

## Prize Essays.

Your editor has asked favors of you, and feels flattered with the responses that have been received. He thanks all who have kindly endeavored to aid him in giving useful information.

The request for articles on the cultivation of the turnip has brought forth writings from many of our subscribers. We find that the prize offered, although totally inadequate for the labor, has acted wonderfully. The value of the prize is of small account in comparison to the honor that would be attached to the recipient.—We do not take upon ourselves the responsibility of awarding the prize, but leave the decision in the hands of others whom we deem more competent to decide, and we will in no way interfere with the decision.

At the annual meeting of the members of the East Middlesex Agricultural Society we requested the appointment of one gentleman to confer with our assistant in awarding the prizes. Mr. Henry Anderson, the Secretary, was duly appointed.—He was so well pleased with the number and merit of the communications that he supplemented the prize offered by giving \$2 as a third one. We will not allow the second best article to go unrequited, so we award \$3 as the second prize. The giver of the first prize of \$5 does not wish his name to appear. We thank him for the very useful plan he has set on foot.

We propose to give more prizes for different subjects. We will give one of Vick's beautiful chromos for the best article on the cultivation of the carrot, and another for the best on the cultivation of the farmer's grape vine.

Articles on these subjects are to be confined to actual practice, such as the enjoyment of good farmers might adopt.—Chemical analyses and technical terms are not necessary; they may be subjects of future discussions. The writings to be at this office by the 20th of February.

## Disappointment.

How pleasant it is to meet with success. Our readers like it themselves; you may depend that we are pleased to send successful accounts to you of the Midge Proof, Deihl, Treadwell, Scott, McCarling, Farrow and other varieties of wheat. It gives pleasure to us and is profitable to you.

You are pleased to see your paper improved, and are glad to hear of its increasing circulation, but, notwithstanding the many pleasing features we have to chronicle from time to time, disappointment sometimes occurs. Perhaps it sweetens success when it comes.

As we promised our report on grasses, we reluctantly take our pen to write it under the above heading.

## GRASSES.

Last year we imported varieties of grasses in order to see if we could find any that would be of advantage to our pasture and meadow lands. The Hon. A. McKellar kindly gave us permission to have some sown on the Asylum farm, near this city; they were duly placed under the charge of the proper authorities, and space was allotted them on land that had been well drained, manured and cleaned. We went to examine them twice during the summer, and were well pleased with the growth and appearance of many varieties, although some either failed to grow or died out after germinating. Several varieties appeared very luxuriant and healthy, and looked as if they would be of advantage.

In the autumn, after the first frost, we went with the intention of procuring specimens and making a report of them before the winter set in, but, to our chagrin, all the grasses were, through some neglect or carelessness, turned under, and nothing but the bare ground was to be seen.

We felt much disappointed at this result of our first attempt to benefit ourselves and our readers at the expense of

the Government. We do not despair, but trust that another trial will be made and that better reports will be forthcoming.—Fortunately we have more strings to our bow than one.

## A RAY OF HOPE.

We give the following letter, as the writer had nearly all the varieties of grasses. We hope to hear a full account of them from this source. We have furnished seed to other gentlemen as well, but reports as to results have not as yet reached us. The following is a copy of the letter:

SIR,—I come before you as a delinquent. Last spring you sent me one peck of a very valuable garden pea, of which I have forgotten the name. You asked me to sow them for you, which I did in a suitable piece of land. They did remarkably well, being covered with long, well-filled pods, and ripening at least two weeks earlier than any other pea we have here.

I cut them at the proper time, and all would have been well had not a careless man left the gate open for the benefit of 100 sheep and lambs who seemed to know what I valued most in the field, for, although they had two other kinds of peas, white beans, wheat and carrots to choose from, they went for your garden pea.—Now, sir, what is to be done? I have only about a bushel left after all my trouble.—What I propose is that you should set the price of the peck of peas, which I am ready to pay you.

I sowed the English grasses you sent, and they are going through a severe ordeal this winter. I hope to write to you in the spring to report how they stood the test.

I enclose \$1, my subscription for 1873. I could not get on at all without your paper, for which I have quite an affection.—The Bresse's Prolific potatoes have done remarkably well. Yours truly,

SHIRLEY GOING.

Wolfe Island, Jan. 7th, 1873.

We will both pocket the loss done by the sheep. If you have no objection, you might sow the bushel next season, and we might spare a few quarts to the public.—We should be pleased to receive your report on the grasses.

## STILL IMPROVING.

We also obtained permission from the Bishop of Huron to allow his gardener at the Hellmuth Ladies' College to sow some flower seed for us. His report has been published. His farmer, Mr. Brett, also sowed various garden and field seeds and roots, but we did not place any grass seeds in their hands.

We publish the following pleasing communication in connection with this article:

SIR,—In reply to your question about seeds and implements, the seeds I got from you all turned out first rate, except two kinds of potatoes—the Australian and King of the Earlies; they are both too small and do not yield enough to suit me. But the Peerless variety makes up for everything; they are good; they yielded a much larger return than any other varieties I have, and I am so pleased with them that I shall plant them in preference to any other variety.

The mangolds, carrots and turnips were most satisfactory. One kind of turnip, the white-fleshed, grew the largest. I think it a fine variety.

The reaping machine I would not exchange for any I have yet seen. I am glad I went to see you before purchasing, as I was almost persuaded to take one from a travelling agent. W. B.

## Importance of the Butter Trade.

Of the amount received annually by the farmers of Canada for butter we have no returns, but we know it must be very large and of great importance to the country. It is computed that the aggregate value of the dairy products of the States, taking the official statistics as the basis of

calculation, cannot fall short of six hundreds of millions of dollars annually.—The official returns for butter, milk and cheese, amount to nearly two hundred and forty-two millions, eight hundred and twenty thousand dollars; this is exclusive of factory cheese, of which the returns had not been received at the time of making the report. There is also, not included in the report, the very large amount consumed by the producers themselves; as this cannot be summed up in the sales of which it forms a part, nor of it is any account kept. From the returns from official sources, as above, the total estimated value is, as stated, six hundred millions.

