

# THE BRITISH AMERICAN CULTIVATOR.

"AGRICULTURE NOT ONLY GIVES RICHES TO A NATION, BUT THE ONLY RICHES SHE CAN CALL HER OWN."—Dr. Johnson.

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## THE CULTIVATOR.

"Agriculture is the great art which every government ought to protect, every proprietor of lands to practice, and every inquirer into nature improve."—Dr. Johnson

Toronto, September, 1842.

THE New Corn and Tariff Bills have passed the British Parliament, and time only will prove what degree of favourable influence they may have upon our interests. We would wish the Tariff had been more encouraging to Colonial produce, and had given more decided protection from foreign competition in a few articles, particularly salted meat. But even in its present form, we believe it is more favourable for us than the former Tariff. What we have the greatest apprehension of is, that a large quantity of live and dead cattle and swine will be imported into England from the North of Europe, and hence greatly limit the market and demand for salted meat from Canada. These apprehensions, however, may be groundless, and the result may be very different from what we now anticipate. At all events, we should be prepared to avail ourselves of any advantage that these new laws would offer to us. We hope our own Legislature will, next Session, do their duty to their Constituents, and give some attention to our affairs. Instruction and encouragement might be held out to our farmers to feed cattle and swine, and to our merchants to form establishments for slaughtering and preparing for export, in a proper manner, these cattle and swine when fattened. It may be answered, that these matters should be left to individual industry and enterprise. We humbly conceive the contrary, and believe that in a country like this, that it is the duty of the Legislature to instruct and encourage the population to adopt such modes of employment, as would be most likely to promote the general interests. This country has been visited with a very great plague, in the destruction for several years, of the wheat crop. If, under such a calamity, the Government and Legislature are not bound to take notice of the people's distress, or offer any instruction or encouragement to them, whereby the loss they have sustained might be compensated, by recommending other modes of employment, we know not what may be the legitimate object for which governments and legislatures were first instituted. If nothing could be done for our agriculture, we should make up our minds to be satisfied with things as they are; but, if on the contrary it is possible, by encouraging new modes of employment and raising new produce, that the prosperity of agriculture, that is the sole dependence of nine-tenths of our population, might be promoted, surely it would not be

an object unworthy the attention of our Legislature to take up the matter. Our Legislature might also, afford us considerable protection from foreign competition, and enable us to make the new Tariff the means of establishing a valuable trade in salted meat and the produce of the dairy, with the mother country. We would remind our Legislators that the competition between the people of the United States and us, is not upon a fair and equitable principle. The producers here pay a revenue, both Imperial and Provincial.— We purchase goods coming to us from England, charged with all the taxes direct and indirect, included in the cost of their production, and these taxes are said to form a large proportion of the entire cost prices of these goods. We also pay a Provincial Revenue upon them. The inhabitants of the United States sell their produce here, and not being obliged to take goods in exchange, they may take only cash, which pays neither Imperial or Provincial revenue. Hence they are enabled to sell their produce here on the same terms that we do, without any drawback of the nature that we are subject to, and this state of things gives the foreign competitor an advantage over us of a very considerable amount per cent. on what each of us receives for produce in the Canada markets. The foreigners may pay revenue in their own country, but that we have nothing to do with. We confine ourselves to the consideration of theirs and our own relative position, when each are in the Montreal market disposing of their respective produce. We must expend the money here on English goods, or to pay labourers who will be purchasers of English goods, and thus we contribute to the revenue both of England and of Canada; while our competitors from the United States sells at as high prices as we do, and carries away the proceeds to his own country, to encourage the productive industry of the United States. We may not make ourselves clearly understood, but we shall refer to this subject again. Canadian farmers are charged with being an ignorant class of men, unable to understand what would be for their own, or the general interests of the country.— From a want of education, doubtless, many of them are so, but they are not all so; and a great many of them are as well qualified to judge correctly of what would be likely to promote the general interests of the country as any other men in the Province. Were agriculturists, like other classes, to assemble together on every occasion that public acts were likely to affect their interests, and boldly and unanimously express their opinions, much more attention would be given to their wants and wishes; but, in this country, unfortunately, there is not that cordial unanimity existing amongst the agricultural class as in England, that will allow them to act together and with effect. We might explain the cause of this disunion, but decline doing so on the present occasion. Perhaps reminding our agricultural friends that such a want of cordial unanimity is extremely prejudicial to their interests, may produce a change and unite farmers, as it is clearly

their interest to be united. It is not for any unworthy purpose we would recommend this union, but for a good object—first, the care of their own interests, and next, in order to promote the general improvement of the country we live in. It is manifest the country cannot improve, whatever our cities may do, unless our lands are brought into cultivation, and yielding a produce that remunerate for the expenditure. No man will continue long to expend capital and labour on what will not yield remunerating returns. It is therefore, not to be expected that the country will improve, unless the improvers are repaid their capital and labour by the produce raised. Our Legislators and others, who pretend to be friends to improvement, will do well to remember that these are incontrovertible facts. We grant that improvement might be effected to a certain extent, by a rural population settling down in the country, and confining themselves entirely to the cultivation of their lands, and manufacturing among themselves all that they would require; and having no commerce or intercourse of any consequence with other classes. But if trade, commerce, and general prosperity is desired to be permanently established in the country, it can be maintained only by a healthy and prosperous condition of the agricultural population. Those who expect to produce these desirable advantages from any other source, will bring disappointment to themselves and to all who place confidence in them. It is useless to attempt to found the prosperity of this country, above all others, upon any other bases than her agriculture. At some future time it may be otherwise, but not for a century to come. We give this opinion confidently, but not without due consideration.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

We beg to acknowledge the receipt of *The New Farmers' Journal*, published in London, England, with a few numbers of *Bells' Weekly Messenger*. These papers contain a detailed account of the proceedings of the annual meeting of the Royal English Agricultural Society held at Bristol. We feel proud to place such valuable papers on our exchange list.

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The first number of *The Berkshire Farmer*, another valuable production of "the old Bay State" came to hand; it is certainly deserving of support, if the first number be a correct specimen of the genius of its talented editor.