

Agricultural Department of our Government.

Canada on all hands, is supposed to be an agricultural country, and in fact is likely to remain such for a long time to come, owing to the scarcity of capital and the thorough absence of manufacturing enterprise that appears to pervade the mind of our population. It therefore seems reasonable that every encouragement should be given by Government, by which the agriculture of the province could be placed upon a healthy footing.

To us it appears strange, that none of our wise politicians should have recommended an agricultural department of our Government. A minister of agriculture in Canada would do much towards making agricultural improvement popular, and it would be a certain means of developing the agricultural resources of the province. The duties that would be imposed upon this department of our government, would be such, that efficient steps would necessarily have to be taken to give encouragement to the growth of new plants; and the improvements in machinery and other branches of productive labour made in the province, would be brought prominently before the notice of the public. In fact, such a minister, in such an exclusively agricultural country, would have to thoroughly identify himself with every movement that would tend to develop the unproductive resources of the province. Facts, should now be deemed the only solid foundation for the superstructures of modern statesmen. Our Legislators are not much interested in the development of the great resources of our country, and we apprehend that this state of things will exist until we have a department in our government, the business of the head officer of which, would be to watch over the productive interests of our land. Such a minister or officer of our government, could obtain a thorough knowledge of the statistics of the country, which should embrace every fact relating to its condition and welfare, both physical and moral, and without such knowledge on the part of our statesmen it is impossible to legislate wisely for its interests. The agricultural products of Canada might be greatly increased, if judicious steps were taken by our government to bring about that end. New products should be cultivated, and those that are only partially and indifferently understood, should be brought into extensive cultivation.

Our wheat and potato crops will in all probability go out of cultivation for a few years, unless efficient remedial measures be found that will have the influence of destroying the insects that are preying upon those important crops. The loss that will be sustained from the depredations of these insects will be severely felt by the government and people of this country, and the peculiar situation of the Province demands, in our opinion, that Agriculture should form a part of the government of our country.

We have, we are happy to say, a Governor General who properly estimates the importance of encouraging agricultural improvement, and it is to be hoped that the people themselves have sufficient intelligence to bring before the notice of their Legislators such improvements as would have the influence of increasing the products and wealth of our country and people.

Improvement in Agriculture.

The following glance at some of the improvements which have been made in agriculture within the last fifty years, is from the pen of Alexander Walsh, Esq.:

The Plough.—In this implement the advance in thirty years has been truly astonishing. There is scarcely less difference between the neat cast-iron plough of the present time, and the clumsy wooden article used for the purpose at that period, than between that and the iron pointed croquet stick used by the ancients. In the case of working and the effect produced on the soil, every man competent to judge will admit, that the difference effected by improvement in the last thirty years, is equal to fifty per cent.

Threshing Machine.—Experience shows that the farmer who gets out and sells his grain in autumn, admitting that the prices are the same, realized at least ten per cent more than he who does not dispose of his crop till the following spring. But it may be safely asserted, that in grain growing districts, the whole force of the farm, if devoted to that object alone, would not be able to bring his grain into market in the fall, if threshed by hand. Hence the threshing machine has come to aid, and does the work so much better and quicker than it can be done by hand, that the getting out of a thousand bushels of wheat is counted a small affair.

The Horse Rake.—With this instrument, on land fitted as meadows always should be, one man and a horse will do the work of six men with hand rakes. The value of this labor saving me-