

easily be collected and exhibited in any one of several central positions. This will give a decided stimulus to these displays.

A good time, we think, is coming for the Dominion in general, and this Province in particular. The symptoms to me are very evident. The immediate cause to which we will owe the beginning of the change, is one which, however much we may profit by it, we cannot contemplate without regret. I refer to the wretched weather which has prevailed in Europe, and the consequent failure of the cereal crops over a large part of that region.

This has been the most calamitous season which the Fatherland has had to pass through for many years. Four bad harvests in succession had tried the patience of the British agriculturist. It was hoped that his troubles were over, but they were not. The weather of the present season has been the worst, and the crops the poorest, of the whole five.

When I left London for Liverpool, about the 17th ult., on my return home, I saw miles of country under water. Hay which had been out for weeks and which there had been no sun to dry, was floating about in the floods. Wheat was rotting in the stock, and really the frightful waste of hay and cereals, destroyed by the incessant rains, was a most melancholy sight.

The *Times* newspaper of the 3rd September thus describes the situation: "We know that the British farmer has had to contend with a succession of adverse seasons. Upon the top of repeated losses has come a harvest which in every particular is most afflicting. The climate from the beginning of this year appears to exhaust itself in efforts to disappoint the hopes of the agriculturists. A winter of extraordinary severity was followed by a sunless and chilly spring, and by a summer remarkable for an excess of rain and deficiency of heat. Not alone do the corn crops shew a probable decline from the average, estimated at one-third by some authorities—and one-fourth by others, and entailing a loss on the agriculturist computed at £25,000,000 sterling, while other crops—peas, beans, peas, potatoes, turnips and mangolds, hops and hay, have, from various causes, suffered in an equal, or even greater degree."

It is not surprising that these losses are regarded as crushing, and that there appears nothing wanting to complete the ruin of the poorer class of tenant farmers.

The loss sustained by this dreadful season is set forth with some particularity of detail by the *Pall Mall Gazette* of the 29th ult. "Calculations," says the editor, "are already being made as to the amount of loss which the farmers will experience owing to the bad season. An estimate published the other morning puts down the amount below an average, on the corn crop alone at £25,000,000, and £28,000,000 if beans and peas are added; potatoes show a loss of £15,000,000; hops of £1,250,000, and hay of £15,000,000. This is a total of little less than £60,000,000."

These calculations, if not exaggerated, are appalling. In this country we are sometimes reproached with running into debt too easily. The debt of the Dominion has been spoken of as enormous. If it be, it will serve to give some definiteness to our idea of the loss which England has sustained in a single year. For, if the calculations we have quoted are to be depended upon, one bad season has

cost the people of England more than would pay the debt of the Dominion twice over.

Is it any wonder that the agriculturists of England, groaning under the pressure of these enormous losses, should look about for some means of escape? One such means they see open to them in the new world—in the vast prairies of the West—where a virgin soil of the richest mould invites and will reward their labors. There the farmer may count will certainly, so far as anything in this world is certain—an abundance of the necessaries of life. He will enjoy many comforts and comparative ease. If he has ordinary industry and health he will die the owner of broad acres which cost him nothing but the sweat of his brow, and leave to his children the freehold of lands for more fertile, and intrinsically more valuable, than those on which, as a tenant in the old world, he had exhausted his strength and ruined his fortunes.

It certainly gives force to the contrast when we find the first minister of the Crown, pointing, as he did on a recent occasion, to our great West, as a recourse open to those whom an adverse fate leaves little to hope for in the old land, as a country where they may, without giving up their traditions or abandoning their flag, pass their days free from the anxieties and embarrassments which make their life in the old home one incessant struggle.

No doubt there will be a vast emigration to Canada. It will comprise a valuable class of emigrants—men with some capital and much skill. This Canada of ours will bound forward with a rapidity which would be the source of unmingled satisfaction, but for the feeling that so much of this progress will, in the first instance, be due to the misfortunes of our brethren in the old land.

The first thing to be done as the result of the bad season in Europe is to transport to that country an enormous quantity of bread-stuffs.

The crops of Canada have been excellent. They are much beyond an average, and we shall have a large surplus to export. As a Province we raise no grain to spare; but we have other things which our Western brethren have not. With their wheat and our ships, we have between us what the emergency requires. It needs no gift of prophecy to foretell the effect all this is going to have on two at least, of our greatest industries. So that with the prospects of improvement appearing in the United States, which are already telling favorably on the iron trade of England, we are getting the first glimpses of the bright sky, through the gloom that has enveloped us. I trust and hope and believe it is the dawn of a better day, and that the light will increase and enlarge till the whole sky shall glow with the perfect day of returning prosperity. The tonnage of Nova Scotia was returned in 1878 at 541,000. This means in money value over 20 millions of dollars. A sudden revival in trade, which raises the returns from this source by a very small per centage, will pour into the Province a stream of prosperity, which will be felt in every branch of industry.

It is quite true, as I have already said, that Nova Scotia raises no wheat to export. Yet we have this year grown a large part of what we require for our own use. This is a great stride. Probably we may never hope to do much more than supply ourselves, for Providence has denied to us the boundless

extent of fertile soil, which she has lavished on Provinces further West. But what is there to prevent us from competing for a part of a trade which is now acquiring great importance. I mean the trade with England in cattle. There can be no better grazing country than Nova Scotia. The 1200 miles of transit between Ontario and the sea shore is a premium to us to enter on the trade. What we want mainly is improvement in stock, and, thanks to the men who have designed and carried out such Exhibitions as these, great improvements have already been made in this respect. When our stock is equal in quality to that of Ontario, we have great advantages in our position at the seaside. If we export our cattle alive, they may be landed on the shores of Great Britain with less injury to flesh and condition, than the cattle of the West will have to sustain before they commence their sea voyage. If we export them as beef we still escape the long journey from the west, with the cost of appliances for preserving meat in the transit over a long land journey with its changes of temperature.

I see nothing to prevent this trade assuming large proportions. Its success would cause many changes in our mode of fattening. We should grow more turnips and other fattening crops, and these again would react on the farming, by placing at the disposal of the agriculturist the means of enriching his soil through the consumption of such crops on the farm.

Within a few years a very marked progress has been made in the cultivation of the land. Side by side with this progress has grown the interest attached to agricultural pursuits. No better evidence can be given of these facts than the changes which have taken place as regards the frequency of Exhibitions. Formerly they were held at an average interval of seven years. Three only took place between 1854 and 1875. In 1876 we adopted the plan which prevails in England, in the United States and in Canada. Since then we have held one each year. Truro had the honor to lead off in 1876. It erected the first permanent building in this Province for such a purpose. Kentville followed in 1877 with a larger building and improved arrangements. In 1878 Truro increased its building and took lessons from the past as regards its arrangements, and now Halifax follows suit in 1879.

Every Exhibition has thus far been an improvement on its predecessor, and so also every building has been larger and better adapted to the purpose than the one last previously constructed. But this progress must cease here. No other county can hope to rear a structure to vie with this, either in cost or in adaptation to its purpose. Any man would have been considered mad, who would have ventured five years ago to propose to the citizens of Halifax the construction of such a building as this, and hopelessly so, if he had supposed such a proposal, if made, would be accepted. What a change must have come over the citizens of Halifax, when this splendid building is erected without a murmur on the part of those who have to bear the cost of it.

If we find the atmosphere entirely changed; if the position of the farmer is raised in public estimation; if the men who own our broad acres are taking their proper rank in the community, we owe it largely to such Exhibitions as these.