

THE

# CANADIAN AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL.

VOL. I.

MONTREAL, APRIL 1, 1844.

No. 4.

Since our last number was prepared for publication we have seen a considerable portion of three States of the Union, and of the Eastern Townships of Canada, and though the season of the year was not the most favourable for observing the state of agriculture, we have seen much that was interesting. As regards climate, and the quantity of snow in both countries, we could not perceive any difference, until we arrived in the neighbourhood of Boston. There, very little snow was to be seen, and in the latter end of February, wheel carriages were in use in Boston. We would, however, prefer snow and ice in our streets until the 1st of April, rather than have them in the state of the Boston streets, so early in the season, before there is fine weather to dry them. With regard to winter roads, we found those in the United States much more easy and convenient to travel upon, than the roads of Canada, though we did not see any one employed upon them, or the mark of any work done upon them. The simple cause that they were better and more convenient than the Canadian roads, was, that suitable carriages are made use of more generally in the United States, than with us. They seldom have any other than double sleighs for every purpose, except for pleasure, and when they use single sleighs, they have the shafts so attached to the one side, that the horse travels in the track of the runner, and by this means, a ridge of snow is left in the centre of the road, that prevents the possibility of a carriage of any other construction passing upon them. When carriages meet upon these roads there is no difficulty in passing each other, by simply moving one of the runners of the sleigh out of the track and leaving a firm footing for each horse, with the centre ridge of snow between them. As a proof that this mode of attaching shafts to winter carriages is the best, we did not, in a distance of more than 400 miles, once come in contact with any other carriage in passing, notwithstanding that many of the teams we met had from 4 to 8 horses to them; some had oxen, and the carriages were in several instances very large, and wide; but when we came within the Canada lines, we found the greatest difficulty in passing other carriages, in consequence of the different state of the roads, there being few double sleighs, and all single sleighs having the shafts attached to the centre, and a great number of common trains constantly, in use upon the public roads. Good winter roads are of so much importance in this country that it is difficult to find any reasonable excuse for those who persist, contrary to law, in using carriages that make bad roads. Not only are cahots formed by our carriages, but deep furrows are cut at one side of the road, that are more disagreeable

than cahots. This deep furrow is formed in consequence of the horses travelling in the middle instead of the track of the runners, which would harden the roads and prevent the runners cutting them up. If the law respecting winter carriages is a grievance, it would be better to repeal it, than suffer its open and constant breach in every part of the country. Our laws are brought into contempt when openly set at naught. We allude to this subject in order to bring the matter fairly before those who are most interested, namely, the farmers. Farmers are more interested in having good roads than any other class, because they are obliged to make use of them when other classes need not do so. We earnestly solicit the farmers to ascertain for themselves whether our statement be correct respecting the roads in the neighbouring States, and if they find that, by adopting similar carriages to those in use with our neighbours, we may have good and convenient roads to travel upon, we trust they will no longer hesitate to put an end to the use of the common trains, and adopt the plan of attaching shafts to single sleighs as they have them in the States. This change, that is so desirable, will not be any additional expense to the farmers, and the advantage of good roads would certainly be of great benefit. There cannot be a greater grievance than to inflict bad roads upon the Canadian community, by making use of unsuitable carriages, and also those that are contrary to law. It is not creditable to our judgment that we should be so prejudiced against adopting what would be manifestly for our interest only because it is new, and not our own plan. If our neighbours of the United States had been so wedded to the customs and habits of their grandfathers, they could not have made the advances in improvement which they have done. It would be very useful to our Canadian farmers were they to introduce a due proportion of the American system of "go a-head" into all their proceedings. We should not wish it to be carried to the same extent, but there cannot exist a doubt, that it would be a great advantage to feel some of the disposition to "go a-head" which appears to be the general principle in the United States.

#### OF THE NATURE OF SOILS.

The question which we are now about to treat, is one of the most difficult in agriculture, but as it is perhaps one of the most important, we ought to give it the greatest attention, and to direct all our researches to proving the difference existing amongst arable lands, and their various properties.

The earth furnishes support to nearly all plants; and as each species of these requires a soil suited to its particular organs, we find that different portions of the