



To the Editor of The British American Cultivator.

London, (Canada West),  
September 12th, 1842. }

Sir,

In the Fall of 1840, I sowed 8 acres of land with rye; the plants looked well in the Spring, excepting about three quarters of an acre where the soil had not been so well prepared, and there the prospect of a crop was so indifferent, that I ploughed it up and sowed oats in the place of it. At the ensuing harvest both the rye and the oats proved to be a very fair crop. It being my intention to give the land a better fallow, it was ploughed that Fall, and received three ploughings during the following summer, and at seed time appeared in very good condition for a crop, and on the 18th of September was sown with wheat. Everything was promising until a short time before the grain came into ear, and then I observed that in spots it began to assume a yellow tinge; these spots increased in extent, and as the time for reaping drew nigh, the field, to a spectator at a distance, presented a black appearance. When harvested it was not all equally bad, but upon the land where the rye grew in the year previous to the fallow, the crop was very miserable. Now, I would have charged the failure to the unusual frosts we had in the month of June, as I know that a considerable quantity of Fall wheat was injured in this section of the country by these frosts; and I would have supposed that mine was the more likely to have been injured in this way, as the seed had only been a short time previous procured from England, and could scarcely be considered so hardy as that which had been so long in the country and has become properly acclimated. But one circumstance prevents me coming to this conclusion, and that is, that where the oats grew instead of rye in 1840, there the wheat was good and the straw of a healthy colour, and not one half so much infested with chaff as the rest of the field, which, I think, will nearly yield as much chaff as wheat. The soil of this field is chiefly a calcareous sand, with a fair admixture of vegetable matter. I do not consider it a first-rate wheat soil, but the land on which the oats grew, is no better than the rest of the field, and scarcely so good as some of it. Now, there being no perceptible difference, (to me at least), between the land that grew the oats and that which grew the rye, the subsequent being precisely the same, the same seed used, and all sown at the same period, how am I to account for the failure of the wheat on the rye land, and the goodness of that on the oat land, but by supposing that the rye crop had exerted on the soil an influence injurious to the growth of the wheat? I have enquired of some of my neighbours the result of their experience in rye growing, and I find that most of them are of opinion that it impoverishes the land more than any other crop. But, according to the experiments of Van Thier, it is no more exhausting in a general way to the land than oats or wheat; and I never heard that it was considered peculiarly injurious to succeeding crops in those parts of the North of Europe where it is most extensively grown. My object in making this communication to you is to endeavour to obtain information through the medium of your Journal, from some one who has had expe-

rience in the growing of rye. At present I do not feel at all partial to the crop, but as it is the first one I ever grew of it; I cannot therefore come to a positive conclusion upon the result of a single trial. For the honour of our Province, I rejoice at the establishment of a respectable Agricultural Journal among us. We all know the poor encouragement that is afforded to agriculture by the present prices of farm produce. If it is expedient that the Canadian farmer be shielded from the competition of a foreign state by fiscal regulations, your Journal presents a fitting opportunity for impressing upon the Government; the necessity of the imposition of these regulations. If our agriculture is to receive no protection of the kind, then we must the more earnestly endeavour to improve the culture of our lands and thus brave the competition. In any case it will be much to the interest of our farmers to support such a Journal as the *Cultivator*, they will thus have the means of exchanging their mutual experience, and of improving the practice of their art, so that at this age of progression, they may not be found among the last in the race.

WILLIAM ELLIOT.

#### THE NEW TARIFF.

Now that the new Tariff of Sir Robert Peel has opened the English market for salted meat and the produce of the dairy from British America, it may be useful to inquire how we are prepared to benefit by this privilege? Have we rich pastures, such as would be suitable for fattening cattle, or for making good cheese, fit for the English market? We are sorry to say that it would be difficult to find one hundred acres of land that could be properly termed 'rich pasture,' in any county in Eastern Canada. The pastures here are generally land that never was cultivated, or else land that had been in tillage the year previous, without having been sown with grass or clover seeds, and producing as much weeds as useful grass. There may be some fields of better pasture than we describe; but we never have seen in the country ten acres of pasture in one place, that would bear any comparison with the rich pastures in the British Isles; though we believe the land here is naturally of better quality than the land in Britain generally if managed as it is there. It may be answered, that this country is not so suitable, as regards climate, for rich pastures as the British Isles. Every part of it certainly is not; but most farmers have some land that is well calculated to be converted into good pasturage, that would hold good in almost every season. Indeed, there are many sections of the country that if properly managed and shaded with trees, would yield most excellent pasture throughout their whole extent. It is inconsistent to say that the country or climate are unsuitable for good pasture, until judicious measures have been adopted to make land into good pastures, and that these means have failed. We regret that hitherto no encouragement has been held out to fatten cattle or have a large dairy produce, because the home market was closed to us, and the Canadian market was constantly open to, and regularly supplied by a foreign produce. But notwithstanding

these discouragements, it would have been much better, under any circumstances, to allow some of our lands to repose in pasture to recover their fertility, than to keep them constantly ploughed, yielding every alternate year, scanty and weedy crops that would not remunerate the farmer for his seed and labour, at the common wages that is paid for labour. By having land in rich pasture, it is at all times ready to be converted to the most useful purpose. Lands under cultivated grasses in much more valuable in every country, than in any other state whatever. There is a vast difference between the value of land under cultivated grasses, and that which is exhausted of all fertility by constant and slovenly cultivation and cropping with grain, without any regard even to rotation. We hope our brother-farmers will pardon the confidence with which we write on this subject, as it is one in which we had some experience. The raising and fattening of cattle and keeping large dairies, would not require so much expenditure for labour that is at a high rate in proportion to the value of produce as tillage farming. No class of this community are so ill paid for their labour, and have so little profit upon their capital as the agricultural, and this is one cause that has made it unfashionable. Any business by which dollars are acquired and accumulated, will always have the preference to agricultural employment with all who desire to be fashionable; and this withdraws from agricultural pursuits the best educated, and many of the most talented young men, even though their parents should have been farmers, to the very great injury of agriculture. Educated men of talent would be highly useful as agriculturists. We hope the time will arrive that this occupation will offer as much encouragement to men to engage in it as any other trade. When justice is done to it this will be the case. It is an employment of which the most noble as well as those of gentle blood need not be ashamed. We may say more in favour of this occupation than we are justified in doing. We confess we are disposed to attract fashionable people to it, in the hope that by this means, more care and encouragement would be given to it, by those who are in influential situations. By every lawful means we shall constantly endeavour to advance the improvement and prosperity of agriculture; and if we are unsuccessful in our endeavours, we shall have the satisfaction to feel that we have done our duty.

We ought, in humanity, no more to despise a man for the misfortunes of the mind than for those of the body, when they are such as he cannot help; were this thoroughly considered, we should no more laugh at a man for his brains cracked, than for having his head broke.—*Pope*.

When any calamity has been suffered, the first thing to be remembered is, how much has been escaped.—*Dr. Johnson*.