

Agriculturist and Canadian Journal.

TORONTO, FEBRUARY 15th, 1848.

OPPOSITION FROM LOCAL NEWSPAPERS.

The *London Times*, C. W., on receipt of our first number, takes occasion to make the following remarks:—

We have received the first number of the *Agriculturist and Canadian Journal*, published by Messrs. Brewer & Co., of Toronto. This journal constitutes the union of the *British American Cultivator* with the *Canada Farmer*, both of which are thus consolidated. It is very desirable that an agricultural journal of the first character for talent and experience, should be well supported in Canada, and we hope the *Agriculturist* will support such a character.

But there is one thing which all journals for a special object should, in our opinion, avoid, if they wish to obtain the support of the local journals—they should not attempt to compete with them in assuming a general character.

The question with regard to an agricultural journal is somewhat similar to that of a religious journal,—a question on which we took occasion to remark a few weeks ago. A press conducted by some Rev. Gentlemen, who does not depend on its proceeds for a maintenance, is issued as a religious journal, and immediately takes up the secular business of a newspaper, in opposition to those who have not the advantage of having a separate maintenance, and the local press becomes subject to an *unfair* competition. And in the case of a journal of agriculture, we should think that its peculiar field was sufficiently extensive to employ all its columns, either in relation to practical Agriculture—Agricultural Chemistry—Reports—Statistics—Manures—Draining—Labour—Markets—Profits,—&c.—with Agricultural Machinery, and advertisements in relation to all. A work of this kind entirely devoted to the subject, would deserve an extensive circulation, and to which the local press might be a valuable auxiliary, instead of a jealous rival. We believe these are the views of other local journals in the Province.

The above is the first intimation we have had from any of the local papers, that our Journal was likely to be regarded as a rival. The *Canada Farmer* which embraced the same variety of matter, which assumed in fact a “general character,” was conducted for one year without so far as we are aware, a single note of disapprobation from the local press. On the contrary our articles were frequently quoted, and our paper highly spoken of. The *Agriculturist* which now stands in the place of the *Cultivator* and *Farmer*, but is conducted more upon the plan of the latter, has also been very favorably noticed by the press generally. Of course this has promoted and will promote our interests, and we cannot do otherwise than feel grateful for it. But at the same time we must take the liberty of informing the *Times*, that we have found to our loss that it will not do to depend upon the “support of the local journals,” and that the country is not sufficiently alive to the benefit of an inter change of ideas and opinions, and a communication of discoveries in agriculture to sustain a publication, conducted by private enterprise, devoted exclusively to agricultural topics. Several attempts, and some pretty thorough and persevering ones have been made, both in Upper and Lower Canada, and have failed. Our co-temporary therefore will see that the question is not, whether the farmers shall have an organ confining its pages to agriculture, and “supported by the local journals,” or one of a *general* character, *not* so supported, but whether they shall have the latter or *no organ at all*. When our Agricultural Associations and Societies shall have been properly organized, and properly supplied with *means* by the Legislature, we may then hope to see an annual volume made up from reports, addresses, prize essays, statistics, &c., &c., relating solely to Agriculture, which will be widely disseminated and generally interesting and useful. Still, such a paper as we intend to make ours will be none the less needed. If the merchants of every little town are to have their newspaper organ; if every religious sect is to have its organ and defender; if each political party is to have its organs, some of them the private property of the leaders of these parties, we can see no reason why

the FARMER as such, should not have his organ. A Newspaper, confining itself to the “secular business of a newspaper”—maintaining a “general character” only, is a thing unknown in Canada. They are all established to serve some class or party, some individual or local interest, and the assumption of the title “newspaper,” is merely to hoodwink the simple ones. They all insert news, tales, murders, anecdotes, &c., because they wish to please the general reader and secure a circulation. But all this is subordinate to the main design, and we confess we cannot understand why we should be debarred the same privilege. We have often heard of the “Republic of Letters,”—of this being a “free country”—of “monopolies,” being “contrary to law,” and a multitude of similar expressions and sayings which had somehow inoculated us with the idea, that we had a perfect right to make our paper as interesting as possible to *all* our readers, even should we range over the whole *terra cognita* of the written and the unwritten, to effect our object. In our simplicity, we fancied that in the LADIES department at least we might speak of—

“battles, sieges, fortunes.

Of moving accidents by flood and field,
Of hair breadth escapes i' th' imminent deadly breach.

—of antres vast and deserts idle,
Rough quarries, rocks, and hills whose heads touch heaven,
And of the *cannibals* that each other EAT—
The anthropophagi (!) and men whose heads
Do grow beneath their shoulders” (!)

“These to hear,” we thought many a lovely Desdemona would “seriously incline,” and though—

“—the house affairs would draw her thence,
Which ever as she could with haste despatch,
She'd come again, and with a greedy car
Devour up” such “discourse.”

But alas, the cruel *Times* would dash this cup of happiness from our lips, he is afraid of our “witchcraft,” he begruges us the “world of sighs,” and therefore he cries out *ne sutor ultra crepidam*, which being interpreted means “Mr. Clodhopper, stick to your ditches and manures!” Ah, thou modern Iago, honest as thou art, we fear it is a consciousness of inferiority, or some unworthy suspicion that prompts thee to say, we must “not compete with” thee.

But seriously, we think political papers have neither right nor occasion to complain of other papers inserting just what they think will be most useful, as well as entertaining to their readers. If people wish to read politics, they must needs take political papers. We shall not interfere with them in this their “special object.” We might with just as much reason complain of those journals that insert a column or two of agricultural matter, but the thing is absurd, we wish they would devote a great deal more of their space to the diffusion of information on agriculture. It would prove of great benefit to the country and no loss to them, and we should willingly put up with the effect whatever it might be upon us. To conclude, we protest against the principle involved in the argument of the *Times*. It is this, that the question of *merit* or *usefulness*, is one to which the “local press” is wholly indifferent, when considering whether it shall give or withhold its support, but that the real question is, *do they cross our path!* We are happy to believe, there are but few “other local journals in this Province,” that will recognize such a principle.

THE WEATHER.—This is surely the strangest winter that has been seen in Canada for a long time. One can't help thinking every time he goes out of doors that Spring is at hand. Snow is a rarity that might possibly be met with in the neighborhood of Hudson's Bay. Wheat fields are looking