

## Agriculturist and Canadian Journal.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 15, 1848.

### THE AGRICULTURIST.—PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.

This number of the *Agriculturist* is the last we shall publish in its present shape. We have compiled an Index to all the numbers published in 1848, which will be found on the outside sheet of this number. By referring to this Index, it will be seen that the sixteen numbers, when brought together, contain as great a variety, and as large a quantity of useful matter as any other publication of a similar kind, published at the same price. It is true, that at the commencement of the year, by the false representations, false calculations, and false promises of other parties, the writer was induced to believe that a *semi-monthly* paper would be more acceptable to the public, which we have still no doubt is the fact; and that such a paper would be sustained, which we have found, to our loss, is not the fact. We will now, as this is the last number for the year, recapitulate the chief reasons which operated to prevent the success of the paper on the plan upon which it was set afloat in January last. As there has necessarily been a good deal of disappointment to subscribers, and as we learn, from our agents, that some are disposed to take advantage of the circumstance, and refuse to pay anything for the paper, though they have taken it from the post-office, and though they were told, in the 11th number, that as the publication must cease to be published *twice* a month, or drop altogether they might pay for the half-year, or twelve numbers, and discontinue the work, if they did not wish to take it under the altered arrangements; and, further, though they have been informed that all paid subscribers would get the first *three* numbers of the Volume for 1849, which will make nearly, if not quite the amount of reading matter originally promised. We say, notwithstanding all this, and the explanations we have from time to time given, we are informed there are *some* subscribers who say they will not pay at all! For the information of these, as well as others, and for our own satisfaction, we will, for the last time, mention the causes of the difficulties through which the *Agriculturist* has passed, and is now passing.

First, it was well understood, before the first number was printed, that a circulation of 8,000 would be necessary to pay expenses and commission to agents. Then, had we reason to believe we would get that number? The following statement will show. The Editor of "The British American Cultivator" asserted that he then had a *bona fide* circulation of over 7,000 for his paper. "The Canada Farmer," which we then conducted, had obtained a circulation of 2,000 the first year of its existence, and without any effort till near the close of the year. Supposing we retained the subscribers to both Journals, we would have 9,000 at once. But, allowing for a large falling off, yet, by sending out ten or twelve travelling agents, to canvass the country thoroughly, and in places where no Agricultural paper had yet been introduced, we supposed a circulation of 10,000 might easily be obtained. These were the data and the prospects with which the year commenced. But how were they realized? In the first place, "The British American Cultivator" had not a *bona fide* circulation of 6,000; and it had been conducted in such a wretched manner, that great numbers refused to have anything further to do with it, or its successor. Then the extraordinary scarcity of money among the farmers, before harvest, prevented hundreds from subscribing, and thousands who did subscribe, from *paying*. At least so our agents represent; for our share of nearly 2,000 subscriptions has not yet been re-

ceived. The result was, after a three or four months' canvass, only 5,000 names appeared on our mail books. Some 500 or 600 have since been added. We now come to another branch of the subject, which we should wish to pass over, but, in justice to ourself, cannot. The Editor of "The British American Cultivator" was to have given his attention to the *business* of the publication, and to assist occasionally in the Editorial department. The first five or six numbers, as we stated on a former occasion, were got out without any one interested in the paper being able to get more than a *sight* of this gentleman, and that very rarely. It is during the issue of the first few numbers that the *business* of a publication requires most attention. As the expenses began to exceed the income, the present Proprietor found that he had to bear *all* the outlay *alone*, and to hire and pay people for doing that which this gentleman had undertaken to do, and pretended *he had done*, viz., the mailing. As difficulties increased, it was also ascertained that agents and others had made payments to him of considerable sums, which did not appear on the books of the concern, *nor did they go to pay any of its debts*. To mend matters, the Sheriff seized and sold his interest in the paper, to pay his *private* debts; and, to put on the climax, this worthy personage (we don't mean the Sheriff) walked off with the mail books, by which it became *impossible* to send the paper, or anything else, to the subscribers, till an Injunction from the Court of Chancery compelled him, after delaying till the last moment, to restore them to the proper office.

Failing, therefore, in all our reasonable expectations, as to the support which a good Agricultural paper, published semi-monthly, would receive, and meeting with these unexpected difficulties, obstructions, and annoyances, from one who ought to have felt the greatest interest, and made the most strenuous exertions for the success of the journal, the present Proprietor was obliged either to give it up altogether, or send it monthly, and trust to the good nature of the public to excuse him for the changes which have taken place. We do not ask any one to pay for what he has not got. We wish, though we shall suffer considerable loss, to keep *substantially* our engagements with subscribers, though we cannot keep them in the terms they were made. To any person who, through irregularities in the post-office or mistake may not have received the whole sixteen numbers, we shall be most willing to send those which are missing, whenever they write to us, post-paying their letters. As stated in our Prospectus for 1849, *three* numbers of the next volume, containing 32 pages each, will be sent to all present paid subscribers, and the remainder of the volume may be had for 3s. 9d. In this way we hope to satisfy, after the explanations given, all subscribers whose good opinion is worth retaining. We believe every man, be he learned or unlearned, will have got value for his money. If any farmer will read the paper carefully, and say he can find nothing in it worth a dollar to him, or to his family, we will not ask him to pay his subscription.

We have only one or two observations of a personal character to make, and then we shall be done with the past, hoping there will be no more occasion to allude to it, but that we may be allowed to look forward to a brighter and more prosperous future. The writer has occasionally met with persons who talked as if they thought *he* could know nothing about farming or farmer's interests, and that it was very like presumption to write or express an opinion on the subject, because he is a lawyer. Now, he has only to say, that he is a farmer's son; that he was brought up, and worked on a farm till he was nearly of age; that, being of a somewhat studious and observing disposition, he learned a little of the practice of farming, and of the peculiarities of the farmers' position in Canada, which he has not, nor probably ever will forget; that, not being blessed with a very strong constitution