

On the Cultivation of Wheat in Canada, and on the Season of 1862.

In the July and August numbers of this Journal we noticed the "Home Manufactures of Canada," and the "Use we make of our Mineral Resources," we now propose to devote a few pages to the Industry of the Soil, and the Manufactures which are dependent upon a constant and cheap supply of grain. In collecting material for this subject, the extraordinary fluctuations in the production of wheat in Lower Canada came so prominently into view, when contrasted with the rapid and steady increase in Upper Canada, that we were led to devote more space to this important subject than would appear to belong to the pages of this Journal, and our notice of "the Cultivation of Wheat in Canada and of the season of 1862," has resulted to a far greater extent than was anticipated, when a mere introduction to the condition of different manufactures in the Province, dependent upon a supply of rye, barley, wheat, and Indian corn was in contemplation.

There are many important questions which require solution, with respect to the cultivation of Wheat in Canada.

Two facts are patent to all from the results of the last census. These are:—

First; The cultivation of wheat is rapidly diminishing in Lower Canada, and the quantity raised does not amount to one-half what is required to feed her population, assuming that each man, woman and child consumes five bushels only per annum.

Second; The cultivation of spring wheat is rapidly increasing in Upper Canada, and more than twice the quantity of land is devoted to spring wheat than to fall wheat.

With regard to the first statement—namely the diminution in the cultivation of wheat in Lower Canada—we find that section of the Province formerly exported a very considerable quantity of wheat, the produce of her own soil. The following table shows the exports of wheat from Quebec between 1793 and 1802, inclusive;

Year.	Wheat, bus.	Flour.	Biscuit, cwt.
1793.....	478,900	19,000	9,800
1794.....	414,000	13,700	15,000
1795.....	395,000	18,000	20,000
1796*.....	3,106	4,300	3,800
1797.....	31,000	14,000	8,000
1798.....	92,000	9,500	12,000
1799.....	129,000	14,400	21,500
1800.....	217,000	20,000	25,000
1801.....	473,000	38,000	32,000
1802.....	1,010,033	28,300	22,051

In 1802 the population of Upper Canada did not exceed 60,000 souls, and there is no reason to suppose that that part of the Province contributed much wheat for export previous to 1802.

*The exportation of wheat was prohibited this year, in consequence of the bad crops of 1795.

The frontier States of the Union did, no doubt, contribute flour and wheat "in casks." We will therefore strike out from the above table all the exports of flour and biscuits, and credit them to the frontier States and Upper Canada, amounting to 855,500 bushels wheat, and 169,451 cwt. biscuit, from 1793 to 1802, a period of ten years.

With these deductions, the total quantity of wheat of Lower Canada growth exported between 1793 and 1802, amounted to 3251,139 bushels, or at the rate of three hundred and twenty-five thousand bushels per annum.

The quantity of wheat raised in Lower Canada in 1827, '31, '44, '51 and '60 was as follows, showing no increase, but, in proportion to the population, an extraordinary and indeed alarming decrease:

Year	No. of bushels.
1827	2,931,240 (1)
1831	3,404,756
1844	942,835
1851	3,045,600 (2)
1860	2,563,144 (3)

The quantity required to feed the population of Lower Canada, at five bushels per head, the usual allowance, is 5,553,320 bushels. Hence the people of Lower Canada, if they consumed wheat after the manner of their forefathers, would require an importation of not less than 2,990,206, or nearly three million bushels.

Nor is this decrease compensated by the production of other kinds of grain in due proportion. The total amount of barley, rye, peas, oats, buckwheat and Indian corn, raised in 1851, amounted to 12,147,000 bushels, and in 1860 to 23,534,903 bushels; † an increase of 11,387,533 bushels—not in fact even doubling in ten years, while during the same the population increased from 890,271 to 1,110,664 souls.

The comparison between Upper and Lower Canada stands thus in relation to population and the production of the following articles:

	Upper Canada.	Lower Canada.
Population, 1851	952,004	860,261
" 1861	1,306,091	1,110,664
Wheat crop of 1860, bus	24,620,425	2,563,114
Indian corn, rye, oats, barley, buckwheat and peas	36,122,340	23,534,903

Total bus. grain in 1860..60,742,765 26,098,017

Proportion of grain produced in Upper Canada to each inhabitant, 43 bushels.

Proportion of grain produced in Lower Canada to each inhabitant, 23 bushels.

The change is astonishing which has taken place in Lower Canadian husbandry during the

(1) Rouchette (2) Census 1851-'2. (3) Mr. Galt's Budget Speech.

† Mr. Galt's Speech.