

that Canadian farmers have been compelled to pay directly and indirectly for all these railroads and for the building up of the great wealth of thousands of the wealthiest men in our country, has all come out of our pockets blindly and in every possibly conceived manner.

Exhibition Complaints.

We hear of numerous complaints from exhibitors in the poultry department of the Ontario Provincial Exhibition; in fact, for some years past there have been great complaints made in regard to the decisions.

We regret to have to touch on complaints of this nature, but on the request of some exhibitors and from remarks by others, we feel in duty bound to call attention to the remarks made to us. We would not like to discourage or blame a single judge, as we know it is a difficult task to please all, and perhaps the judgment may have been correct: but the complaint is that an exhibitor or exhibitors have been in the habit of using particular tacks or particular leathers below the tacks, and placing the tacks in just such a position as to indicate who is the owner of such particular pens of poultry, and that birds in such coops where these tacks have been used have gained the prizes and have received more attention than the others.

We have heard this complaint from such sources that we deem it proper to call the attention of the directors to it. There is also another complaint made, namely, that an individual of some prominence in poultry circles exhibited fowls at the Provincial Exhibition and took prizes with them as his property; at one of the other leading exhibitions the same individual acted as judge, and the same poultry was awarded prizes in another person's name.

Would it not be well to enforce more stringent regulations in regard to attempted deception, and to allow everything exhibited to rest on its own merits and not on individuals or their marks.

Statute Labor.

Many a day have we spent in performing our statute labor; we have travelled many miles in a day with our company, camped out at night with axes and provisions, to make the first road through the woods from our residence to reach St. Thomas. We have for years since, with axe, plough, oxen, scraper and wagon, put in our share of that labor so necessary in a new country. Our sons now perform that part of the work.

We have acted as path-master as well as laborer; perhaps we may now suggest to path-masters, councilmen and legislators a few improvements in our present mode of applying the labor.

In some parts of the country it has now become a matter of wasting time, very little good being done; this is the case only in localities where gravel roads are made. These roads have often been made at the joint expense of all the farmers in a country: many farmers still have very bad roads, and require all the labor they can get and work voluntary labor besides, to make the roads passable.

Would it not be well to have the statute labor collected in the form of cash from sections that have had the roads made from general taxation, and expend it to make good roads in other parts of the country?

In sections, townships or counties that require statute labor done, would it not be much to the advantage of the farmer to do his statute labor in the month of October; at that time he has more leisure, the weather is cooler and he can perform more work; the ground is then moist, so that it is much easier worked, and the roads would be better, because they would have more work done on them, we mean in grading and levelling. When the labor is performed in June, as at present, it generally makes the roads rough, heavy and bad during the summer, when otherwise they would be good. Besides, in June the

farmers are all busy with the cultivation of their crops. The statute labor is now performed just at the time when the root crops require attention. We believe the alteration of the time in performing the statute labor would tend to increase the yield of many acres of roots, and tend to keep the land cleaner and more fit for cereals; roots and cereals are both equivalent to cash.

In October the time could be much more easily spared from the farm, as the grain crops would all be in the barns. Do you not think the change would be beneficial?

Why has not this change taken place ere this? Can you give a reason why it should not? We believe it is simply because we farmers do not look after our own interests.

The Harvest of 1873—Deficiency of Grain Crop and Supply.

The reports of the grain crops and markets of Europe and America received.

Since our notice in our November issue on this subject, the grain deficiency of Europe has not caused any changes in the prospects of producers and consumers, while the movements of breadstuffs, and the prices in the principle markets of both continents tend to confirm the opinions we then expressed. The report of the grain deficiency in Europe has been confirmed; the deficiency is so great as to cause a demand for all the surplus products of America, and that surplus is sufficient to meet all the demands.

England is a large purchaser of foreign breadstuffs, but not more than usually so. Her required importations, judging from the latest advices, will not exceed the estimates given last month, ninety-two millions of bushels of grain—a very large importation seemingly, but in reality not large when we take into account the density of her population. At one time there were apprehensions respecting the late crops, in the more northern districts, but these apprehensions were relieved by the favorable weather, and the large home supplies sent forward to market, as harvesting and threshing progressed, produced a decline in prices. There has been since no excitement in the English market; the report has generally been—"almost no change"—"Markets quiet."

