

Communications.

REPORT ON THE PRESENT STATE OF BRITISH AGRICULTURE,

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[Continued from our last.]

That the farmers of Canada require to pay particular attention to the increase of the growth of green crops, in order to ensure a fresh supply of that particular kind of nourishment to the soil required for *continuing* the growth of wheat, in as great abundance as it has hitherto been grown, and on the same soil, the experience of our neighbours very plainly teaches us. Mr. Kennedy, in his report on the Census of the United States, says:—"The crop of New England decreased in ten years from 2 014,000 bushels to 1,090,000, exhibiting a decline of 924,000 bushels in this old wheat growing country. In the older Townships of Canada, so soon as the farmers cease to have new land to bring into cultivation let us take care lest the same results follow, probably the results of overcropping—and tho' in Canada we cannot, perhaps, at present, procure or use to advantage artificial or what are called portable manures, owing to the high rate of freights, &c., we have yet abundance of *new land* whereon to cultivate the turnip, mangel wurzel, and thus increase our manure heaps and also take advantage at the same time of the very high price of meat, which has extended to *our* markets as well as those of Great Britain.

In the present state of our Agriculture, it may be said and perhaps with truth that having other resources we have no occasion for imported manures, at all events as a general thing. There may be localities even now where they would be desirable—a very few years will increase the number. The great resource, viz., new land which the Canadian farmer possesses, is (in the old townships) quickly passing away—many of them having already nearly all the land under cultivation they can spare for that purpose, being obliged to keep enough under wood to supply their fuel. It would appear specially incumbent upon those who have any left to lose no time in following in the footsteps of our old country friends and use the forcing system by the means which are still available to them. It is a fortunate coincidence that high prices are a great in-

ducement to most farmers to increase their stock and crops—at present they will not complain on that score, and it is well that the same movement that increases the quantity of our beef and mutton, butter and cheese, will also lead to the increase and improvement in the quantity and quality of our grain.

I know it is said by many farmers that wages have risen so high here that they cannot undertake any extra labor. Wages have risen just as high in proportion in Great Britain, and extraordinary as it may appear, it is a fact and not difficult to account for, either, that in Canada we are much greater adepts in the use of labor-saving machines and expedients, and much greater economisers of labor than the farmers of Great Britain, in fact they are constantly endeavoring to take leaves out of our book, and it is a fact also well worth recording, that the *acreable* expense of putting down and of saving crops is much less in Canada than it is in Great Britain or even Ireland; therefore, the argument that wages are too high to carry on farming to advantage in Canada does not hold good unless they be also too high in Great Britain, a circumstance which I heard no farmer complain of. In fact, the very high prices of grain, meat, &c., in both countries preclude such a complaint.

There is another subject which is engaging a great deal of public attention, viz.:—the producing of more breadstuffs to meet the increased demand occasioned by increased gold—increased prosperity—and therefore increased facilities of purchase for consumption. Free Trade and free importations of grain to England, which almost all the farmers of Great Britain and not a few of those of Canada thought must bring ruin to the Agriculturist in both countries has not been found to afford sufficient means of supply to meet the demand—hence new exertions are necessary to increase production. The exportations from the United States to Great Britain have not been found nearly so abundant as it was expected they would be—and the increased export that there has been of wheat and flour, has not been owing so much to increase of produce as to the means which the farmers have taken to live upon other descriptions of food and spare as much as possible of these commodities for export owing to the very high price which they were producing. In addition to the fact that very many of the States have fallen off in their supplies of wheat, it appears that very little attention is paid to Agriculture in that country.