

THE

ONTARIO FARMER;

A MONTHLY JOURNAL OF

Agriculture, Horticulture, Country Life, Emigration, and the Mechanic Arts.

VOL. I.

TORONTO, NOVEMBER, 1869.

No. 11.

THANKSGIVING FOR HARVEST.

It is eminently proper that a professedly Christian people should, in their national capacity, make united acknowledgement of the goodness of God in harvest, by the observance of a day of thanksgiving. The right of Government to interfere authoritatively in religious matters is pretty generally disbelieved in now-a-days, and by distinct assertion on our Statute Book, all vestige of connection between Church and State has been done away with. But it is no way inconsistent with the order of things established among us, that our rulers should single out a day, and request its observance as a social and religious festivity, in view of the Divine bounties vouchsafed unto us. In default of governmental action the present year, the ecclesiastical authorities of some churches made choice of the fifth of the present month as a day of thanksgiving for harvest. In the town of Guelph, where we reside, three Presbyterian congregations, the Wesleyan Methodists, and the Congregationalists held Union Thanksgiving Services, in the forenoon at St. Andrew's Church, and in the evening at the Wesleyan Methodist Church. This arrangement, though in some respects a very good one, had its drawbacks in the necessary carrying on of business, and the inability of many to keep the day, owing to its observance not being general. We trust that in some way, provision may be made in future years for doing that on a general scale, which has been done the present season but partially and imperfectly.

Whether we observe a set day or no, prominent among our subjects of devout thanksgivings,

should be the Divine gift of another bountiful harvest. This good land has again yielded her increase, and it becomes us to reflect that we have herein a signal proof of the goodness and faithfulness of God. In the olden time, "He left not Himself without witness, in that He did good, and gave rain from Heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling men's hearts with food and gladness." So now, each harvest gives testimony that "God is love," for "Every good gift, and every perfect gift cometh down from above, even from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." The course of nature, though governed by established laws is, nevertheless, in one view of it, a standing miracle, a constant display of Almighty wisdom and power. In the eloquent language of another:—

"Suppose that, early in this year, the whole world had bent itself in supplication to the Invisible Ruler—every man and woman, from the Arctic circle to the hot Equator, kneeling in the humility of conscious dependence, and lifting up from every zone the prayer, 'Forsake us not this year, Great Benefactor, but bless us in our helplessness, from the treasury of thy goodness.' And suppose that, after such a verbal petition, the supply had come, that in every house had been found the water and the stores, the bounties of vegetable and animal food—how surprising would the mercy have seemed.

"But how much more surprising and inspiring is the real wonder, that such a shower upon a barren globe could be! With few prayers for it, the great miracle has been wrought, and in the double way of beauty and bounty. For what is the display of the seasons? Is not the quickening of nature in the early months of the year, as though God smiles upon the earth at the Equator? and then the spreading wave of that benignity sweeps northward, rolling back the water-line, loosing the fetters of the frost, melting snow into fertilizing juices, pressing the cold clouds farther and farther back, and from the tropics to the edges of the Polar seas gladdening the soil,