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The Rural Canadian.

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THE RURAL CANADIAN FOR 1883.

We present our patrons with the RURAL CANADIAN enlarged to twenty-four pages, and otherwise improved. Our arrangements for illustrations are not yet quite completed, so that this issue of the paper is not altogether up to the high standard aimed at, but a large quantity of practical matter is given in a very readable form. We again ask our readers to help in extending the circulation of their monthly. A kind word from one and another will work wonders in this direction. A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!

The large harvest reaped in Ontario this year has not so far done much to aid the general business of the country. The reason is that, owing to the drop of prices, farmers are not disposed to sell. They are waiting for a rise, and their granaries are full to overflowing. The effect is the same as when money remains locked up in the bank vaults; trade is inactive, and a panicky feeling is created in commercial circles. Is it a wise thing for farmers to hold on for the higher prices they may or may not get? A commercial crisis at the present time would not be a surprising event, looking at the rampant speculation in stocks and at the vast sums of money that are locked up in new railways and wild lands. Wealth is not created by buying and selling stocks; as with betting and gambling, it merely changes hands, and always at the risk of driving the losing party into bankruptcy. The capital invested in new railways and wild lands is usually as unproductive as the wheat stored up in farmers' granaries.

Yet there is a possibility that higher prices may return long before the next harvest ripens. Low prices and the scarcity of other food have induced greater consumption of wheat abroad, and owing to the bad fall weather in western Europe a considerably less average of wheat land has been sown than usual. In Ontario, too, the land was in bad condition at seeding time, and much depends on a favourable winter and spring. The present supplies of wheat in England, though unusually large, are sure to be greatly reduced before March; for Russian ports are all closed by ice, and prices are too low to encourage imports from India in the face of heavy freights by railway and steamship. But then there is a very important element in the calculation—and we are not little surprised to find it—that this year's crop of wheat in the United States has been much more largely exported than the crop of any previous year during the same period. From the 1st of July to the 30th of November the total exports of wheat and flour from that country were eighty-three and a quarter million of bushels, against sixty-two and a half millions of bushels for the same period in 1881.

The figures of United States exports of breadstuffs are valuable for what they suggest as well as for the facts themselves. Reducing barrels of flour and corn meal to their equivalents (at the rate of 4½ bushels for the former and of 4 bushels for the latter) we find the following results for comparative periods of 1881 and 1882:—

EXPORTS FOR FIVE MONTHS, ENDING NOVEMBER 30TH.

	1882.		1881.	
	Bushels.	Value.	Bushels.	Value.
Wheat	66,481,639	\$76,026,022	61,569,664	\$62,406,610
Wheat flour	15,763,990	\$1,275,960	10,979,500	\$1,933,242
Indian corn	2,878,047	\$2,290,753	30,749,059	\$19,578,939
Commeal	407,929	\$11,942	636,180	\$91,457

EXPORTS FOR ELEVEN MONTHS, ENDING NOVEMBER 30TH.

	1882.		1881.	
	Bushels.	Value.	Bushels.	Value.
Wheat	100,345,337	\$114,441,685	107,814,650	\$123,316,378
Wheat flour	23,764,265	\$3,961,737	23,402,405	\$7,187,700
Indian corn	13,057,940	\$9,344,633	70,263,454	\$42,326,154
Commeal	835,009	\$19,814	1,505,848	\$1,151,250

It will be seen that while there has been an increase in the exports of this year's crop of wheat compared with last year's, as shown in the first table, there has been a decrease in the exports of corn. The average

prices also show that while wheat was \$1.24 and corn 64 cents per bushel during the five months of last year they are \$1.17 and 85 cents per bushel respectively, for the corresponding period of this year. One of the obvious inferences is, that while there is an abundance of wheat this year there is a scarcity of corn.

BUT there is a more practical inference from the statistics given, though not so near the surface as the other. In all the quotations it appears that the price per bushel has been increased by converting the grain into flour and meal. Calculating the averages for the two periods in the second table (the prices for twenty-two months) it is found that this increase is 18 cents per bushel on wheat, and 21 cents per bushel on corn. Assuming that these results are correct—and they are ascertained from data published by the United States Bureau of Statistics—they show that milling is a very profitable business. There is a good margin left after paying freight taxes, commissions, interest on capital and the price of labour. In addition, the miller has the "shorts"—a material for which there is always good demand for feeding purposes; and we need not enlarge upon the importance of converting the surplus products of the farm into beef and pork at home. These facts are full of encouragement, and we hope the lesson they teach will be carefully studied by the millers and farmers of Ontario.

A CANADIAN FARMERS' ALLIANCE.

It is an old and time honoured motto that "Union is strength." Its truth is practically exemplified in these modern days. Nations seek alliance with nations for offensive and defensive purposes. Within the borders of each nation, individuals form alliances for the purposes of commerce and industry. What in the olden time was undertaken by one individual is only now touched by joint stock companies. For the aggregation of capital has become the rule, and larger railway, shipping, and manufacturing companies from the division of labour and other advantages can drive from the field of competition, all weaker rivals. Turn where we may we find capital and enterprise uniting together to overcome the forces of nature and assist the onward march of civilization.

