

will be, of great service to them, and to us. In the race of commercial competition the farmers of America have an important place. The removal of absurd and injurious restrictions on the freedom of trade, cannot fail to exert a very beneficial influence on their material wealth and progress. Those who consume our surplus produce, share a benefit in the facility of access to our market now afforded to them. For this boon, the farmers of Canada are largely indebted to the unwearied exertions of the Hon. Mr. Merritt.

While congratulating ourselves on the rapid strides which Canada is making, I am anxious to press on your attention the subject of Agricultural Education, as the great instrument of promoting our prosperity. This may seem a work of supererogation. Man generally assents to the proposition that "Knowledge is power," yet it is a fact that Agriculturists, as a body, do not act on this principle; I mean in so far as regards the Science of Agriculture. Many strange notions exist in reference to it, and so very much is it neglected, that the language of the old Roman author seems almost applicable to our own time and country—"Nothing," he says, "equals my surprise when I consider that while those who desire to learn to speak well, select an orator whose eloquence may serve them as a model; while those who are anxious to dance, or become good musicians, employ a dancing or a music master; in short that while everyone looks for the best master, in order to make the best progress under his instructions, the most important science, next to that of wisdom, has neither pupils nor teachers. I have seen schools established for teaching rhetoric, geometry, music and dancing, &c., and yet I have never seen a master to teach Agriculture, nor a pupil to learn it." It is a very common opinion that education unfits men for labour, and that the only man who will assiduously persevere in it, is the ignorant and the illiterate. This is a very absurd idea. When you set an illiterate man to do a piece of work, if he obeys you it is from the mere habit of obedience to precept. Now this habit cannot ensure a proper performance of the duty required. Your only security is in the intelligence which the man can bring to bear on his task. He must understand the "how and why" of the process, or his efforts may be misdirected. The really intelligent man, should his moral faculties be in proper exercise, will do his work from a conviction that it is reasonable and proper that it should be done in the way pointed out. Nothing can be more pernicious in practice than this false estimate of the effect of education. The mass of Canadian farmers till their own land, and the labour is chiefly performed by their own families. Should they train their families on the principle that labour and education are incompatible, how fearful would then be the result as respects our social and industrial position? Fortunately, the youth of Canada are enjoying the blessings of a Common School system, which is the glory of our land, and the honour and pillar of the State. They cannot, therefore, be illiterate. But they do not receive that kind of education that will fit them for the proper exercise of the profession of Agriculture. Here lies the whole cause of the difficulty. Many farmers give their sons a liberal education, expecting that, when they shall have gone through their course of instruction, they will return to agricultural pursuits. In the majority of cases, the young men go to other professions, much to the chagrin of their parents, who at once conclude on sending no more of the sons to get a liberal education. Their neighbours, influenced by their opinions, fol-

low their example. They never once attribute the effect to the proper cause; namely, that they gave their sons that kind of education which excited a taste for, and qualified them for practising other pursuits than that of Agriculture. Would it be reasonable for a parent who had bound his son to serve an apprenticeship to a shoe maker to expect that, at the end of his term, he would turn his attention to blacksmithing, and at once be proficient in it? So with any other trade. And as it is impossible to gain proficiency in any undertaking without the preparatory processes necessary to give that proficiency, so it is with Agriculture. Another cause of many of our youth engaging in other professions is the low estimate which is formed of the dignity of labour. This is producing a most vicious state of feeling. A sort of sickly sentimentality, vanity, conceit and folly, drive numbers of young men to other occupations. They seem to think that no one has any claim to respectability, or can hope to rise in the world, unless he be a physician, merchant, lawyer, &c. They draw vivid pictures of the success that shall attend their path through life, and of ease and comfort which they shall enjoy when emancipated from what they consider the toil and drudgery of a farmer's life. They crowd into our towns and cities, where many of them exchange purity of life and manners, and a noble profession, for vice, dissipation, disappointment, and, too often, a miserable end. This state of feeling prevails to an alarming extent, and must be promptly and vigorously met, or the sun of our prosperity will soon be obscured. Where, then, is the remedy? The work must begin with yourselves. You have, by your apathy sanctioned the degradation of your profession. You have permitted other men to form a low estimate of it, and to usurp that position which is common with them you should occupy. What secular pursuit is superior to yours, either in point of honour or usefulness; yet by many it is not so deemed. I have heard men, from whose education better things might have been expected, talk contemptuously of the men who wear homespun. Make the frieze coat respected. Don't think and say that labour and education are incompatible. Teach your young men that they ought to be educated. Give your sons not merely good common school instruction but a liberal and thoroughly scientific agricultural education. And, when they shall have finished their curriculum, instead of looking for them in the crowded city, engaged in other avocations, you will find them beside you, attached to your own honorable calling, aiding you with enlightened counsel, and comforting you in the evening of life. Do men in any other walk of life, treat their professions disrespectfully? Are they not all eager to bring the light of science to bear on them? Is it less necessary for yours. Nothing is hazarded by asserting that its aid is becoming absolutely indispensable. It is true we have got on to some extent without much scientific knowledge, but the time is at hand when a different course must be pursued. The old system does well enough while the large deposits of organic matter last. With a virgin soil and abundance of vegetable manure, there is little difficulty in raising abundant crops. This stock is nearly exhausted, and other modes of cultivation are needed. Professor Johnston, who visited Canada some years ago, adverts to this subject which ought to rouse us to action. Although the picture he has drawn may be too highly colored, yet there is so much truth in the reference that I am induced to quote it,—“as to the condition of agriculture, as an art of life, it cannot be denied that this region, as