

AGRICULTURAL.

[FOR THE BEE.]

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE STATE OF
AGRICULTURE IN NOVA SCOTIA, AND THE
MEANS OF ITS IMPROVEMENT.

No. 3.

ON THE AGRICULTURAL STATE OF THE
COUNTRY.

Mr. Dawson,

Sir,—This is a part of my proposed plan that I enter upon with the greatest diffidence, being conscious that I cannot handle the subject in the way it deserves: but in hopes it may stimulate some one more adequate to the task to take up the pen, I proceed, and in the first place, I would observe, that as agricultural affairs are so connected with the other concerns of the country, I may be led to touch lightly upon some of them in going along. Farmers, at the same time that I would say, look well to your fields and flocks, I would say, look around you in the world; and by comparing our own state with that of others, I doubt not but you will see matter of congratulation, while at the same time we may discover something to reprehend. That in the course of Providence we enjoy many blessings for which we ought to be thankful I admit, but that we are improving these blessings as we ought I deny. From the local situation of N. Scotia, its resources internal and external, if properly brought into action, it might soon rival any of the British American possessions: but while we hear of some of them opening canals, and others projecting metal railways, we look on with seeming apathy: the ill-planned and worse executed Shubenacadie canal seems to have paralysed all our efforts in that way: "although the best laid schemes o' mice and men gang aft aglay," we should not fold our hands; rather let us strive to arouse the dormant energies of our country, and if we cannot lead the van, let us follow in the rear of the march of improvement. I attribute the greater part of the inactivity that prevails, and consequent distress, to the premature influx of luxury, occasioned by the unnatural flow of wealth into the country, during the war between Great Britain and the States of America. It led to habits of dissipation in a good many—to finery and idleness in others, and so on. It is commonly said, 'light come, light gone,' this was verified from the way in which money, both public and private, was applied or rather misapplied; farm produce brought such a price that a farmer thought there was no risk in laying aside the moccasin himself, and his wife the homespun gown—and substituting in their place boots and silk; and from this and a corresponding train of expences, I have little doubt but debts were contracted then that are not discharged to this day: every one then seemed to think that he could not get enough of land, and from the great demand, the price about doubled in a few years; but purchasers soon saw that it was likely to be a losing concern, and from that time to this there have been a good many law suits in consequence, and as there are few wish to work for nothing, the lawyers had to be paid, and the parties often left penniless. It is an easy matter to increase our expences, but it requires some self-denial to circumscribe them: those who had it in their power still indulged in luxuries, even after the cause that introduced them ceased to give them support; hence new resources had to be looked for. Those who had the management of the public money employed it pretty freely, and when the coffers were emptied, recourse was had to the issuing paper representing money, upon the faith of the country refunding it; but as there are Quit Rents, Secretary's fees, and a great many other things

of that kind to pay, unless there is a course of retrenchment entered upon and persevered in, it may soon become a part of the funded debt, and the country have to pay interest upon it. The lumber trade presented another tempting source of supplying the demand, but as it was thought till lately, that it could not be carried on without the use of that demoralising, health and peace destroying article—Rum, a good part of the proceeds was destroyed by the too free use of it; and frequently, from making miscalculations, these engaged in it were involved in debt: I do not say that this proceeds from any fault in the trade itself, but from the way in which it is conducted. If farmers would lay out the first spare money they could command, in getting good ploughs and carts in place of chaises and sleighs, it would answer a good purpose—it might enable them soon to get the others, and things go on more easily. Another drawback to the prosperity of the country is, that too many wish to live without labour; every idle man is a burden on those who work; if every lounge were to set actively to work, he would soon feel more comfortable, and his labour would tell in the appearance of the country. The high price of labour tends to retard improvement without benefitting those in a general way who earn it. If the Legislature were to fix the rate of wages in public works at about 2s. 6d. a day, it might do something to correct the evil; and if some member who would merit the title Honble. would set the example, by introducing a bill to lessen the wages of said Honble. Members, the thing might be effected. In hopes that some abler hand may wield the pen in the cause, I shall say no more at present, but remain

Yours truly,

OLD RUSTICUS.

[FOR THE BEE.]

