

Civil and Social Department

NATIONAL ECONOMY AND NATIONAL HABITS.

A stranger listening to the grave discussions in which the press is frequently engaged, regarding the progress of our manufactures, and the national (or Colonial) advantages that would accrue from their extension, would at once come to the conclusion that we have attained perfection in Agriculture and Horticulture. But how would his surprise be excited if he were told that, instead of having attained perfection in these branches of industry, we are actually dependent upon the United States for a great part of the fruit we consume? If he should ask the reason for this, the only answer would be that we have contracted the pernicious habit of omitting to adorn the homestead by raising around it a fine orchard. In the climate and soil we find no satisfactory reason for practice. The omission we shall therefore treat solely as a pernicious social habit that has engrafted itself upon Canadian Society.

The Cultivation of fruit has been neglected in Canada, to an extent greater than most persons, who have not paid particular attention to the subject, are aware of. We find the following paragraph in the Kingston *Advertiser*.

"Our market is now plentifully supplied with fruits and vegetables of all kinds. Of the former the greater part is imported from the United States. Our farmers in this vicinity do not appreciate the advantages of a good orchard, else our American neighbours would not find so good a market here. We remember hearing an observation made by an American who sold Fruit Trees here last spring to a Canadian Farmer. The latter said it was too bad that so much money should be sent out of the Province annually, for fruit trees. This, replied the American, is certainly not creditable to your Nurserymen—but not half so discreditable as to your Farmers who allow ten times the amount to cross the lines for the purchase of Fruit."

A foreigner on reading the above would be forced to the conclusion either that we are a thriftless people, or else that our soil and climate are not favourable to the production of fruit. Indeed such opinions have already been expressed abroad, and used to our prejudice. Whoever will take the trouble to look into "Cobbett's guide to Emigrants," or "Advice to Emigrants," we forget which, will find that the author recommends English farmers to go to the United States in preference to Canada, "because the latter imports peaches and green peas from the former." Cobbett did not, of course, intend to assert that, as a general rule, an exchange of products between two countries cannot be beneficial. The case is a peculiar and an anomalous one. The anomaly consists in one purely agricultural country, leaving undeveloped its own capabilities, and depending upon the productions of another agricultural country, and that too when climate and soil are fit from offering any sufficient or even plausible excuse for pursuing so singular a course. If Providence in its inscrutable and all-wise decrees, had, by the nature of the climate, ordered that Canada should be dependent upon some other country for her fruits, we should have been the last in the world to encourage an attempt to force the growth of productions, unsuited to our soil or uncongenial to our climate. But such is not the case. Man has not availed himself of the munificence of Providence. We reap not only because we have not sown. Dependence upon other countries for a portion of their productions we shall not be childish enough indiscriminately to deny. The cases, generally speaking, in which we ought to depend upon other countries, are those wherein these other countries can, from some cause, produce particular articles cheaper than we can, and where we can be more profitably employed than in raising them ourselves. But in the case in question—the raising of fruit—there are so many delightful associations connected with the orchard; the beauties presented by the trees in full blossom; the pleasure to be derived from watching their growth and development; the at-

tractions which home receives from the presence of a fine orchard, and the benignant and hallowed influence which seems to hover round the spot; in consideration of all these things we are not willing to reduce the question of cultivating fruit to one of mere pecuniary consideration, or rigidly to try it by the dry rules of political economy. Yet we might perhaps do this, for if the Americans can make a profit on raising fruit for exportation, there is no reason why we, with equal natural advantages, should not find it profitable to raise our own. While we are perpetually debating on the policy of establishing domestic manufactures, of a kind which, the chances are, would not at present be profitable to the country; we are strangely neglecting the cultivation of those fruits for which our soil and climate are peculiarly adapted. We are seeking far-off objects of industry while we neglect those at our own doors. Let us rid ourselves of this strange misapprehension of our position and resources.

An agricultural journal, in a new country, has much to do besides giving directions for the guidance of the hands; it has first to prepare the mind to appreciate them; to awaken its generous impulses, and to create an interest in things now neglected, and which no other power than the press could awaken. If we can diffuse a taste for the beautiful; we shall secure attention to worthy, but now neglected objects; and in assisting to increase the productions, augment the happiness of our country.

Let our farmers remember that it would be for the benefit of Canada, if she were to raise her own fruit. Let every man who has the opportunity, make a point of having an orchard. Let us raise our own apples and make our own cider, before we talk of "domestic manufactures."

NORMAL SCHOOL.

It will be seen by reference to our advertising department that the opening of the Normal School established for the training of Schoolmasters takes place on the first Monday of November next. Mr Robertson who has been appointed head Master, has the recommendation of a large experience. The establishment of this school is the dawn of a new era in our educational institutions. The subject of education will claim our attention on a future occasion.

PETERBORO, 24th Aug. 1847.

