and one hundred and fifty miles of these roads properly graded, drained and gravelled! The average cost of these gravelled roads, I was informed, is about \$1200 a mile, including all expenses; and a toll-gate is nowhere to be seen! It is true that the surface of the country is very favourable for making good roads, and abundance of gravel is generally found on the banks of streams; but an apathetic and non-progressing people would long have left their resources latent, instead of developing them at once as rapidly as possible, as is now being done by the enterprising settlers of Bruce.

The question of a railway through this extensive section of country is closely occupying public attention, and there cannot be the slightest doubt that such a facility of inter-communication is greatly needed, and, if judiciously carried out, would prove remunerative.

In the flourishing village of Kincardine, I gave an address in the hall belonging to the Mechanics' Institute, when the members met for the interchange of books. The scene was interesting and suggestive. Among the current periodicals I observed the good old favorite of the people, "Chambers' Journal," "Good Words," and a number of the English sixpenny and shilling magazines, all of which seemed to be eagerly sought after. Here on the shores of Lake Huron, an unbroken wilderness, traversed only by the wild Indian, some sixteen years ago, I saw men earnest in the pursuit of useful knowledge, and imbibing pleasure and instruction from some of the leading periodicals of Britain, that had not even been published in London more than a fortnight before! Truly we live in an age of rapid transit, and of great and widely diffused intellectual power. The backwoodsman now-a-days is happily not absolutely removed, as was formerly the case for many long years, beyond the genial and elevating influences of science and literature. It has often occurred to me, how many thousands of industrious people at home, with large families, who daily struggle for a mere subsistence, would be irresistibly drawn to a fine and healthy country like this, did they but know of the advantages which it offers to honest and persevering labor. Notwithstanding, I have seen daily, both here and elsewhere, farmers put to the greatest straits for help to carry on the most necessary and pressing operations. It is hoped that something effectual will, ere long, be done to mitigate or remove this great impediment to our agricultural progress.

At Kincardine a stratum of clay, apparently of great extent, has been discovered, that produces scouring bricks of the best quality, quite equal, it is said, to the English Bath, which are largely imported both here and in the States. This new enterprise promises to be of great importance.

The live stock of the county is gradually improving, but there is much room for greater exertion in this respect. Considering the newness of the country, however, as much has been done, perhaps, as could be reasonably expected. I saw some excellent cattle and sheep belonging to Mr. Wm. Gouenloch, near Port Elgin. He has a number of calves and yearlings, pure-bred Durhams, that will do good ser-

vice in the county. I had also a passing opportunity of seeing the flock of Mr. Hewitson, of Arran, whose arrangements for wintering sheep are the best and most extensive that ever came under my notice in this country. He has several highly-bred Leicester rams and ewes, imported from the well-known flock of Mr. Grey, of Northumberland. As Mr. Hewitson has a considerable number of sheep for sale, an excellent opportunity is presented to the farmers of this section of country to improve their flocks.

I regret being prevented from seeing so much of the adjacent county of Grey as I intended, by an attack of hoarseness rendering speaking almost impracticable. This also is an extensive county, to which many of the remarks previously made will apply. The soil is not so uniformly good as that of Bruce: the limestone rocks, which underlie the whole country, crop out and form considerable elevations in several places in Grey. I was in Owen Sound and neighborhood two or three days, and held a few meetings; one near Leigh was quite interesting; the people were evidently intelligent and inquiring. There are some well cleared and managed farms for many miles on this road, and I was particularly pleased by the manner in which Mr. Harkness had used up the surface stones on his farm—very troublesome material when not removed—in the construction of fences and the walls of his dwelling house, and the foundations of his extensive farm buildings.

In conclusion, I would just observe that this section seems well adapted to the growth of fruit. Mr. Stafford, of Port Elgin, a pleasant and improving little place, has an excellent and thriving orchard; grapes, peaches, apples and pears, appeared productive. The peach, I find, is cultivated as far north as Owen Sound, where I noticed some good specimens, as well as of grapes and other fruits, in the gardens of the Sheriff, Mr. Scott, and others. Owen Sound is quite a place of business, is fast improving, and its surroundings are very picturesque.

The crops of all kinds have been generally abundant throughout this section of country, particularly wheat, both spring and winter, which is of excellent quality.

GEO. BUCKLAND

Toronto, Sept. 18, 1867.

Economy in Bread.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER:

SIR,—Many persons, from choice, prefer bread made of unbolted wheaten meal; and, in the opinion of many scientific and medical men, it is far more wholesome than that in common use, made from the pure farina of the grain. It is more digestible, and contains elements (the phosphates particularly) which exist only in very small quantity in superfine flour, yet are essential to the health and vigour of the body. The phosphate of lime, the element in food which produces bone, so essential to the stamina of the body, is said to exist to the amount of thirty pounds in five hundred of fine flour, but it amounts to eighty-five pounds, or nearly three times greater, in the same quantity of unbolted wheaten meal. Experiments have been made on animals with bread made from both kinds of flour, and while those fed exclusively on that made from the finest flour died within a limited period, others fed on that made from unbolted wheaten meal were healthy and vigorous. Thus commending the coarse bread on account of its quality, I now refer to its cheapness when properly made.

It is well known that millers generally charge as much for unbolted meal as for the finest flour, and this, I doubt not, prevents many persons from using it. There can be no good reason for this charge, but parties requiring the meal have supposed there was no alternative but to submit to it. Now, any good domestic baker may produce sweet, wholesome bread, equal to any made from unbolted wheaten meal, by simply mixing equal parts of fine flour, middlings, (or the best shorts), and good bran together, and baking in the ordinary manner, giving it rather a longer time in the oven than fine bread. The cost of the mixture of the three ingredients will be found to be only about half the price of fine flour. This is an important consideration for every one, but particularly the poor in time of scarcity. Were children fed more generally on this kind of bread, there would be much less disease, such as rickets softening of the spine, decay of teeth, &c.

COMMON SENSE.

York Township, 5th Sept. 1867.