French markets have been quiet. More recent returns have served to allay in a measure, the apprehensions first entertained. The deficiency, though great, was not greater than the first reports led us to expect; and the French were early in the market as purchasers, making timely provision for the deficiency then known to exist. The French markets have consequently been free from excitement.

In the German markets only has there been an upward tendency. The Markets have so far been in favor of the purchaser. That they will continue so is a matter of great uncertainty. The deficiency must be met principally by supplies from this continent; hence Americans may rely on a ready market for all this surplus produce; what the probable amount of that surplus may be we can hardly estimate from the conflicting statements in the different agricultural and financial reports. Prices will be also affected by the financial condition of the United States. They who are in want of money cannot afford to hold back their goods from market, waiting for higher prices.

The reports from the American Department of Agriculture are, on the whole, favorable to the consumer. We append some extracts:—

"CORN.—Frosts have been early this year. These frosts were not generally of great severity, but sufficient to prevent the thorough ripening of the corn. The average condition throughout the country is 84. In round numbers the reduction in indicated product is 250,000,000 bushels.

WHEAT.—The returns of September averaged, with reference to the production of each county, indicated nearly a full round crop, the average depreciation being only 5 per cent. The returns of October are made in direct comparison with the crop of last year, involving, of course, the element of area as well as condition. The aggregate is an increase of about 4 per cent., which is equivalent to ten millions of bushels, making the promise of the crop about 260,000,000.

The Agricultural Department report, in comparing the harvest of 1873, with previous

harvests, says the present year is one of low production as regards maize, our main cereal, both in quantity and quality, while the quantity of wheat will be rather more than an average, in view of its increased area, though not equal to the great wheat crop of 1869. This result is far better for farmers and consumers than a deficient yield of wheat with a large crop of corn, as the surplus of the former above the actual wants of bread consumers is very small; but two hundred millions of bushels of corn can always be spared from a full crop without any other effect than an enhancement of prices, to a figure representing more fairly the cost of production.

The *Michigan Farmer* expresses some doubt as to the accuracy of these reports, thinking the statements exaggerated. It says:—"It has been the policy of the whole of the report, from that of the Agricultural Department at Washington, to that of the smallest Western Press, to brag over the great crop of wheat, whereas when we take out the States of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and Missouri, there has not really been any great increase in the wheat crop at all, and hardly more than the general average, and, if California does not have a surplus as great as last year's, there will not be in the aggregate any very extra production. Whatever grounds there may be for this supposed inaccuracy, the reports furnish data sufficiently approaching to reality to enable us to form a pretty correct estimate of the general results of the season. The yield in the U. S. are lighter even than an average; but this deficiency in yield will be more than compensated by the greatly increased area, so that the expectations of the crop yielding 260,000,000 bushels is not at all unlikely to be realized.

In the United States the low price, with the general state of the market unfavorable to producers is attributed, not to a great surplus produce, but to the financial difficulties of the country. *Moore's Rural New Yorker* says, "There has been a sharp decline in prices of wheat lately, brought about by larger supplies, and some little difficulty in obtaining a satisfactory shipping trade. Supplies are needed on the other side, but the irregularities growing out of our money panic restricts purchasers. Exchange is hard to negotiate with rates; added to this our freight rule high, making it necessary for shippers to insist upon lower prices for grain to make anything like a margin for operating." The *Western Farm Journal* says:—"The outlook at this date in financial and commercial matters is, to say the least, not satisfactory or encouraging for either buyers or sellers. The continued stringency in money matters, as well as the unfavorable condition of affairs, in financial circles has produced an unusual desire to sell, while buyers are slow to take hold while prices continue to decrease."

With the restoration of confidence in financial circles, we have no doubt the uneasy feeling and low prices in the grain market would be at an end for the season. To the great failures and consequent panic in Wall street, the present unsettled state of the market is owing. Vast projects have been undertaken on what has been proved to be in a great measure fictitious capital. This is the root of the matter.

Meanwhile higher prices are anticipated in England. The *Mark Lane Express* says:—"With the certain prospect of a vigorous competition, we see nothing in the future to prevent prices from advancing. There is no reason to fear that England will be unable to obtain a sufficient supply for her own consumption. With an abundant capital at command, and a free access to every country she can secure the trade of the whole world."

We repeat, the result of our enquiries are still favorable to Canadian producers. There is every prospect of an active demand for all their surplus produce at remunerating prices, though prices are now low and markets irregular.