To the Editors of the Canada Farmer—

GENTLEMEN—We have been accustomed to view an emigration of the labouring and industrious class to this Colony as an event which could not but tend to their weal, as well as of those who had years before preceded them; and so it would assuredly, if under proper management and restriction. The state of Ireland in particular renders this the more necessary, and the authorities (especially those residing at the ports of embarkation) should now feel, and must be told, that they have been the cause of a great loss of life, not only amongst the emigrants on ship board and since their arrival in this country, but amongst the settled inhabitants here, many of whom among the survivors, are now mourning afflictive bereavements of which the unfortunate strangers have been, alas, the innocent cause. Any project as to interference with the liberty of the subject in such a case is futile; these poor people must be guided, and in the name of the people of Canada, it may be naturally asked, Why were they allowed to be crammed on board ship in a state of physical exhaustion or of actual sickness, to bring disease to this country? Could it be supposed that the hold of an emigrant ship, such as it is when filled with some 500 poor creatures in a state of sickness, pestilence and poverty, of all places in the world, was likely to restore them to health? I venture to state from what I have seen, and I have by no means seen the worst, that many of these vessels, this year, have presented scenes little if any better than African slavers, which have excited the commiseration of Britain as a nation for the last half century. Such a waste of human life as these overloaded vessels have witnessed, demands the strictest enquiry, and ought to lead to the adoption of every precaution in future; why is not the same care taken on emigrant, as on troop ships and in the Royal Navy? I trust these remarks, taken in connexion with the sequel of this letter, will not be deemed at variance with the general character of your journal, in which I would still hope they are more likely to have an endurance than in the columns of common place newspapers.

I will now suppose the dangers and perils surmounted. 1st. The emigrants, after a fearful decimation of their numbers, looking out for winter quarters; they will principally consist of agriculturists, labourers, and mechanics—the second of these will be

found the most numerous. It would have been well if the several rail-road companies had so defined their lines that they could have fixed at about ten miles apart a sort of barrack or collection of cabins, capable of containing from thirty to fifty men, with their wives and children, as they could be more easily maintained in this way than in any other, and might be employed in paring the way during winter. These situations, well chosen, might afterwards form the sites of villages, and the labourers encouraged to look forward to small allotments of land as payment in part for their labour. The mechanics, a valuable class, will no doubt find employment in our towns and villages, provided they are not foolishly impressed with the idea of getting exorbitant wages. This remark must be applied to the remaining class also, and although as agriculturists I consider them of most importance to the community at large, they must expect to undergo a good deal of toil and even privation before they attain that degree of comfort which I fear the misrepresentations of Agents and others at home, as well as in this country, have led them prematurely to expect, without the exercise of industry or common prudence. I hope I shall not be understood as having the least idea to damp his spirits or retard his onward progress, when I recommend the new comer to engage himself, if he can, for at least three years with a master, on something like the same plan and terms as he may have been accustomed to at home. Presuming that farmers having 100 acres or more cleared will adopt the system, I feel assured that both master and man would be benefited. The first step is to have one or more good cottages, according to the size of the farm or means of the farmer, with a piece of ground attached for a garden. Let it be his object to find emigrants, if possible, who bring with them certificates of character, (with best of precautions before embarkation,) the terms of engagement to be three years, employed upon the farm unless by a proviso to the contrary, and the rate and mode of payment to be exactly as it is practised in the best farming districts of Scotland, which is as follows:—

Table with 3 columns: Item, Quantity, Price. Items include Oats, Barley, Beans or Peas, Potatoes, Cows' grass and Scotch, Free House, Coach driver, and Five weeks board in harvest.

sterling, £28 4 6. No whiskey is allowed—water and oatmeal is generally given in harvest.

Now the value of these products being much less in Canada, entitles the servant to so much more of each; for instance, in oats, it might happen that instead of 72 bushels, he might be entitled to three times that quantity, and yet the master is secured against deficiency of crops in bad seasons operating to his disadvantage, as the markets in that case are higher.

The servant thus engaging, places his family on their arrival, beyond the reach of want; having a cow and the necessaries suitable to his situation in life provided in part of wages, and he need not be quite without money, as the sale of part of his share of the grain will procure him that, or at all events store goods. Now if such an amount of produce as I have stated to be the yearly wages of a farming man, enables him to live and bring up a family, well fed, well clothed, as their appearance bespoke, when I saw them in the Lowlands of Scotland, and I may add their children well educated at the parish school; I see not why it should not do so here, where they would have all these advantages, besides others which might be mentioned, as more produce on the score of wages. They would be enabled with prudence, to save the value of, or receive from the master at the end of three years, a yoke of oxen and a couple of cows, with seed, &c. so as to set them a going on their own account, either on a cleared farm or in the bush; the experience gained by that time fitting them for either. Let it be supposed that such a person on his arrival goes with his family at once into the bush; what is the consequence? His productive labour, such as he has been used to on a cleared farm is *totally comparatively lost* to himself, and the country; he soon gets discouraged; his family gets dissatisfied; they probably have neither school nor church within reach; their morals languish; they suffer in short so much in every way, that a premature grave is often the lot of whole families. The expectation of assimilating our farms in Canada to those at home may seem visionary, but the contrast need not remain so great as at present;—the transition from one to the other can certainly be made in time, and the bush itself deprived of its terrors—a gradual initiation to its labours may be gained in the way I have pointed out. I may here mention that I was present at a ploughing match held early in

