

TRUTH.

OLD SERIES.—21st YEAR.

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TO PRINTERS.

Having just placed in our office a new web printing machine, we have for sale several Improved Cottrell Presses. They are in excellent condition, and are equally well adapted for job or newspaper work. Having no further use for them, these presses will be disposed of at a very low figure, and any publisher contemplating such an addition to his plant can get a decided bargain. Correspondence requested.

WHAT TRUTH SAYS

The man of fearful spirit, who, looking upon the increasing multitudes of men on the earth, has begun to be apprehensive for the future lest there should not be sustenance found for all, will find reason for assurance in the facts produced by Prince Kropotkin in his article, "The Possibilities of Agriculture," in the *Forum* for August. The Prince, who has no sympathy with the Malthusian heresy that no equality in the temporal condition of men is possible, a heresy which affects much of the modern works on economics, undertakes to give some idea of what the soil is capable of producing under the favorable conditions which science and art can impose upon it. The facts adduced are certainly remarkable, and will come as a revelation to many, if indeed they will not appear to many tillers of the soil incapable of belief. They effectually dispose of the familiar and almost universal cry, "farming doesn't pay," and demonstrate that there is sound philosophy in the old rhyme which speaks of "the little farm well tilled." Prince Kropotkin is no advocate of extensive farming. On the contrary he sees the solution of the problem which at present confronts the politician and the economist in what he designates intensive farming, in the tiller reducing his acres and increasing the attention he bestows upon the land tilled. As serving to show what may be accomplished by feeding the soil with proper manures, Prince Kropotkin cites "the district of Saffelare in a part of East Flanders which Nature has endowed with an unproductive but easily cultivated sandy soil. The territory of 37,000 acres has to nourish 30,000 inhabitants, all living by agriculture; and yet these peasants not only grow their own food, but they also export agricultural produce, and pay rents to the amount of from fifteen to twenty-five dollars per acre. By means of 'catch crops' (second crops in the latter part of summer) they succeed in taking three and four crops every two years from the same land; and their regular crops are four, five and six times as large as those of the fertile lands of Georgia, Texas and Illinois. Moreover they keep in the same small area—two thirds of which is under cereals, flax and potatoes—no less than 10,720 horned cattle, 3,800 sheep, 1815 horses, and 6,550 swine. A population which is denser than that of England proper inclusive of its cities, is thus no cared at all. It is easily fed—and could be fed much better were it not for the ever increasing rents—upon an unproductive soil simply improved by rational manuring."

The power of irrigation to increase the productivity of the soil is also strikingly illustrated. Thus, "on the irrigated mea-

dows of the Vosges, the Vaucluse, etc., even upon an ungrateful soil, six tons of hay to the acre become the rule, and that means a little more than the annual food of one cow. By means of irrigation a money return of from \$120 to \$280 is obtained from a soil which formerly would not yield more than from \$16 to \$48 worth of produce. Below Paris in the irrigated fields of the Genovilliers plain, each acre is capable of yielding double the crops of the very best un-irrigated lands. And below Milan, the nearly 22,000 acres irrigated with water derived from the sewers of the city are yielding crops of from 8 to 10 tons of hay as a rule, while occasionally some separate meadows will yield the fabulous amount of 18 tons of hay per acre." From the field of the farmer the Prince leads us to the greenhouse of the market gardener, and shows us what modern improvements have effected here. By the aid of soil-making, hot water pipes in the soil, and culture under glass at a certain period of the life of the plant the most astonishing results have been secured. Speaking of the island of Guernsey where green-house gardening extensively obtains, Prince Kropotkin says "I saw three fourths of an acre, covered with glass and heated for three months in the spring, yielding about eight tons of tomatoes and two hundred pounds of beans as a first crop in April and May, to be followed by two crops more during the summer and autumn. I saw potatoes dug from the soil in April to the amount of five bushels to the twenty-one feet square, and so on. He tells us that from one vinery of thirteen acres there were produced last year: 25 tons of grapes (which are cut from the first of May till October,) 80 tons of tomatoes, 30 tons of potatoes, 6 tons of peas, and 2 tons of beans (the last three in April), to say nothing of other subsidiary crops." Such facts as these carry their own lessons. Surely any misgiving as to the ability of the earth to supply the wants of its inhabitants may be dismissed as not vitally concerning the present generation. Nor is the question likely to become practical for at least the next two hundred years. On the other hand one can hardly reflect upon what has been accomplished in these isolated cases without feeling impressed with the great distance that is to be covered by the average farmer, with his frontier and antiquated methods, before he will have reached this elevated position. The case is not hopeless, however, seeing that many farmers are beginning to act upon the principles advocated by this eminent economist.