Mr. Editor,

Temperance, or as they rather should be called, according to the plan on which they are at present constituted, *Abstinence Societies*, have formed of late the subject of much and keen discussion. The question is one of no inconsiderable moment. That such Societies should have encountered even violent opposition, need not seem strange. While mankind are fond of novelty, they are at the same time prone, from a narrow perversity, to exclaim against real improvements, but in the introduction of which they have had no individual share, as at least suspicious, if not dangerous innovations. Besides this general source of opposition, there are other circumstances which have exercised a powerful influence in augmenting and maturing hostility to Temperance Societies. There is the stubborn power of long established custom; with which are associated false notions of friendship and social affection; a strong love of sensual gratification; and with many the calculating views of interest. That feelings in connection with such circumstances, have been in arms against the Societies of which we speak, is undeniable.

Not a few who have spoken and written against the Temperance cause, have charged its friends with substituting it, as a means of reforming the morals of mankind, in place of the Gospel. This is a very plausible objection, and has had no small weight with those, who think but superficially on the subject. We are far from defending all that the *sincere* friends of the system have written; nay, much of it we condemn, as it appears to us untenable. But as respects the objection now mentioned, we maintain that it is plausible *only*. We shall admit that some of the friends of Temperance Societies, do prefer these to the Gospel, and show that they feel much more interest in them. But who ought to vindicate conduct of this description? Besides, this ex-

ample, erroneous though it be, does not prove that such Societies are in themselves wrong. It merely shews, that they attach a preference to what is less valuable, or, it may be, while advocates of temperance, they have no esteem for the Gospel at all. Farther, we shall admit, to give the authors of the objection all manner of justice, that some of the supporters of the temperance system may have so acted, and spoken and written, as to warrant the objectors in saying, that the former really *wish* to substitute such societies in place of religion. To this we reply as above. The conduct of such friends is highly reprehensible; but still, this is far from shewing, that the societies in question are, in principle, vicious, and ought to be suppressed. But we have reason to think, that the concessions now made, are much more liberal, than the case requires. It is our conviction, and we think it is well founded, that by far the major part of the advocates of Temperance Societies, have never entertained the remotest idea of substituting these, in place of the Gospel; nor have given the slightest grounds for the objection, which has been often and carefully presented by the enemies of the system, in its most formidable and effective aspects. But even although all the advocates of the temperance cause, should come forward, and declare that they *do* intend to make the substitution with which they are charged, still even this would not prove, that Temperance Societies, in themselves, are necessarily wrong. In themselves, after all, they may be good and useful, although supported in a manner the most condemnable. If they could be vindicated in no other way than at the expense of the Gospel, we would say at once, dismiss them altogether. But we think, and we hope to be able to show, that they can be supported in perfect consistency with the high claims of christianity. The principle of Temperance Societies is quite distinct from the real or supposed course which some of the friends of the system may have pursued. Any measure, and the manner in which it is upheld, should never be confounded. And from the mistakes which may be connected with the latter, shall we necessarily infer, that the former is essentially faulty. This, however, is the spirit of the objection against Temperance Societies, which we have now considered.

I intend to send you soon some further remarks. M.

QUERY

[FOR THE BEE.]

Is it not an imposition in the spirit, as well as an intrusion on the privileges, of any class of His Majesty's subjects, to have a Magistrate nominated from another quarter of the country for them, without even asking the opinion of, or acquainting, a single respectable individual of those among whom he was destined to act, of the matter—asserting as a pretext, to sanction such clandestine proceedings that neither the natural or acquired capacity of those nominated for that purpose, were competent for the responsibility of the station; individuals whose integrity stands unimpeachable, residents from their infancy among ourselves, and recommended by the unanimous approbation of the community among whom they reside?—In my simple conjecture, Mr. Editor, it is precisely the same reasons that *Tatler* gave in your last number, in his admirable letter to Lawyers, why a Farmer should not be a Representative, because they are not Gentlemen—although I have always been taught to consider "gentility without ability, as a pudding without fat;" at all events, it looks something like the meaning of the word "*iniquitas præpotentium*" or "partiality" among our Solons—*quid putasne?*

ATHANATUS.

[In answer to the above Query, we would say, that however desirable it may be that the appointment of Magistrates should be regulated by the people's choice, it is a power which although sought, has not so far as we know been conceded to the people in any part of the British dominion, except in Upper Canada. The example of that Province, should en-