January on the grounds of Lord Melville in Mid Lothian: 115 ploughs started, man'd by as fine a set of stout well clad fellows as you would wish to see; in short the men, horses, equipment, work done, and fine weather combined to make it a beautiful sight. Now not one of these men would listen to an invitation, or be tempted in any way to go to Canada.—"Oh, the Bush! the Bush!!" and we are already so comfortable," was the general reply. Occasionally there is a redundancy of hands and good situations are not to be obtained; in that case emigration is thought of, and surely if such a system as the one which they have been accustomed to were open to them, the step would be more frequently taken by a description of settlers who in the first place would benefit the farmers who have cleared farms, and be a great stimulus to improved cultivation; they would supply not only an increase of population, but a rapidly progressive advancement of the growth of products for exportation.

Farms of 100 acres should at least have a ten acre field in root crops: this would be found to afford valuable employment for the younger branches.

I beg to offer these remarks in the hope that they may be deemed worthy of insertion in your journal. The importance of the subject will in my humble estimation plead in excuse for their length. Misrepresentation has done so much to rivet prejudice and lead people astray respecting Canada as regards farms and farming, that the enlistment of more powerful and than mine from every quarter would be very desirable to counteract it. Respectfully yours,

A SCOTCHMAN.

THE ENGLISH ELECTIONS.

[From the Wiltner Times Aug. 14.]

The Elections for the English, Irish, and Scotch boroughs are now, we believe concluded. There are yet a few of the counties undecided. Various speculative divisions of the new members have been allotted by our contemporaries, but if political parties are to be ranked as before into Liberals, Peetles, and Protectionists, the members will be considerably on the Liberal side; but the apparent accession of strength gained by the ministerial phalanx may, upon a division, be counterbalanced by the votes of the new members, entertaining ultra or independent opinions. The ministerial, or liberal section, would, if muted, be about equal to the Peetles and Protectionists combined. With the exception of free trade questions, respecting which there is a great gulf between the more liberal Peetles and the protectionists, it will be found, probably, that the ministerial measures which may be proposed in the ensuing Parliament, will be carried either by the forbearance of the protectionist party, or by the support of the Peetles. Should any question arise upon which all parties are as yet unpledged or unfettered, turning upon the great cause of public liberty, and involving the rights of the people against the aristocracy, then it will appear whether the present rancorous feeling of the protectionist party against the Peetles would survive the trial, and such a question would test the integrity and consistency of the Peetles. The present distinction of party cannot be of long duration. Either Sir Robert Peel, with such of his adherents as may be attached to him, must form a virtual coalition with the whigs, or they must return to their old seats "below the gangway," and merge into the protectionist party who, upon a new question, would receive some fresh designation, remaining still, as they ever will be, the great Tory party of the country.

The county contests have not exhibited so many singular features of excitement as the borough elections. The great constituency of the West Riding of Yorkshire, the most numerous in the kingdom, proposed Mr. Cobden just prior to the nomination day; and his name threw such terror into the hearts of his opponents that Mr. Denison, who had represented the West Riding for six years, did not venture to demand a poll; and Mr. Cobden was by acclamation elected the colleague of Lord Morpeth. Such a step cannot fail to have predominating influence over the free-trade discussions in the ensuing Parliament. Mr. Bernal Osborne, a Liberal, has displaced Colonel Wood, a Conservative, in the county of Middlesex. Sir George Grey has also gained a county seat in Northumberland. In Ireland our apprehensions of the loss of Mr. Shel's seat have proved unfounded, but he gained his election only after a severe contest; whilst we regret to say that Mr. Wyse, one of the most enlightened Liberals of Ireland, has been defeated. Sir Denham Norreys, a rising influential member of excellent principles, has been successful again at Mallow. Up to the latest hour of our going to press, the government of Lord John Russell may be said to have the following gains and losses at the present elections:—

Table with 2 columns: Party, Gain/Loss. Total Liberal gain 74, Total Conservative gain 25, Net Liberal gain 49.

If the above be an accurate estimate—it is subject, however, to correction—it will give Lord John Russell 93 votes on a division. The returns to be received will probably give his Lordship some further votes.

THE MACKAY.—Capt. Sutherland's new iron steamer has been launched. She will be the fastest boat ever built at Niagara.