

The following communication from the President of the society, William Matthie, Esquire, of Brockville, was laid before the meeting :

Brockville, August 21, 1853.

GEORGE BUCKLAND, ESQ.,

*Professor of Agriculture and Secretary Provincial Agricultural Association, Toronto.*

DEAR SIR,—In addressing the Provincial Agricultural Association through you, as Secretary, I am grieved to state that I cannot do so at present without pain—pain both externally and internally. Externally, because for some considerable time, I have been confined almost exclusively to my bed from severe indisposition; and internally, that I should feel it my duty to relinquish the high and honorable office of President of the Provincial Agricultural Association, bestowed upon me at the last annual meeting of the Association; the duties of which office, from the cause I have alluded to, I feel I am unable longer to perform. Believing this—and believing further that no man should hold such an office as a sinecure, I humbly conceive it to be my duty, thus to place my resignation of the office of President of the Association in the hands of the Board, in order that a more able successor may be installed forthwith.

Had there been reasonable hope to believe that I would be blessed with a speedy restoration to health, I might not have troubled the Association with my resignation, but my physician having ordered a long course of sea bathing, I think, in view of the forthcoming annual exhibition, to which I had looked forward with great pleasure, that in acting as I am doing, I am only consulting the interests of the Association—an Association second to none in the Province either as respects its present or future bearing on the prosperity of this my country, in benefitting which the private convenience of its office bearers, should never be allowed to interfere.

In accepting the office I have just resigned, I know you will believe me when I say that personal ambition had far less to do with it than the sincere desire to lend my humble efforts in forwarding the interests of what I conceived to be the most important branch of productive industry I am sorry to think, notwithstanding its value, too many in Canada seem to slight. In saying this, I do not by any means wish to throw odium on the other productive branches of industry carried on in the country; neither would I wish it understood that I insinuate anything disparagingly of the learned professions; I only wish to express an opinion in reference to Agriculture, on which, so far at least as Canada is concerned, I think the prosperity of all other arts is based, *and to which*, in the present overstocked condition of several professions, it would be well if the attention of the youth of the country was directed.

To relieve Agriculture from a portion of the obloquy prejudice has thrown around it, was one of my motives for endeavoring to enlist the sympathies of the young farmers of the country in defence of "the dignity of labor." The competing essays on this subject, may perhaps be few in number, but like the traveller's acorn, the future may show how great a little thing may become.

As no real happiness can be obtained without labor, the sooner a proper tone is given to it, the sooner it becomes enveloped in its proper garb, and wreathed with its legitimate dignity—and becomes more of a blessing—and the farmer thus emancipated from the trammels of prejudice, will be enabled to take his stand on a footing of equality with the most favored of his fellow men.

I mean it as no idle compliment when I state, that in my opinion, the future prosperity of Canada depends much on the position of her agricultural population. The agricultural associations of Canada are capable of exercising a vast influence in favor of the farmer. The office-bearers of these associations bear much responsibility. This will be seen when we consider that Agriculture, with many of the new settlers, must of necessity for a time be carried on in a very primitive way. For a season, improved implements of husbandry will be hidden things, while the science of agricultural chemistry can only be heard of from afar. While in this situation, the new settler may almost be said to be in a state of incubation; and just as agricultural associations progress, in the spread of knowledge, so will the new settlers progress, till at length they burst forth into an enlightened existence, surrounding themselves, one by one, with such improved implements and stock as the influence of associations may have placed within their reach. Thus guided and cared for, the primitive implements of new settlers will gradually give place to patent ploughs, improved harrows, reaping machines, &c., while their barn-yards will become filled with well selected stock; and the owners, from being ignorant and unhandy backwoods-men, will soon become intelligent and well-skilled yeomen.

But it is not altogether in drawing out new settlers from their shells, if I may be allowed the expression, that the work of Agricultural Associations consists in. The fact is too well known, that in many of our old settled districts, the state of agriculture is not at all what it ought to be. The schoolmaster, in many localities, has yet to go abroad and unfold his share of knowledge in relation to stock, crops, manures, drains, composition of soils, &c., &c.; and I trust I will be pardoned when I say, that I think it would be well for the Provincial Association to press on the attention of the Agricultural Department of the Government, the necessity of taking steps to make it imperative for all Common School teachers to know something in reference to Agricultural Chemistry, in order that the youth of Canada may be taught something of a science which is of so much importance in the proper cultivation of the soil in which they have so large a stake.

To you, Sir, and the other officers of the Association, I beg to tender my heartfelt thanks for the many acts of kindness and courtesy which you have all extended towards me; and I trust you will excuse the liberty I have now taken in transmitting these thoughts for your consideration, in bidding you farewell as an officer of the Association. If there is one thing I desire more than another in this world, it is the progress of my country in everything tending to elevate and ennoble her people. That something has been done by the Association in this work, no man can