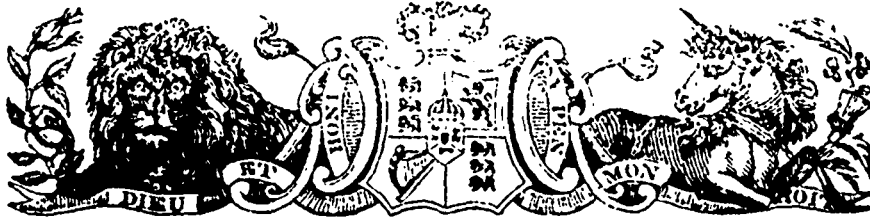


# THE CANADA FARMER



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#### THE FEEDING OF CITIES.

THE city of New York contains some seven hundred thousand inhabitants, and it is estimated that they daily consume an average of half a pound of meat each, or three hundred and fifty thousand pounds a day, the year round. The state of New York contains many cities beside its great commercial metropolis, whose inhabitants live on the fruits of rural industry; and the feeding of our growing population in villages and cities, has already become a business of immense magnitude and importance. It is not at all probable, that any one will ever again see bread-stuffs and provisions as cheap in this country, as they have been within the last ten years. Consumption presses too closely upon production, coupled with the rapidly increasing necessity of importing guano, or other costly manure, for any lasting low prices of grain or meat. Our farming lands have parted with so much of their elements of crops, and our cities have wasted so many millions of tons of the raw material of human food and raiment, that cheapness hereafter, as compared with former prices, is out of the question. It may take ten, twenty, or perhaps thirty years, for the denizens of cities, and the culti-

vators of the soil, to learn the true state of the case. Popular neglect, or ignorance, can not alter the facts as to the constant and ever-increasing draft made upon the soil to support an urban population. The latter make no adequate restitution to the land that both feeds and clothes them; and for this reason, if for no other, the market value of a bare subsistence in all American cities, will steadily advance from one decade to another. Farmers will not supply those that dwell in towns using the word town in the English sense with food, without being paid well for all the manure, lime, ashes, seed, and labor bestowed on their annual crops. A few cultivators may blindly sell all the elements of grain and provisions which their farms contain within reach of the plow; but so large is the number of consumers at home and abroad, that their folly will not, hereafter, greatly depreciate the market price of agricultural staples. Of course, we do not assume that the present uncommon prices are to continue, but simply that they will never again average for ten years together, as low as they have done for the last three or four decades.

How, then, can American cities be fed to the best advantage? Clearly, by combining tillage with stock husbandry, and fruit-culture, in a way to maintain intact all the natural resources of the soil, and augment the fertility of such lands as need fertilization. The most economical production of grain, vegetables, apples, and other fruit, as well as provisions, for city consumption, requires great skill in the use of manure. Agricultural plants have to be fed in some way not less than all animals; and how to feed them wisely and properly, is a question antecedent to that of feeding mankind in old communities. Unfortunately, the people who live in cities prefer to keep their local manure for breeding pestilence rather than prepare it for the economical use of farmers in the country, so that very little need be expected from that source.