

country, which will now be available for export, was sunk in the manufacture of an article, which added nothing to the general wealth of the country, but rather tended to impoverish it. Assuredly, it will be far better to export our oats in the shape of oatmeal, than to consume them ourselves in the shape of spirits of any kind. The more attention and prominence there is given to growing oats, the better it will be for the country, provided we do not neglect those other crops which can be profitably raised. The introduction into general use of oatmeal in this part of the Province would be of very material service to the inhabitants. Below Quebec, for instance, where the seasons are so late and the wheat crop is so uncertain, the loss of the potato will be very much felt, unless oatmeal comes into use among the habitants. A few years ago, the consumption of wheaten-flour in Lower Canada was very large. When the fly first attacked the crop, the potato was the only resource and now that it too proves a failure, the farmers labouring under such a combination of misfortune must fall back upon oats. Measures should be taken to encourage the people to plant oats, that the proprietors of seigniories may be induced to erect oatmeal mills. An example is already, I have heard, been set in this respect by Major Campbell, who is building a mill at his Seigniorie. Oatmeal forms quite as nutritious a food as the potato, and has this advantage over that root, that it can be cooked in a variety of ways. So wholesome in fact, is oatmeal, that in the States persons whose digestion has become enfeebled, are often placed upon an oatmeal diet; the result being frequently an entire cure. In Scotland, it is well known, that oatmeal porridge and cakes are the principal food of the farming community, and a more robust and healthy set of men than the Scottish farm labourers are no where to be found. In some parts of England, oatmeal is still used, although a prejudice has prevailed against it in that country. This prejudice was fostered especially among the better classes, in a great measure by the slighting remark of the celebrated Dr. Johnson, that oats were food for horses in England, but for men in Scotland. When the Doctor, under the influence of the national prejudice, made the remark, he must have been ignorant of the fact that oats and oatmeal were very generally used in England before the introduction of the potato, which almost en-

tirely supplanted them. In proof of this assertion, I will now quote from "The Way to get Wealth," published at London in 1637, the copy in my possession being the 5th edition. The 6th chapter of the 2nd book is wholly devoted to detailing the various methods of using oats and oatmeal then in use, and to enlarging upon "their virtues and excellencies," which the author does at considerable length. The chapter opens with the following sentence: "Oats, although they are of all manner of grain the cheapest, because of their generally being a grain of that goodness and hardness, that it will grow on any soil whatsoever, be it never so rich, or never so poor, as if nature had made it the only living companion and true friend to man; yet it is a grain of that singularity for the multiplicity of its virtues, and necessary uses for the sustenance and support of the Family, that not any other grain is to be compared with it, for if any other have equal virtue, then it wants equal value, and if equal value then it wants many degrees of equal virtue; so that joining virtue and value together, no husband, housewife or housekeeper whatsoever has so true and worthy a friend as his oats are." After this warm eulogium on the excellencies of oats, "their virtues as they accrue to cattle and creatures out of doors," are treated of at considerable length; but this I pass over for the present, as I now merely wish to show that oats were held in high favour in England, both before and at the time the work in question was issued. The following passage will be found worthy of particular attention, as it shews in how general use oatmeal then was, and how necessary it was for the maintenance and support of the people. When proceeding to treat upon the use of oatmeal for human food, our author commences with stating, "that there is no grain in our knowledge, answerable unto it for the general support of the family, for the oatmeal, which is drawn from them, being the heart and kernel of the oat, is a thing of rare price and estimation, for truth to speak, it is like salt of such a general use that without it hardly can any family be maintained." It is needless to dwell at length upon the force of the evidence here contained, of the fact, that oatmeal was in very general use at that period in England. As, however, I do not intend to rest the argument upon any isolated passage, but rather upon the whole scope and tendency of the chapter, I will now proceed to