

change of weather or of wind that may probably affect the growing crop, is carefully noted down and transmitted with lightning speed, and eagerly received and read in the most remote parts of Canada! There is, in fact, no other subject that excites such general interest. "The State of the Funds"—"French Revolutions"—"Louis Napoleon." "Denmark and the Duchies"—"Papal Aggressions," and all must give way to the grand anxiety to learn the "Prospects of the Harvest!"

This fact shows very forcibly the great importance of Agriculture; but it will show it in a still stronger light when we consider that Great Britain is comparatively unfavourably situated for agriculture, in soil, climate and other circumstances: and being besides a maritime, commercial and manufacturing country, it would be easy to imagine that she would dispense with being also an agricultural country, and would depend upon receiving the most of her breadstuffs from other countries, which buy her fabrics, and which are more favourably situated for agriculture than herself. But the number, industry, and necessities of her people compel her to be an agricultural country also. She dare not depend upon other countries for her bread, or the greater part of it; still she cannot produce enough for her own consumption, and a considerable portion must annually be procured from other countries; and the question which causes such great interest in the success of the grain crop of the British Islands, is with them, how much bread they will have to buy; with us and the people of other countries it is, how much we shall have to sell.

This great and general interest manifested in the progress of the British grain crop might lead us to suppose that Britain was the foremost, or at least one of the foremost agricultural countries in the world. This, however, I believe is not the case. I believe that agriculture in many parts of the Continent of Europe, has long been in a more flourishing condition than it has yet arrived at in Britain. I believe, also, that the eminent scholars who have most successfully turned their attention to making science instrumental in the improvement of agriculture were Europeans of the Continent. Still Britain has attained great improvement of late years, and particularly since the commencement of the present century. She is sufficiently advanced to be a good school for Canadians to study in, and it is not of much consequence to us whether or not there are other countries of Europe more advanced in the art than Great Britain, for it is chiefly to her that we must naturally look for instruction and improvement in these respects.

It is, however, difficult to learn agriculture by theory alone; and it is difficult and very unsafe to apply the theory or practice of any one coun-

try to another country or section, totally different in climate, soil, and other circumstances. This difficulty has been the cause of much evil, and it is one of the principal causes of retarding the progress and advancement of the art. In connexion with this part of the subject it may be remarked that, though much good has resulted from the various agricultural periodicals which have of late years been so liberally circulated, both in this Province and in the neighbouring States, yet the good has been mixed with some evil, which has given the opponents of "Book Farming," as they style it, some reason for their opposition. Some specious theory is promulgated, apparently well authenticated and proved by ample experiments; and perhaps well adapted to the place, soil, and circumstances which originated it; but which taken as a general rule, and put in practice in a different soil and climate, proves a ruinous failure! And even in the same place, and under similar circumstances, schemes and systems which are applauded to day, may in six months time be exploded and condemned, and some new theory, directly opposite, recommended by the same publication; so that the farmer who depends on an agricultural paper as his *sole guide*, will have to change each system he adopts before he has time to test its merits! This evil should not be attributed altogether to the publications themselves—though they must not be considered entirely blameless, but to the want of judgment and care in the agricultural reader. If a farmer in the backwoods of Canada, reads an account of a great crop of corn being grown on the warm sandy plains of Indiana, he should not thereupon plough up and plant with corn, fifteen or twenty acres of his heavy clay land, which in many respects is quite unfit for corn, would yet in all probability produce a good crop of wheat or peas. Or if he reads that some body has 40 bushels of wheat to the acre, which was sown on the first of October, he should not, on that account, wait a month to sow his wheat, if he is otherwise prepared to sow it on the first of September.

These publications, though generally very useful and interesting, should be used with much caution and judgment, or they will do more harm than good.

In taking Britain as our best school for agricultural improvement, it should be carefully kept in mind in what respects the two countries assimilate to each other in soil, climate, and other circumstances relating to agriculture; and in what respects they differ. It will be found that though differing widely in many respects, yet there are some circumstances in which they are similarly situated. Although lying geographically ten degrees further north than Upper Canada, the winters are not so severe as ours, but they