If we estimate the amount received for the products of our dairies in Canada from the data given above, in proportion to the relative population of each country, it would give us in round numbers about fifty millions of dollars. In an industrial pursuit of such pecuniary importance as this is, a strict attention to all the details of the dairy department would doubtless add very much to the wealth of the country.

## Caution.

Canadian farmers have been progressing favorably for several years past. We have profited at the expense of other countries; great improvements have been carried on both by public and private means; the coffers of our Government are well filled with cash; many farmers have a good bank deposit; property of all kinds commands high prices, and everything, apparently, is progressing very favorably.

Let us raise the curtain and take a view of the future. The British markets are our guide. The unsettled labor question that already caused the failure of many very large and wealthy farms in Europe; it has shaken the confidence of some of our manufacturers; it has caused a rise in everything we require.

The prospects of the British wheat crop for 1873 is most discouraging. It is already computed that it will be less than it has been for the past twenty years.—This year the potato crop alone in Great Britain falls short one million, four hundred tons—equal to forty million dollars. The potato bug has, in a great measure, prevented us from profiting by this great loss.

## OUR WHEAT PROSPECT.

Our wheat, which looked remarkably well when the snow covered it on the setting in of winter, is now in a precarious position. The thaw and heavy rains that set in between the 8th and 14th of January, turned the snow into water, and the frost setting in again before the water could escape, has coated the wheat fields in this locality with a sheet of ice. This is one of the most dangerous positions our wheat can be in, and we fear much damage may be done to the plant.

At the same time we do not say that our prospects are hopeless. Our wheat crop is in a position of great danger, but all that is in danger is not lost; it may yet do well. But threatened danger should make us act with prudent caution in all our speculations.

If our wheat should be a short crop, a depression will affect the money market, and many enterprising farmers may fail unless they act with caution in entering into liabilities. Land has gone up to a high price, and many are purchasing to hold.

We would suggest that greater caution be taken this year than usual. Remember the old adage: "After a storm comes a calm," and *vice versa*. You have had a long calm lately. Put a reef on the expenses in time. There are not many of our readers that may require this hint, still some may perhaps heed it when too late, as we are impressed with the belief that a depression in the value of most kinds of property will take place before many months pass away.

## A Proposed Tax on the Improved Estates of the Country.

## A TAX ON FARMERS.

We have before us a programme of recommendations and resolutions to be presented at the annual meeting of the Board of Trade, at Ottawa, 15th January, 1873. In this official programme it is proposed that a revenue of at least one mill per dollar be levied on the improved estates of the country. That this tax on industry (for such it undeniably is) is unjust, oppressive and unnecessary, must be evident to every one who gives the matter the slightest consideration. The owners of these estates, the proprietors of these cleared and improved farms, to whom we especially refer, are indebted for these improvements entirely to their own industry. Their own strong arms and indomitable perseverance have changed the wilderness into fertile fields. By their labor the forest has disappeared and fields of wheat and well stocked pastures bear witness to the industry of the owners. The wigwam has given place to the comfortable farm-houses and barns. And now comes the proposal to levy a tax on these improvements, the fruits of hard, incessant toil.

It would be doubtless a judicious measure to levy a tax on estates, but it should be on those that are unimproved. It should be one that would tend, not to discourage industry by laying a burden on improvements, but that would compel the owners of unimproved estates to contribute towards the revenue of the country. There are tracts of land in every section of the Dominion, owned by individuals and by companies, unimproved, and preventing improvements in their vicinity. On these estates a tax should be levied, not only to pay for their protection, but that their proprietors might thereby be brought to improve them, or to dispose of them to others who would make the improvements so conducive to the prosperity of the country.

But this short-sighted legislator, the proposer of this tax on labor, gives his reason for the measure—"It is in consideration of their protection and increase in value." The protection of our properties, of our homes and all that make our homes happy, depends not so much, in our Dominion, on standing armies and wealthy exchequers, as on the fidelity and bravery of her people. They know the privileges they enjoy, and they will maintain them. The yeomen of Canada "Have hearts resolved and hands prepared, The blessings they enjoy to guard."

But the unimproved and unoccupied estates are a source of weakness to the country. On these there are none to contend for their country in the hour of need, were such a day to come. And this is a reason why a tax should be laid on them, and not on those whose owners have improved them by years of hard toil. And the improved lands contribute much in every way to the prosperity of the country, the unimproved contribute nothing but are a source of weakness. "The increase of value," a reason for the proposed tax, is the product of the farmers hard labor. The tax may be well called a tax on labor and industry.

Let us look at the matter in detail, as it actually exists before our eyes:—Here are two adjoining townships, or two "estates" in one township. One is improved, the other unimproved. From one the bush has disappeared. For years it has produced wheat, beef and pork for the neighboring markets and for export, adding every year to the wealth of the country. The owner has erected buildings on it where he and his family have lived and labored, purchasing in the country what they needed, thus adding continually to the revenue. His sons are enrolled in the militia, the strength and protection of the Dominion. The other estate is still unimproved—it is as both farms were a few years since, a wilderness. From it not one dollar has been contributed to the revenue of the country—not one aim raised in de-

fence. It is tempted—this improvement profit is to labor or neighbor. pose additional farm, on a levied.—A

P. S.—Board of and though by the means of its own still deem such measures to the country a be on our to legislate of this He is de snake is measure of modify the products of in our next to keep fr agricultural terests of gross are must resign Asst. Ed.

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