The hog cholera is having a run in Pickaway county, Ohio. Several hundred cases have resulted fatally near Circleville.

Cattle which at the commencement of the panic were being collected at shipping pints, are being driven back to be fed again, and to await better markets.

Massachusetts finds it impossible to get young men to work her farms. The State established an agricultural college at a cost of between \$300,000 and \$500,000, and has graduated ten farmers.

Does Farming in the West Pay?

"Westward Ho!" Some of our Canadians as well as farmers from the East have from time to time been leaving their homes to push their fortunes in the west—Kansas, Nebraska, Illinois, any place but home. Hills are proverbially green afar off. The *Miner and Farmer*, an American journal, thus relates the experience of one who knows that land of promise:—"We met recently an intelligent gentleman who went from New Hampshire to Kansas fourteen years ago, and who in his business has been constantly travelling through Kansas, Iowa, Nebraska and Minnesota, and, in the course of conversation, he said, 'I have a very extensive acquaintance among farmers west of the Mississippi, and I do not believe those who have gone from the East can sell out to-day and return with as much money as the carried away. And everybody wants to sell out. Why, sir, I was offered last week for \$2,700 a farm in Central Kansas of 460 acres, as good land as lies out of doors, 200 acres of it fenced and under cultivation, with corn upon it 15 feet high, 60 acres splendid timber, and the remainder prairie, with house, barn and outbuilding upon it, and a railroad running right through the centre. I sold last week for a man 240 acres of beautiful prairie at \$3 per acre."

Such facts as the above are more convincing than any fine-spun theories. What is the use of such farms when they are of such intrinsically small value. Surely land such as described by the *Miner and Farmer* would be considered cheap in any country at such figures. The fact is that farming in the West does not pay. We have seen here at the Provincial Exhibition a good display of the products of those lands, including the tall corn, and, no doubt, it spoke well for the fertility of the soil; but with these was not a word of the circumstances that made that land worth less, acre for acre, than one-third the value of the farms in Canada. The circumstances that make the Western farms so little worth to the farmer may be summed up in a few words:—Ruinously low prices for farm produce; high taxes on everything needed by the farmer; exorbitant rates for the transportation of his produce; unhealthiness of the climate.

EIGHT CENTS A BUSHEL FOR CORN.—In this state of the farmers' war, says a New York commission merchant, it is possible that a few facts will do more to enlighten the minds of the people here than any argument. The writer sold in New York, Aug. 5, five cars, being 1,778 10-56 bushels Prime Western Mixed Corn, at 56 1-2 cents per bushel of 56 pounds. The corn was sold at an extreme price, because dry, sound, and in every way superior to the bulk of the crop now being handled in New York. The grain in question was shipped from Iowa, came into Chicago, via Chicago and North Western Railway, was transferred direct to the Erie and North Shore line cars, and arrived in New York by the Erie Railway. The freight paid was \$820.90. The expenses, including weighing and elevator, \$37.90; leaving of \$1,004.64, the gross proceeds, the sum of \$145.98 as net proceeds to Western shipper of 1,788 10-56 bushels corn—a trifle over 8 cents a bushel on board cars in Iowa.

A correspondent of the *Boston Cultivator* thus writes:—

One of the greatest mistakes which farmers make is in cultivating too much land. It is a truth which needs no argument to prove, that it is cheaper by thorough manuring and cultivation to raise 50 bushels of corn on one acre than it is by slovenly farming to raise the same amount on two. If a farmer has plenty of manure and time to give to the two, then let him plant them by all means. Now the average yield per acre of any crop throughout the country is not half what it is upon the best cultivated farms. Supposing that farmers should bestow the same attention to one-half of the acres that they now do, they certainly would be gainers in the saving of one-half of the land for wood or pasture while they would still have as much to dispose of. But it is not necessary to give the same attention; 50 per cent. more manure and labor would double the crop, for it requires the same ploughing and planting in either case. It is the thoroughness with which this is done, and the after cultivation that tells; so that by planting one-half as many acres, farmers would save one-quarter of the expense, and these two savings would make a change from profit to loss. The great trouble with farmers is that they do not make sufficient calculation for drawbacks, as bad weather, sickness, breakage, and unstable help. It would be far better to allow too much the other way, and then after their crops were thoroughly attended to, devote their spare time to improvements, such as fencing and ditching, than to be forever worried by the friction caused by being behind.



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