

THE COLONIAL FARMER,

VOTED TO THE AGRICULTURAL INTERESTS OF NOVA-SCOTIA, NEW-BRUNSWICK,
AND PRINCE EDWARD'S ISLAND.

HALIFAX, N. S., NOVEMBER 1, 1842.

NO. 9.



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BEMEDY FOR HARD TIMES.

At present a general complaint of "hard times," which is confined to one nation, or to one kind of business. This complaint has always been made by some at all times, but it is only now made by so many, as to prove that it is well founded. If we can discover the cause of the evil, we may perhaps find the remedy. It does not appear to have originated from any cause beyond our control. Peace has continued for a long time; seasons have not prevented the earth from yielding a plentiful harvest to its inhabitants; the sea still furnishes us with fish. Yet we hear the cry of woe spreading ruin from those who have more than enough of the necessaries of life; their produce they say, will not sell for enough to pay cost, and they cannot employ laborers and tradesmen as they used to do. But why should the Farmer, who has enough to live upon, be greatly distressed because his surplus produce fetches a low price? What is the cause of the Incubus that has paralyzed the energy of mankind. It is debt, debt not necessarily incurred. It is not very difficult when we are in trouble, to reflect that it is our own fault when it is the case, it may be useful to know it, because we can then change our practice. The remote cause of the difficulty may be traced to the modern offices for lending, a paper currency, which is a heavy man, for the consideration of a heavy interest, to set his property afloat, without the trouble of selling it. Most men wish to become rich, but neither the Farmer, the Merchant, nor the Tradesman will succeed in this wish, without extraordinary industry and application, nor without establishing a rule to spend no more than he earns; and when this course proves successful, many years of hard labor must elapse before wealth can be acquired. But it was generally understood that a man could have nearly the same amount of what he owned in something that answered the purposes of money, while at the same time he retained all his real property, the stock of speculation soon appeared, and spread from place to place like the Cholera. The Manufacturer increased his workshops; the Merchant doubled his importations; the Farmer increased his acres, and in too many instances left his own occupation for some other by which he expected to acquire sudden wealth. For a time the active man believed that he was growing rich, for it is no more easy to gull half a nation, than to impose upon one intelligent man. We are more frequently too lazy to think, than we are to work, and when it is generally believed that wise men have

thought for us, we often follow them without reflection, as we have seen the sheep follow the old man into the well, the curb of which he mistook for the garden fence. But these golden dreams ended, and many a wretched man discovered that they had involved themselves in debts which they saw no prospect of paying, and all the value they had received, was learning by sad experience, what they might have previously learned by reflection, that the only way to be rich is to spend less than they earn. But during the time that they believed they were going ahead, most had drawn upon their future wealth to introduce a more showy and expensive style of living, an evil which is never confined to those that begin it, for it always spreads till it reaches the lowest classes. Virgil gives a distinguished place in his Elysium to the inventors of the useful arts, and as a contrast to this, some of the religious writers, of the "dark ages" inform us that the unhappy spirits of the inventors of oppressive taxes, and of wasteful and extravagant fashions, are in danger of a constant increase of their misery to the end of the world, because there will always be an addition to their punishment, for every additional person who suffers by the tax, or who adopts the luxurious fashion; which is no less injurious; because it absorbs the funds which ought to have kept the no helpless portion of the human race comfortable. When men discover that they are spending too fast, few have the fortitude to retrench immediately, but in such cases the time soon arrives that gives an irresistible check to their career; and then the blame is laid upon "dull times," and it would be a pity to deprive people of the privilege of having something to lay the blame of their mismanagement upon, besides themselves.

We all know that dull times cannot be mended by sitting down and grumbling, we must make use of our strength both mental and bodily, let every one think before he acts, and calculate his projects so carefully as to ascertain whether they will be profitable, let every one reduce his expenses below his income, if possible, (and few farmers will find it impossible,) let strict economy be observed, permitting nothing to be lost for want of care, or from neglect in doing work at the time that it ought to have been done. Let every one be sober and industrious, and we shall be upon the right road, and though it is an up-hill road which we cannot go up as fast as we ran down it, yet it will, if we follow it, lead us out of debt and difficulty.

It is never so easy to retrench as in dull times; the fear of being suspected of poverty, often prevents men from reducing their expenses, but in dull times the first that dares to retrench will immediately be imitated by neighbours who have long wished to do the same, but who have not had courage enough to be the first to begin. Fashion is often called a tyrant, because his laws are so frequently mischievous and unreasonable; but we should recollect that he allows his subjects perfect liberty to frame the laws by which he governs them, with a franchise as unlimited as any Chartist could desire. If there are any of his regulations which we dislike, we have the power to change them when we will; if we have ourselves framed the regulations under which he has compelled us to spend more than we earned, till we had all got in debt. And shall we not act like wise men in adopting a rule to earn more than we spend, till we get out again, especially as we