And the fact is true not only in the case of the capital entering into every industry, but it holds good in the case of the labour itself. There is not a single trade which has not its union. For the purposes of offence and defense, and for securing to labour its just rights, the trades-unions with all their aspects have been highly beneficial. Now what is true of almost every other industry is not true of agriculture. In our industry neither can the capital be aggregated nor the labour divided. Ours in Canada, is a system of yeoman farmers, each with a comparatively small capital. And whilst we can have co-operation we cannot in the technical sense of the term, secure division of labour. But whilst this is true we can combine to assist our mutual progress. And we have done so. Few countries in the world can show so many live and progressive agricultural societies as Ontario can. And nowhere have their beneficial effects been more strikingly felt. It would be difficult, if at all possible to find on this continent, we speak with moderation, any state where mixed farming is at so high a stage of advancement as in this Province. Every agricultural visitor who travels over America bears testimony to the fact. But these societies are the practical alliance of farmers, for increasing the products of their own industry, and advancing the industrial progress of Canadian Agriculture itself.

But more than that is sometimes needed. There are times in the history of every industry when an alliance at least for the purposes of defense, is imperatively necessary. Such a time is emphatically the present in the case of the farmers of Canada. It has been tried in the case of the Grange. But the members of that body have laid down as a rule of action, the principle of non-interference in politics. Now if by that were meant partisan politics, all would be well. But the rule has been construed to mean all questions within the sphere of politics. And it is precisely such questions, before they become and are made party questions, with which farmers are above almost every class of the community most deeply interested. None more highly than we would deprecate the action of the farmers as a class in the party

politics of the day. They act there as citizens, irrespective of occupation. And any other action would be prejudicial to themselves and to the state. But whilst this is true there are questions, at first non-partisan, in which farmers as a class are deeply interested and on which, before they reach the region of politics, and if they have reached that region, before they are made planks in a party platform, the farmers of Canada should be prepared as a class to give their unanimous and decided opinions. And that can be done we firmly believe, only by a Canadian Farmers' Alliance.

As an illustration of what we mean take the question of railway consolidation as it presents itself in Ontario and throughout Canada generally. There will be in a short time, but two lines—the Canada Pacific and the Grand Trunk. Each in its own sphere now has a practical monopoly. The effect upon the facility of shipping our own produce, and the price to be obtained for it, will in another season be keenly felt. To every one of the amalgamated lines we have given bonuses, to many of them heavy bonuses. But either we have had no guarantee or they have been useless. The effect of the railroad monopoly upon us as a class will be more direct than upon any other, and it will be found that unless we are prepared to speak effectively the two roads mentioned can check any legislative action.

Again, Canada is in for some time at any rate for a directly protective policy. We are not discussing the policy at all. But any one can see the fact. Now unless our history be different from that of any other country, the farmers will reap the least benefit from such a policy, mainly because they are not united as the manufacturers are, and able to attend to its proper adjustment as they do. Next adjustment will be an annual one. How important is it that the farmers should have an alliance that could look after their interests in adjusting the yearly incidence of protection.

But again, our sons are settling the timber lands of our own Province and the lands of the great Northwest. Their interests are our interests. Our land policy in the latter especially, is neither sufficiently elastic nor encouraging. The interests of the settler are too frequently placed in the background, and those of the railway, the colonization companies, and the speculators put first. This may not be done intentionally by the Government, but the land policy through the keenness of the three agencies named has that effect. The pioneers of the prairie are our brethren—mostly as we have said our sons. We must look after their interests. How quickly would obnoxious clauses or tendencies in such a land policy be eliminated, were a great Canadian Farmers' Alliance, having a membership as wide as the Dominion, to make its voice heard in the interests of its own class.

These are three of the questions. But they are only samples of scores of others. To their solution our legislators will be obliged to turn their attention. How important that they should know the carefully matured opinions of the very class most directly interested in their wise solution! We have but indicated the reasons, yet we hope that enough has been said to show the line along which the good of a great Canadian Farmers' Alliance can be most easily seen. May we ask our thoughtful farmers to take the subject into serious consideration during the present winter, in order that decided action may be taken before 1883 has closed.

SCHOOLS OF BUTTER-MAKING.

The proposal of the Ontario Government to establish public creameries with the object of giving practical instruction in butter-making will, we believe, commend itself to the good sense of all people. How to make good butter is not one of the lost arts, but it is unfortunately true that in a great many farmers' homes the knowledge of it has never been acquired. Those who make a good article are seldom at a loss to find a ready market for it; yet they are a small minority. The bulk of what is produced and sold at country stores is very poor stuff indeed, and it never improves under the treatment received at the store-keeper's hands. The best of it perhaps is sold to local consumers: the rest is compounded with a club, and perhaps sold to the wholesale dealer at the price of wagon grease. There is no profit to the makers of