To the man who realizes his just relation to his fellowman it gives no pleasure to contemplate the misfortunes and want of prosperity which others experience. Sometimes, however, it proves a profitable exercise, tending to remove any feeling of discontent or dissatisfaction with one's lot. For this reason it would be well for the farmers of Canada to consider the report just handed in by the United States census enumerators. Though strict regard for truth compels the admission that the condition of the Canadian farmer is not all that could be desired, there is some gratification in the thought that it is better by many degrees than that of the average American husbandman. Look at the following facts and figures:

George K. Holmes, who is in charge of this branch of the census work, thinks the returns will show about 7,000,000 mortgages made since 1880. The number already re-

ported when the correspondent wrote was about 6,000,000. Summaries for three counties in Illinois, where real estate, Mr. Holmes says, is heavily loaded with mortgages, are given as illustrating a tendency observed quite generally in the western States. In Cumberland county only three mortgages were put on record in 1880. In 1885 this number had grown to 170, and in 1887 to 722. The year following 216 more were added, and last year 217, making a total of 1,155 in ten years, 970 of which were created in the last four years. In the meantime only seven mortgages were canceled, one in 1881, two in 1882, and four in 1883. In Vermilion county 754 were recorded in 1880, and the number has exceeded 1,000 every year since, the maximum being 1,480 in 1889, and the total for the decade 11,252. During the first four years of the decade 2,931 mortgages in that county were canceled, while 4,096 new ones or renewals were made. Since 1883 the record does not show that any have been canceled. In Kane county 633 mortgages were placed on record in 1880, and 865 in 1881, and in the succeeding years the number has always exceeded 1,000 reaching the maximum of 1,610 in 1889. In this county, again, mortgages were canceled in the first four years of the decade, the number reaching 2,295 all told, while in the same years 3,793 new ones were recorded, but none are reported as canceled since 1883."

In the light of this startling picture let the Canadian farmer, while striving to better his position by applying to his work all the knowledge which modern agricultural science has disclosed, be thankful that he is not called upon to bear the burdens which afflict his fellow toiler to the south.

M. Zola, the French high priest of realism in literature, has just given to the public an expression of his opinion of Count Tolstoi, the famous Russian novelist and reformer. It is very evident that the Frenchman possesses very little affection for his Russian contemporary, whom he designates as a compound of a monk of the middle ages and a modern Slav with the mysticism of the one and the romanticism of the other. He charges Tolstoi with having appropriated ideas that were discarded by the French school of philosophers forty years ago. As to Tolstoi's "Krotutzer Sonata," his recent work on marriage, M. Zola says, it is the work of a diseased imagination, its author no doubt being cracked. He adds with much force that the Russian's ideas represent that he has taken a particular case and argued illogically to a general, that is to say, he has found one or a few husbands and wives who have no ideas, no sympathies, no tastes in common, and therefore concludes that all marriages are equally inharmonious. "There," says Zola, "his logic and observation are both at fault. Given a male, sound in body and mind, and a female likewise sound in body and mind, and their union will be happy. But given bodily or mental defect in either, their life together will not be happy. The man seeks the woman. If she be not what we may assume he has a right to expect, he will brood over the conception, perchance not willingly, but the workings of his mind will continue until day hell lies open before him, and his instinct is to kill. So it is with the woman who goes to the man and finds him such as he is. Such is the Frenchman's opinion of the Russian and his most celebrated work. We have yet to hear from Tolstoi, but the reply will be in effect, 'I am not the male kicked, but the female who kicked it out from him.'"

The spirit of Canada

to complain, and not without reason, of the want of appreciation, manifested by Canadians generally for those of their fellow countrymen who succeed in forcing their way into the front rank of the world's literature, and by the strength of their thought, the originality of their conceptions, the power of their imagination, or the beauty of their diction compel the world to give ear to what they have to say. That Canada has produced authors whose works have been eagerly read by interested thousands such names as Sir William Dawson, Sir Daniel Wilson, Mr. Goldwin Smith, Dr. Bourinot, &c., &c., leave no doubt. And yet, as Mr. Adam points out, taking the case of Miss Duncan (Garth Grafton) as a particular illustration, in order to be sure of an adequate audience to remunerate them professionally for their labors, Canadian writers have been generally obliged to seek such audience outside of their own country. That such a state of things should exist cannot of course be spoken to our own praise. The important question is, How is the evil to be remedied? Mr. Adam thinks that "to the status of a dependency is doubtless due the fact that in the matter of our intellectual sustenance we continue to be dependent upon others rather than upon ourselves. With a change in this respect, and the freedom we should then have to make our own copyright laws, we should doubtless become more self-sufficient, and be enabled to give employment to the native writer within, and not without the country." Mr. Adam does not stand alone in his belief, other writers on literature, Beer, for instance, maintaining the same theory. But even conceding that there is truth in the theory, that a change in our relation to the mother country would in regard to our literature tend to produce a better state of things, it may still be questioned whether this would be a sufficient remedy. Is the literary taste of our people, which has not direct connection with the question of our relation to the mother country, not largely responsible? That it is found so "hard to maintain" in Canada any high-class periodical, shows pretty clearly that while there may be and are many of her sons and daughters whose literary tastes are as fine as can be found anywhere, the great body of the people intent upon answering the question, "what shall we eat? what shall we drink? and where with shall we be merry?" the question is evidently not one of more than of a few. The writer, and the responsible editor, who possess the power to do better, are few.