

## Miscellaneous.

## The President's Address.

At three o'clock on Friday afternoon last, N. J. McGillivray, Esq., President of the Upper Canada Agricultural Association, delivered the annual address from the grand stand. It was as follows:—  
FARMERS OF CANADA:—

It now devolves upon me, as President of this Society, in accordance with the usual custom, to address you on those important matters that have been occupying our attention for the last three days. So many distinguished agriculturists have addressed you in former years that I feel unequal to the task of interesting you as they have done. But the agricultural interests of the country are so important that it would be a dereliction of duty in me not to try to say something that may be beneficial to us. I have to express my very great regret at the absence of His Excellency the Governor General, occasioned, as you are doubtless aware, by the death of a near relation. I am satisfied that His Excellency has the sincere sympathy of the farmers of Canada in the occasion that has prevented us from having the pleasure of seeing him amongst us at this time. May I crave your attention, therefore, while I address to you a few practical remarks on the present state and future prospects of agriculture in Canada. Year after year, with good reason, my predecessors in office have congratulated you on the progress which we, as farmers, have been making; and with the greatest of pleasure I find that I might safely do the same. And I sincerely trust that such arrangements are being made that at the Exhibition in Paris next year, the display of the natural and industrial productions of Canada will sufficiently prove that their encomium is just. Our prosperity has in the past been great, and still continues to increase. By reference to statistics, I observe that between the years 1851 and 1861 the live stock of Upper Canada has increased 30 per cent, while the produce of the soil attains the high figure of nearly 150 per cent increase, but allow me to remark that this cannot be taken as a true criterion of the intrinsic prosperity of the country. Such increase may follow from extended cultivation in reclaiming new lands, and from immigration, while older settlements and older reclaimed lands may be decreasing. The true criterion of continued prosperity must be that the lands already cleared are, through better cultivation, becoming more productive. In this respect, however, from the imperfect statistics given on this point, I feel myself at a loss how to speak. But these statistics I look upon as one of the highest importance, and would submit that the attention of this society might profitably be drawn to the advantage of collecting the same. It seems to be an undisputed fact that, in the older settled portions of the United States the yield per acre is becoming less, and on some parts of Canada, I am satisfied, the same is true. Might we not then devote some consideration to this important fact upon which our prosperity so materially depends. The exhibition of this year however, gives proof that on the whole we are progressing. The stock shown has in number and quality exceeded that of former years. While the machinery and implements exhibited show that the ingenuity of man is still prolific in adding to that which benefits the farmer, and to the means by which mother earth is made to yield her treasures to her children; and that these are taken advantage of by the Canadian. And notwithstanding the inclemency of the season, especially during the harvest, the varied productions of the soil submitted, prove that a good crop has been secured in comparatively good condition. For this, as in duty bound, we give thanks to our God.

It is right on such occasions as this to enquire into the causes that have led to this prosperity, so that from past experience we may draw future guidance, and still advance. First, and most important among these, is the great blessing of peace which we have so long enjoyed, and for which under Providence we have to thank our connection with Great Britain. May we never cease to value that connection, and the more so, that England continually approves her care for us, for even now there are landing upon our shores some of her noble army to help in our defence in this time of threatened danger. And here let me make mention of that great and now accomplished

undertaking of laying the Atlantic cable, through the medium of which we no sooner asked for aid, than immediately the answer came, *your help is coming*. Nothing drains the resources of the country and checks particularly agricultural improvement, like war; drawing as it does so many of the inhabitants from profitable occupation, and carrying in its train such immense destruction of property.

Next to the blessing of peace, I might mention the fostering care of the Legislature, as exemplified in their annual grants to this and kindred societies throughout the country, and in their late endeavours to introduce and extend the cultivation of flax. The growth of the population, ever adding as it does to the working energy of our country, had tended in no small degree to the increase of agricultural wealth. While the railways and public highways, by facilitating the transmission of goods to market, benefit largely the farmers in the more remote settlements. The intelligence of a people is also a most important mean toward this end; and our common school system of education, in its steady advance and in the cheapness, with which a young farmer may now acquire much theoretical and scientific knowledge, has added greatly to this progress. The same has been the effect of the press, by means of which, instructive articles on agriculture and commerce are daily circulated and read by our people. Lastly, science has done its part in helping us. It is true that science, in its application to the farming interest, is slower in its effects than when applied to the manufacturing. The best mechanism of scientific research is expensive, and the wealth of the manufacturer generally enables him at once to avail himself of it, while the smaller available resources of the farmer often preclude him from procuring many a machine which would prove of great advantage. Nevertheless, science has been laid hold of by the Canadian farmer, and many are the appliances now, by which at little expense compared to years gone by, the soil can be made to yield its fruit.

