

Serious consideration will easily remove the first objection. The Province has not hesitated to incur a very large debt for the construction of our canals and railways, an immense proportion of the remuneration of which, is but indirect and speculative, in so far as they have very largely increased the value of our lands and of the products of them; but how will even this benefit be realized if no effort is made to stimulate and ensure the due improvement and cultivation of these lands, or their fertility be allowed to fall off, as has been gradually the case throughout this continent, and if the sudden failure of the last two harvests become a permanent affliction, and it should be remembered that this failure is not without its precedent—as witness the cases of Lower Canada, a great part of the Niagara District, and portions of the State of New York. On the other hand, the investment of money in the manner now proposed will undoubtedly bring its own return and reproduce itself. In the old countries where this system of underdraining has been so universally adopted, and forms the very basis of modern farming and of that enormous increase of prosperity of the agricultural interest which has accrued during the last few years, it is a matter of unquestioned profit, generally reckoned to be equal to twenty per cent. on the outlay when the land is properly managed afterwards, and in the case of lands highly cultivated draining has frequently been known to repay its expenses in a single season. The profits of draining in other instances have been estimated at thirty, forty and fifty per cent. on the outlay, the land having been increased in annual value to that extent, without greatly altering the former mode of culture; and when we see that a great part of the benefits of manure is lost where proper drainage is wanting, it becomes evident that the poorer the soil the greater will be the improvement of it by this means. It follows, therefore, that the adoption of a measure of this nature, instead of increasing the difficulties of our financial position, would but tend to relieve this Province from its present embarrassment; and the sale of Government debentures under a Canadian Drainage Act, instead of lowering our credit, would be hailed by English capitalists as an evidence of the earnest and enlightened attention paid by our legislators to the most vital and material interest of their country.