

that the late financial crisis was a blessing to the country, and is now working beneficially, to the farming community especially. During that unparalleled season of good crops and famine prices, men became intoxicated with success; their ambition knew no bounds. Every man who could raise twenty dollars, or could get credit at all—and who couldn't then?—must speculate in some way. Among farmers there was a land mania. Land, more land, was their maxim, and no matter what the price. If they had to give four times its value, and hire money at 25 per cent. to meet their payments, it was done, without reflection as to consequences. We know the result. Markets fell as suddenly as they rose, crops failed, and thousands were ruined, while but few were permanently benefitted. Those who were content with one farm, and were not affected with the speculative fever, are now prospering, and many of them on the road to comfort and opulence.

Notwithstanding the gloomy forebodings of a few discontented persons about the "awful state of the country," and the "deplorable condition of the funds," Canada never had a better prospect before it than at present. Farmers are living within their means; and those who incurred debts during the good (?) times are fast freeing themselves therefrom. Piles of lumber and shingles; large quantities of hewn timber, and, not unfrequently, stacks of bricks and heaps of stones, are drawn together, ready for building operations during the next summer. This is the present state of things all over the country; and surely there is nothing discouraging in this?

It is also pleasing to know that the morbid desire for extension of surface is fast giving way to the more profitable and satisfactory mode of extension of soil, viz., by underdraining and subsoiling. More attention is given to the collecting and preserving the fertilizing elements contained in manures; a more systematic rotation of crops is adopted; naked summer fallows give place to root and green crops; more attention is paid to gardens and orchards; homesteads are rendered more attractive by planting ornamental trees, &c.; in fact farming is beginning to assume its proper position, and is now looked upon as a science, worthy the attention of the intellectual student.

You, Mr. Editor, have a great responsibility resting on you. The *Agriculturist* being the only agricultural paper in West-

ern Canada, it should "lift its banner on high," and take a noble stand; endeavour to create a national literature worthy of the country and the people it represents; depend more upon home productions than foreign. There is sufficient talent among the farmers of Canada to make the *Agriculturist* one of the best papers on the continent; it only requires to be brought out in some way.

By reference to the columns of the *Genesee Farmer* you will find, that eight of the twenty-one premiums given to agents, were taken by residents in Canada West; and I have no doubt that the circulation of that paper is larger here than in any one State in the Union.

You will, also, find that there is about the same proportion of correspondents in Canada West. In my opinion the secret of their success lies in this general correspondence from all parts of the Northern States and Canada. Farmers have adopted it as their own paper; where they can freely communicate their thoughts and experience—it may be—in a home-spun way; still it is comprehensible and practicable. Now, I see no reason why this correspondence may not be diverted, or brought to contribute to the success of *our own Canadian paper*. Surely there ought to be sufficient patriotism among farmers to prefer a provincial before a foreign production, if the article is equally as good. There is no reason why any present subscriber to the *Genesee Farmer* should give it up when 37½ cents will pay for so much valuable reading—but I do think that we ought to do as much for the *Agriculturist*, and assist the managers to give it a national standing and render it not only interesting and profitable, but also a high authority on agricultural matters generally.

There is no reason why its circulation should not reach to twenty thousand copies. Its price is almost nothing and it has the advantage of being free of postage.

I may be presuming too much, Mr Editor, but your cordial invitation in the last number has induced me to do what I before hesitated at doing. With your permission, I would now urge upon brother farmers to take this matter up, and see what will be the result by the end of the present year.

Yours, &c.,

SIGMA.

East Zorra, Feb. 14th, 1860.