These are some of the most important causes of our present prosperous condition. Let us now, reasoning from them, draw some useful instruction for the future. The same means that have proved successful in the past, must prove successful in the future, and if more earnestness and energy are applied to the use of those means greater will be our progress. Of incalculable importance is a wise and conciliatory spirit towards foreign nations, so that as long as possible we may enjoy peace especially the cultivation of friendly feelings with our nearest neighbours, the people of the United States, children of the same parents, having the same interests with ourselves, and possessed of the same energetic Saxon spirit, whose effect in the civilization of the world, and the improvement of all the interests of civilized nations can scarcely be computed. In any neighbourhood, if the inhabitants live amicably together, interchanging the courtesies of life, they can materially assist each other in many ways, so with nations. The Reciprocity Treaty, entered into many years ago between Britain and the United States, proved of great advantage both to them and to us, as is shown by the immense increase of imports and exports during its continuance. We regret it has now been repealed, but are thankful that it appears the effects will by no means be so hurtful as was anticipated. Nations cannot live without each other's assistance any more than individuals; and we find the American people still continue to buy extensively from us. In the encouragement of immigration the Legislature might do much for us. The more labourers we have in our land, the cheaper will labour be, and the more will be accomplished, thereby adding to our wealth. It is to be regretted that so many emigrants, year after year, pass through our country to the Western States, while in British territory there lies so much uncultivated fertile land. A great deal might also be done by our Government in the establishment of agricultural schools. In Ireland, under the supervision of the Board of National Education, these are among the valuable means that have produced in that country the present advancement in farming. These Irish schools are preparatory to a higher institution, at which young men, generally the sons of farmers, are taught at a cheap rate the usual branches of a sound English education, as also book-keeping, land surveying, levelling, mapping, animal and vegetable physiology, botany, geology, chemistry with practical agriculture, and horticulture—there being attached to the institution a farm on which the practice of agriculture in its most improved forms is pointed out. In this country generally there is little knowledge of scientific farming, and often even by the farmer very little interest taken in the occupation. Hence the daily emigration of our young men to the gold regions or the commercial cities. A step of very great consequence and from which no doubt beneficial results will flow, has been taken in the opening up of commercial relations with distant countries. And we may congratulate ourselves that the report of the Commis-

sioner appointed for this purpose is so favourable. The Confederation of the Provinces, giving us a more influential position and a name; and the Intercolonial Railway, enabling us at all seasons of the year to exchange goods with other countries, will, no doubt, tend greatly to our advancement. But we must ever bear in mind that the best Legislature in the world can do little to advance a country, unless the individual exertions of enterprising men are faithfully and continuously employed. Therefore, let us, each and all, do our best to promote the agricultural interests of our beloved land.

And now, in conclusion, let me call your attention to some matters that seem to me to have been too much overlooked heretofore. One is the necessity of a more satisfactory adaptation of our stock, our crops, and modes of farming to our climate. Every country, yes, even every district, has a peculiar climate and soil: so with Canada. And while we value the breeds of cattle that are found most profitable in Britain, it is a question whether the same breeds generally prove the most profitable here. Would it not be well to direct attention to the subject and try if, by care in crossing our present breeds, we could not produce other breeds better adapted to the several parts of our country, which being so extensive, must possess many varieties of soil as well as climate? A similar remark might apply although perhaps not to the same extent, to our crops. Rotation of crops is a matter that in Canada generally receives too little attention—this more especially in Central Canada. When a field is found to be good and yield well, it is too often the case that that field is cropped year after year until its very life-blood is withdrawn, and years of good manuring will scarcely restore it—one of the causes, no doubt, of the complaint that old settlements do not produce such good crops as new. A regular rotation of crops and regular manuring would certainly prevent this. Root crops are also, I believe, too much neglected. They are incalculably useful in pulverizing the soil, and enabling the farmer to clear it of weeds.

One other matter, and I will not detain you longer. The establishment of regular fairs or markets throughout the whole country, quarterly, monthly or weekly, according to the requirements of the place, would be of such advantage that those who have not been accustomed to them cannot comprehend it. There, and there only, can the farmer become acquainted with the real value of that of which he has to dispose. An immense saving of time and labor would also be the consequence. Instead of the farmer in want of a good horse, cow or sheep, driving around the country for days or weeks, till he finds the object of his search, half a day at the fair will show him all the animals for sale. He can there satisfy himself better, and save much time, which is money. At such a place also, he will learn, by contact and conversation with his fellow farmers, any new ideas on the subjects that should interest him, and naturally be induced to emulate his more enterprising neighbor. Let us, then, for the sake of our beloved Canada, put our shoulders to the wheel, and push forwards as best we can the agriculture of our land. And while we do so, let us nobly determine to defend what we do possess. If those threatening invaders, the Fenians, do set foot upon our soil, I am satisfied that we, the sons of toil, and subjects of a beloved Queen and Government, will give them such a reception that they will regret that they ever attempted to molest us.

Gentlemen, I thank you for your attention.

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