

The Coming Crops Throughout the World.

Time rolls on, and with it comes the period when we should present to our readers our annual opinions as to this all-important matter to the Canadian farmer, and how it may probably affect him. We can with some degree of pride refer to what we prognosticated in our last year's report, in the main, to have proved correct. Since then, our means of procuring information has increased, and we have spared no pains nor expense to gather all we can, and would like our readers to watch what we say with care, to see how far we shall this year prove astray.

Within the last two or three weeks, some agitation has arisen on this side by a report reaching here of the crops in the south of France being probably light, and this has, through speculation, caused prices to rise to a respectable and remunerative figure; and our ever alert friends across the border have taken advantage of it by shipping considerable quantities of grain to Havre, which has had a tendency to put prices down in Europe. It must be remembered that the south of France is a grape producing district, and the small amount of grain that is grown there, even supposing it to be a light crop, will have no very material effect upon the price of grain, and so far it can only be said to be a speculator's rise. There has actually been no orders remitted from there; on the other hand, accounts from the northern and eastern parts of that country report the grain crops as about an average, but speak of a great scarcity of hay and grass. If this is the case it may turn out to be enough for its own wants, but one thing is certain, it will not have any to export this year as it had last; and as long as it can grow enough for its own use, and does not require to be an importer in competition with England, we fear there is no prospect of high prices. The value of grain in the latter country has the last year ruled as low nearly as ever remembered, and, we fancy, has reached its minimum. Again: in southern Russia they have the prospect of a bountiful crop; and Hungary is now harvesting one, and bids fair, from the rapid strides it is making in Agriculture, coupled with its capital climate, to be a large grain producer. The Baltic districts have the promise of a good yield, as also have Prussia and Italy; while in Egypt they have again, as in last year, an enormous crop. Looking at this fact, together with the large surplus they hold from last year, it will have a strong influence on prices.

Now to England, the place whose wants affect the districts of all, and whose grain markets are the index that rules the world. There is the report of an average crop here too, although the harvest will be somewhat late. We think we cannot do better than put in a quotation from the *Mark Lane Express*, the greatest authority on these matters:

"As respects wheat, we are of opinion there is nothing to apprehend in this country, though the light lands must suffer, and there is more to be feared in an untimely visit of the clouds at the time of harvest than from anything that now meets the eye. We cannot, however, speak for other countries, though the prime mover has been France, whose former growth must have been fallaciously reported,

or else her prospects of a crop. We cannot, indeed, help thinking she has been sharpened up by the really deficient stocks in parts of Germany, by the generally bad accounts of the rye, and in some districts, of the wheat crop; but Russia, in the main, speaks favorably, and again Hungary confirms her good accounts; while nothing has happened in America to change the previous impressions of a coming abundance."

Some think that the probability of a war between France and Prussia would cause high prices. It would no doubt cause a little advance, but diplomacy now-a-days is the sinew that carries on war in Europe, and has given place to the musket and sword, and will outlive this one, which perhaps has been as foolish and preposterous as ever was advanced. It will thus appear that there is little danger, on the whole, to be apprehended, and if the United States reports continue favorable, we see no little cheering prospect.

In our own Dominion, undoubtedly, there is a great deal of the fall grain thin, but it must be remembered that it is not the thickest grain that yields the most; but anyhow, what there is promises to be of good quality, and with little midge in it; while we would like to see a better price, the present one having a small margin as compensation.

We will impress on the farmers of Canada the advice we gave them last year to turn their attention more to grazing, and the making of cheese and butter.

Finally, we fervently hope that our all-wise Providence will favor us with weather suitable for securing the harvest, wishing all our readers a general God-speed in their harvesting operations.

Agriculture.

"Agriculture is the most healthful, useful and noble employment of man."—WASHINGTON.

Man, the lord of this lower creation, was at a very early period of his existence, doomed to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. Accordingly, he is endowed with capacities of body and mind for taking advantage of the means laid at his disposal in order to the providing himself with those things that are necessary to the maintenance and the enjoyment of the life that now is; and we find him as a necessary consequence turning his attention to the cultivation of the soil, as presenting the best and most reliable source from whence his wants can be obtained. Hence we read at a very early period of history, of tillers of the ground, keepers of sheep and planters of vineyards, embracing the three grand divisions or branches of agriculture: comprising cereals, roots, stock and fruits. Thus agriculture became of the first importance to man in the earliest ages, has continued to be so ever since, and in all probability will be so to the end of time; and so the study and carrying it on is a necessary and most important work, under all circumstances. Coming down to more recent, though to us far remote times, we find that many efforts were made, and most expensive operations gone into and carried out by civilized nations for its furtherance and improvement, science and art both being brought into action for that purpose. But, notwithstanding all that has been done, much remains for the present and future generations still to do, in bringing the art of agriculture to perfection, if that

