

ny towards it,—no difference between those who would form the strength of its armies in case of war, and those who would form the strength of its enemies in such a case. If this be wise and just, the Canadian farmer cannot see it, cannot understand why his country and his government should place no more value on him and his interests, than on foreigners and their interests, cannot conceive why he should not be allowed the same favour here as other countries give to their agriculturists. Hence, a strong desire prevails for placing Canadian agriculture on a better foundation, by giving it protection against the competition of foreigners, and a free admission into the English markets, as the growth or manufacture of British territory, labour, and capital.

But in order to understand the question, it is necessary to take into consideration several circumstances which affect Canadian agriculture, and from which no legislation can relieve it. If we suppose that all that is wanted to render our farmers uniformly prosperous, and enable them to acquire wealth as easily as other classes of the community, is to be done by act of Parliament, we shall commit a weighty mistake, be doomed to see much of our labour fruitless, and be mortified by disappointment where we expected the fruition of our hopes and desires. We must endeavour to ascertain how far legislation can help us, and how far we must help ourselves, and how far time and the general progress of the country must help us. If we expend our efforts on what is impracticable or unattainable, we shall not only lose our labour, but be prevented from pursuing such benefits as may be attained. In order to act with a just understanding of what the result of our efforts will be, we must investigate the whole question closely, and take into account every fact or circumstance that can contribute to produce that result, or modify it in any degree whatever. To omit any element essential to the calculation would be as fatal to the result, as the omission of a figure in working a question in arithmetic would be. To form a correct judgment we must omit nothing.

Canadian agriculture is subject to a disadvantage from the very circumstance which forms one of its advantages, namely, the cheapness of land, and consequent easiness with which it may be acquired. From this cause great numbers settle on land, and contribute to swell the amount of its produce, but

they are without the least power of controlling that produce so as to make it most beneficial to themselves, by taking advantage of the state of markets, holding on when markets are low, and selling when they are high. In commercial affairs this is an important power, and the man who possesses it will make money when others lose who have it not. In trades or employments that require but little or no capital, there are always numerous competitors, petty of course, but living on the smallest gains, and thereby keeping out of the business persons of larger means and larger expenses. Among these petty competitors there is no storing by, or waiting for better prices. Every article that is made must be sold as fast as it is made, and, to use a common phrase, each one lives "from hand to mouth." This is too much the case with our farmers. They cannot wait for better prices, but must bring their produce to market, fetch what it may. Now when a whole class are in this situation, that they have not the least control over the prices at which they shall sell the products of their industry, they are not only subject in all its rigour to the general law of supply and demand, but are utterly unable to guard against speculators who combine to purchase the farmer's produce at very low rates, knowing that he is unable to help himself. Let us suppose a case in illustration. A farmer goes into a merchant's store, and asks the price of a piece of cloth.—He is told, say, 15s. per yard. He thinks this too high, and offers, say, 10s. No, says the merchant, the cloth cost me more than that.—I cannot afford it lower than 15s., and if you will not give that price you cannot have it at all. So far so good. The merchant has capital, and he holds on to his goods rather than sell them at ruinous prices. Now reverse the picture. The farmer has wheat for sale, and he is asked the price. He answers, 4s. 6d. per bushel, and he is offered 3s. 6d. He should then be able to say,—No. It costs me more than that to raise it. I cannot afford my wheat under 4s. 6d. per bushel, and if you will not give that you cannot have it at all. Every body knows that, how much soever a farmer may wish to use these words, there is not one in a thousand in a situation to do so. On the contrary, after much chaffering, and many exclamations against bad times and ruinous prices, and many warm wishes that Parliament would interfere for the farmer's benefit, he is