



Our Social and Industrial Condition.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER:

SIR,—I am occasionally favoured, in a private manner, with suggestions and information generally more or less practical and important, in relation to the condition of our agriculture and the improvement of the farming community. The following letter was received a short time since, and perhaps you will give it, with a few remarks of my own, a place in your useful and widely circulated journal. The writer's name and address I am not authorized to make public. The letter is as follows:—

SIR,—I have seen a number of your communications in THE CANADA FARMER, descriptive of the progress in agricultural matters in different parts of the Province, and I think much that you have said both truthful and judicious. But stranger though I be to you, and in a very different walk of life, being a practical farmer from early youth, I respectfully beg to suggest a few remarks from my stand point, as an interchange of ideas from those in very different positions may be of mutual advantage sometimes.

Your correspondent, both from experience and observation, is of the opinion that the great drawback to agriculture in Canada is the want of good, willing workers, in the shape of ploughmen and dairy maids. Of all other classes we seem to have a superabundance already in this new country. The streets of our cities are thronged with idlers, at every railway station or wharf there are to be seen crowds upon crowds who seem to have no lawful calling. But look at the harvest field, and you will see one man, or it may be two, working to the very point of endurance, and who are thus made strangers to the joys of harvest as they should be, were all to turn out who are able. The very few who have to gather in the fruits of the earth in America are so overtaken that their spirits are broken, and their very countenances assume a desponding cast, for they well know that there are thousands in the country of cooks, chair-rockers, piano players, novel readers, buggy riders, whi-key drinkers, visitors and pic-nic-ers, and an endless variety of the non-productive classes, who by some means will manage to get the benefit of their honest industry.

Now, sir, were our public teachers and agricultural publications to endeavour both by example and precept to stir up both men and women, all ranks and all ages, to take to farm work according to ability, your correspondent thinks it would do more good than all that is written about chemistry and the strata of rocks. As we learn both from sacred and profane history, husbandry has always been considered the most honest, the most useful, the most healthy and the most honourable of all employments, while the merchants and money changers have been termed "a den of thieves;" so that it is difficult to understand how it is in this country that almost every young person seems to think it degrading to work on a farm. In the course of your peregrinations through the country, you must often have been struck with the disparity of the numbers in the harvest field and of those around the farmer's table; this I take to be a greater drawback on farming in America than the midge in the wheat, or the weevil either. There is much talk about education in this age, but I often suspect that there is a popular delusion upon what a good education really is. I can find plenty of help to read newspapers, but have to clean out the cow-house alone. I find men who can tell me the length of the Mississippi, but cannot tell how far apart potato drills ought to be, and women who can play on the piano, but cannot make a shirt, far less butter or cheese.

As a very great number of our migrating population have been, for a shorter or longer time, the inmates of boarding houses or hotels, it is my impression that far too many boarding house manners are now introduced into the private circle of the farmer's family—too many either for health or economy. We all know that in a well conducted farming establishment there may be an ample supply of all the essential elements of food, and of the most genuine, healthy, and nutritive kind, at all times; but in the farmer's domestic circle there can be no propriety in imitating the five-dollar-a-week style of the hotel, with all the variety of dishes, the jingle of crockery and crystal, foreign ingredients and worthless con-

diments, which neither make blood, bone nor muscle, but merely act on the nervous system, and drain the purse; while the farmer, not perceiving how the avails of his labour are leaking out, is apt to blame the country, or the climate, or it may be the Canada thistle.

My correspondent is mistaken if he supposes that from my stand point I have been insensible to the evils of which he complains. On several fitting occasions, I have acknowledged and deplored their existence. Every one conversant with Canadian society, rural or urban, must have observed a growing tendency in our youth to avoid as much as possible the duties that involve hard and serious work. In this respect we are not peculiar, as the same habit of mind is equally evinced by our neighbours on the other side of the lines, and also, I dare say, in various degrees, among the people of other countries.

I think, however, that my correspondent has stated the case in a manner somewhat one-sided and extreme. While deploring the fact that too many young people of both sexes show an indisposition to undertake cheerfully and in right earnest the indispensable duties of country life, I must say that, from a pretty extensive acquaintance with Canada and its people, I have good reason to hope that these evils, however serious, are not so extensive as the strong language of my correspondent would indicate. I have been the temporary inmate of hundreds of Canadian farmers' families, and as regards industry and domestic comfort, they will, I believe, compare not unfavourably with similar classes in other countries. The great error into which young men in the country are liable to fall, consists in forming a low estimate of the pursuits of rural life, of not appreciating the true worth and dignity of human labour, and of indulging in utopian expectations of the ease and attractions of life in cities, the inmates of which generally work as hard, bodily or mentally, as do the people of the country. It is a palpable mistake to suppose that young men can rise in life, either in professional or commercial pursuits in cities, without good natural talents accompanied by indomitable industry and perseverance. Among all these classes are to be found men of the strictest probity and unshaken honour.