is attainable by finite man—the field being large, and offering full employment for his researches and all his inventive faculties. There has been, perhaps, (at least we think so,) less done in the way of lessening manual and animal labour in this department of toil—by the discovery of steam and other auxiliaries for enabling man to contend more successfully with those difficulties with which he is beset in his conflict with the elements, in making them, if not his servants at all events his helpers in the daily round of toil,—than for any other vocation he may be engaged in. Even till within the last fifty years most of the implements of husbandry were of a very primitive description, and this seems all the more remarkable, seeing that we are indebted not only for all the necessaries and luxuries of life to the successful cultivation of the soil, but the well-being and progress of the world depend upon it.—When the labour of the husbandman is, through the munificence of a kind Providence, crowned with success, and plenty for man and beast is spread throughout the length and breadth of the land, then the wheels of commerce roll smoothly along.—the merchant, tradesman and labourer all reaping a fair remuneration for their toil,—the year is crowned with abundance, and peace and plenty preside at the board. But let only for one single year the harvest be a partial failure, even in any one of its products, and what are the consequences. Business becomes to a great extent paralyzed; confidence among monied men is shaken; bankruptcy and ruin overtake many, and penury and want many more in the humble spheres of life.

We hail, therefore, with satisfaction, every useful invention for enabling the farmer to prosecute his work with greater ease and less expense. And here we would from amongst many other useful though less important inventions which have come under our notice, mention two perfect machines, which by their combined usefulness, will prove to be of incalculable benefit to the farmers, and through them to the country, by enabling them to have the important operation of underdraining brought within the reach of all engaged in the cultivation of the soil. And as all now are fully alive to the great good resulting from this process, which lies at the basis of successful farming, we will take for granted that it is their desire to possess the means for carrying it into effect on their respective properties. We allude to Carter's Ditching Machine, backed up by McIntosh's horse-power Tile making Machine, as possessing the means of rendering the land more productive, and lessening the expense of so desirable a result, and place them foremost in rank and usefulness to the farmers; and in doing so we do not overlook the claims of the various excellent reaping, mowing and thrashing machines, which have proved themselves of so much benefit. But as the homily goes, you must first catch your fish before you can cook them, so you must raise your crops before you can reap them; and here we think the two before-mentioned machines take the first place, as through their united operation, under ordinary circumstances, a larger and improved crop will be the result, while the others in their proper order are brought into requisition to garner what these have helped us to produce.

Some few years after the repeal of the Corn Laws in Great Britain, great attention was excited in regard to farming, in order to enable the home grower to compete successfully with the cheaper products of the foreigner, and among other questions the one affecting underdraining impressed itself so strongly upon the minds of all interested, that a measure known as the Land Drainage Act was introduced and carried through Parliament, by which it was provided that those land-owners desirous of draining their properties, would be provided with money by the government at as low a rate as they (the government) could borrow it themselves, only adding to the amount borrowed the cost necessary for carrying the act into effect. Many persons took advantage of this, giving mortgages on their lands as security, and the best results followed, to landlords, tenants and the country at large. Could not some plan analogous to the above, be adopted here? We think it might and should.

In England there is no department in the government for watching over the interests of agriculture. But here we have one, presided over by a minister specially appointed for that purpose, and we would imagine from this fact that no possible obstacle could arise to the adoption of a course similar to that of the English government. We should like much to see the question ventilated through the country, and we throw out the hint for the consideration of our Boards and Councils of Agriculture, for the farmers generally themselves, as well as to those in power in the Government, and especially the Minister of Agriculture, whose duty it is to aid by all means within their reach the agricultural interest, the progress of which affects to so great an extent the welfare of the Dominion.

While treating this subject we cannot avoid making a few remarks on Mr. Molesworth's Drainage Act,—not with a view by any means to condemn it, but merely by contrast to the one we propose, as being much more early in its results,—by which it has been arranged to spend no less than \$500,000 in carrying it out. This is to be done under the idea that the land will be advanced in value by \$4 to \$6 per acre; and in another instance the swamp known as the Brooke Swamp is expected to realize \$8 per acre, its present value being put at \$3 per acre. Any one can see that, in the first place, this act entails a heavy outlay of money by the Dominion, and while it may be that the advance in the value of the land so drained may ultimately be obtained, but when it is impossible to say, depending altogether on the amount of emigration accompanied with capital into the country, which is well known to be the exception instead of the rule.

The measure we advocate would show beneficial results at once, by being used on land already cultivated, would cost the Dominion not one cent, would enrich the farmer, enhance the value of his land and its productions, stimulate trade, and benefit the whole Dominion, as soon as ever it came into operation, and was taken advantage of by the agriculturists, who, we doubt not, would be quick to do so. The reasons we have given appear to us to be conclusive in its favor.

A volume that will bring tears to your eyes—
A volume of smoke.