

Sons, is to squeeze them into a, so called, liberal profession; do we not equally see Wives of Farmers, who think they are working for the good of their Daughters, in seeking for them a future unconnected with agriculture?

Have such parents, whether they are influenced by weakness, or by want of thought, reflected on what they are doing? Have they considered that, in sending their children to the towns, they are over peopling the professions and the trades, which are already sufficiently encumbered; that they are exposing these young persons to a kind of life, almost always precarious, frequently wearisome, and, not uncommonly, ending most disastrously? They have left the rank of life into which they were born, and, in spite of the more or less complete education which they have received, they will too often be tempted to shorten, so to speak, their wretched existence, and to seek consolation for their sad disappointments, by giving themselves up to the seductions of vice, and the attractions of dissipation.

Might not these young people, thus made miserable for life, have been capable of discharging, from their very entrance into active life, the duties, if not of the landed proprietor, at least those of the Tenant-farmer, of the Steward, of the vigorous and hopeful Colonist, in short of the useful citizen, who renders services of the most necessary kind to all his fellow countrymen. The girls who leave their country homes in search of a more attractive and convenient abode, are they more fortunate in their families, are their children better brought up, more docile, more useful to society, and, in their turn, more generally happy?

I seize this opportunity to submit to my readers some reflections which have often occupied my attention during the constant and varied labours of a Farmer, and I wish to call their attention to our position as Agriculturists. I would appeal to all men of sense and of feeling who love our dear country; that country which contains the fertile and unequalled valley of the St Lawrence, that glorious Province of Quebec, whose riches are still hardly begun to be explored. More especially do I address myself to the intelligent men who inhabit the country, to those numerous youths who are in search of a profitable and an useful career. I demand that they shall all honour agriculture, as it deserves to be honoured, and that they shall not close their eyes to its nobleness and its eminent usefulness. Our Statesmen, and all those charged with the duty of watching over the common weal, will, after due consideration, find that, in this subject, the most important question of political economy, as regards our country, is contained. I say it, with regret, but with profound conviction; this question of our agricultural progress has, since the termination of those arduous struggles for the maintenance of our nationality, been, almost entirely, overlooked. Thank God! we are to-day the sole masters of our own destiny. Should we not be highly blamable were we to neglect any longer that art which has always been, since the establishment of the country, and which still is, the principal source of prosperity and happiness. I will say more: Agriculture will be, in the future, the greatest safeguard of our nationality, after that chief of all safeguards, Religion. Let me appeal then to all, but principally to the clergy and to the managers of all houses of education in the province. Let the first homage of all be paid to agriculture; let no opportunity be lost of showing the high nobility of this art, the only art taught to man by the most High himself. Let all, by word, or by example, extol the dignity, the utility of manual labour, of that enjoyment given to our first parents as their principal occupation in the Garden of Eden. Yes, men may talk, but to him who is gifted with good sense, to the man of reflection, manual labour has

always been an immense satisfaction. He who is accustomed to the work of the counting-house, the professional man, the man of letters, whose forces are sapped by the advances of age, for want of the exercise given by manual labour, may not appreciate this truth, but, let them once test it, and they will soon find, joined to repose of mind and tranquillity of soul, a vigour and robustness of health, the most inestimable gift of the great God to his earthly servants.

Is it not most desirable that the principle of social economy which I have just mentioned, the improvement of agriculture, should incite the surplus of our population towards the colonisation of our immense forests, those sources whence should flow incalculable riches, riches which, without doubt, will bring peace and plenty to thousands of families, to-day, alas, without resources?

Let the State protect Agriculture, let our Legislators, and our public men who are more directly charged with this duty, encourage, as they ought, farmers to study and observe the laws of good farming, then, this country, already recognised as one of the most peaceful and happy countries in the world, will become, what it ought to be, one of the most productive.

Canada, I repeat it, compared with other lands in our age, is prosperous, peaceful and happy. To what do we owe this happiness, this prosperity, in the midst of our numerous vicissitudes, if not, in great part at least, to agriculture? Would the French-Canadian nationality have been in existence to-day, had not the Catholic and French population of the country, surrounded, as it was a century ago, by those numerous armies of the enemies of our faith and of our nationality, remained, after the conquest, concealed, as it were, by the shadow, and under the protection of the Belfry of our country parish churches.

And, in the future as in the past, our only hope for safety, as a people, does it not lie in the ownership of the soil, in the colonisation and clearing of our forests, in the development of our riches and of our population by fostering the regular and intelligent improvement of our agriculture?

Were we to forget this duty, were we to neglect agriculture any longer, must we not expect to see in a very short time the recommencement of that terrible scourge, the expatriation of our fellow countrymen? We all know but too well how this scourge of emigration has in a few years swallowed up a notable proportion of the population of our older parishes; how it devastated lately our newest and most prosperous colonies to feed the requirements of the vast manufacturies of our southern neighbours. Have we not seen, and seen with grief, in more than one district, Farmers, the owners of the soil, abandon, with their families, the home of their Fathers, where their ancestors had lived in comfort, to wander, as exiles, into a strange country, in hopes of amassing a few pieces of gold more rapidly, perhaps, than was possible in their native village? Too often, to satisfy the ever increasing demands of the luxury in which their families have desired to live, have they yielded to the attraction of higher wages and shorter hours of labour, without considering that the labour was the labour of a slave, and more, of a slave exiled from his country.

I trust I may be forgiven these remarks. They belong, naturally to the subject, and they seem to me to be quite suitable to the peculiar situation of our Province. Besides, they are in themselves an eulogy of agriculture, since to it belongs, most assuredly, our national happiness in the past, and our salvation, as a country, in the future. Yes, we must not disguise it, after God, it is to agriculture that French Canada owes that it is, what it is; it is in this art that its strength and its defence against future dangers reside. What greater praise, then, can be given to this divine art, with what more brilliant and more glorious coronal can a Canadian