To induce young people in the country to follow the pursuits of their fathers in cultivating the soil, they must be imbued with a love of rural life, by gradually opening their minds to the perception of the beauties and wonders in nature by which they are every day surrounded. They should be taught both by precept and example that agriculture is the most important and healthful of all industrial pursuits, and that now-a-days it is as much a science as an art. Just as the mechanics of agriculture advance in the improvement of implements and machines, the muscular drudgery of the farmer diminishes; and it is impossible to set limits to the operations of these ameliorating agencies. Farming for the future will make a greater demand on brain than muscle, and as a business, intelligently conducted, will afford profits equal to the average of other pursuits.

In journeying through the country, I have certainly often had to regret the evident want of a sufficient number of "willing workers" on the farm, and the extensive labour to which a few have been consequently subjected, particularly during harvest, when, no doubt, the physical strength of many people is tried to an extent that is incompatible with health and longevity. Under such circumstances it must be admitted that our agriculture cannot advance, and its profits must be seriously reduced. The only adequate remedy I can see to this state of things is a constant stream of immigration, sufficiently large to meet our annually increasing wants. It is to be hoped that this vital subject will receive the earliest possible attention both from our general and local legislatures.

Toronto, Dec., 1867.

GEO. BUCKLAND.

HAND POWER STUMPING MACHINE.—Mr. H. Y. Read makes enquiry respecting a "Hand Power Stumping Machine," mentioned in one of our issues in 1865, as manufactured by Messrs. Patterson & Bros., of Richmond Hill. We have written to Messrs. Patterson on the subject, but having received no reply, are led to suppose that the machine referred to is not now manufactured.

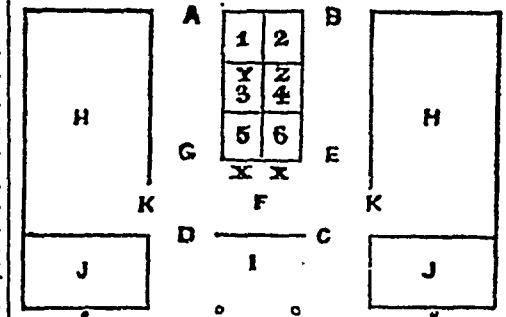
Plan of a Barn.

A CORRESPONDENT, Mr. White, of Collingwood, has sent us the following communication and plan, which we consider of merit sufficient to justify their publication:—

Three points should be aimed at, in building a barn.

First,—Room to mow away grain; Second,—To be able to mow the grain with as little labor as possible; and Third,—To secure as much convenience as possible for threshing, storing away grain, and preserving the straw and chaff for future use.

The following plan, which has been adopted in building a barn for Mr. W. White, Collingwood township, during the past summer, seems to combine these requisites:



A, b, c, d, 12 feet double doors; e, f, g, barn floor: h, h, mows; 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, bins; i, j, stables with doors at o. The centre of the bins is made fast; the sides next the floor and the ends are made with loose boards to slide in a groove, so that access can be had to any bin independent of the other. With a barn about thirty feet wide the boxes in a threshing machine will be about at e, or g, on the floor, and by having the sides of the bins all up, a person at x can take the boxes and empty them in bins 1 or 2, putting in the ends y, z, as they are filled up, and so on the other four bins. To find the capacity of a bin in bushels, multiply the number of cubic feet by 8 and cut off the right hand figure. Thus, a bin 6 x 7, and eight feet deep, is equal to 336 solid feet, which, multiplied by 8, gives 268.8 or 269 bushels. This rule allows a trifle for waste. When threshing on one side the chaff can be run through on the other, and when one mow is empty by having the openings at k, all the feed can be kept in the barn close to the doors for feeding out. The granary is 8 feet high, and above it is a good sized mow, also over the doors and over the stables. The barn floor is all sleepered; and the mows laid with double inch boards, the rest of the floor with 2-inch plank on inch boards. The top soil is all taken away from under the barn, and plenty of room left for dogs and cats as well as rats and mice.

The Divining Rod, for finding out Suitable Places for Digging Wells.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER:

SIR,—You will perhaps be surprised at being asked for your opinion respecting the supposed virtue of a small hazel fork revolving in the hands of seemingly gifted persons, over certain places only; as in the following case, which lately came under my notice.

A young farmer residing in the neighbouring township of Roxborough, being about to dig a well, was at a loss to select a suitable place, as several not very successful attempts had previously been made to get water. He was advised by some of his neighbours to secure the services of a person who accidentally happened to be in the neighbourhood, and was said to be an adept at finding out the desired spot by means of the divining rod. Having provided himself with the necessary prong, he walked over the ground in several directions, in parts of which the fork was