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The Farmer's Journal.

AGRICULTURAL REPORT.

The harvesting of the crops of this year is now nearly brought to a close. With the exception of a portion of the potatoes, and the turnips, carrots, and mangold wurtzel, there is scarcely any other produce now remaining in the fields. The last two or three weeks have been extremely unfavourable for harvesting that part of the crops which was not housed previous to the 21st September, and I believe considerable damage has been done to all the grain crops which have been exposed in the fields during that period, either cut or uncut. There may be some excuse for sowing wheat late to escape the ravages of the fly, but there is none for sowing barley, oats, or peas very late, because the sooner they are sown after the spring commences, the better the crops are likely to be.

The season for working in the fields in Lower Canada is generally short, and if we do not commence sowing with the very first opportunity in spring, we incur the risk of a late harvest, as well as injury to our crops by frosts and mildew. We occasionally, I may say frequently, have fine harvest weather in October, but I do not consider that grain crops that are not harvested and secured previous to the 21st September, (the time of the Equinox) can be estimated at much value. There is very little heat or drying in the month of October, and the days are short for work, and these circumstances are very unfavorable to late harvesting. From my own experience I am persuaded, that late sowing will generally prove an unprofitable practice, with the exception of wheat, perhaps, which is sown late to escape the fly. This year, farmers continued to sow wheat until the month of June was far advanced, and I believe this is the cause that a part of the crop has been exposed to the late bad weather, and utterly spoiled. It is in the fall that we have to prepare for early sowing in spring, by ploughing, manuring where it is possible, and draining sufficiently, previously to the commencement of winter. I have seen very good crops of wheat this

year where the soil was suitable, and judiciously cultivated; but I have also seen poor crops that could not be profitable, and in numerous instances, the fault was not in the soil, but in its management, and particularly for want of sufficient draining. Where the produce of wheat will not average from 12 to 15 bushels to the acre, I think it would be better to substitute other crops, and allow those who can grow a fair average crop of wheat to do so. A full crop of peas, barley, or oats, will pay much better than a light crop of wheat, and these grains may be produced in ordinary seasons, in considerable perfection, on lands that are not the best adapted to growing wheat. On strong clay soils, properly prepared, wheat by all means should be sown; but on light soils, and where late-sown crops are liable to rust, other varieties of grain should be substituted, that could be sown early, and harvested previous to the 21st Sept. If we desire to have good crops, we must manage our lands in the same manner that those farmers do who really do raise good crops. The climate is the same for all, and I can safely affirm I have seen good crops on land of very inferior natural quality, while I have seen bad crops on land of excellent natural quality; and these very different results proceed solely from the mode of cultivating and managing the land. No agriculturist can be ignorant of these facts. It is absurd to blame the soil and climate for bad crops, when, on similar soil, and with the same climate, good crops are produced. These results do not happen by chance. Any agriculturist who will visit the farms of his neighbours will be able to discover at once why the crops are better in some instances than in others. It is time for agriculturists to study and understand their real position. If my neighbour can raise good crops while I only raise bad crops, certainly I should endeavour to understand what is the cause of this difference, and strive to remedy any defect I discover, by comparison, in my cultivation and management. I have no doubt that a large proportion of the loss sustained within the last few weeks by damage to the crops which were not harvested, was the consequence of mismanagement either by want of draining, manuring,

sowing in proper season, or not having the land and crop sufficiently clean. Unless we take this common-sense view of our circumstances, we are not likely to introduce an improved system of husbandry. While we continue the same system that has resulted, year after year, in disappointment and loss, we cannot expect any other results. It is not only the arable part of the farms that is managed unprofitably, but also that portion that is in pasture. I have never seen the pastures so poor as this year. In many instances there was scarcely a plant of grass to be seen, and I could not understand how the animals could subsist upon them. It is in the power of almost every farmer to make a change for the better in the state of the pastures, by either sowing grass seed when they are let out of tillage, or summer fallowing them, and thus insuring a future good crop with very little expense. Summer fallows are not introduced here to any extent, though there is no easier mode of improvement. The land is suffered to lie waste, producing nothing but weeds, rather than prepare it, and clean it for a crop, by summer fallow. We are not able to have the seed sown in spring, because land is not properly drained until it is too late, or sown in mud, before the soil is fit to harrow; and what can result from such management? I hope agriculturists will excuse me for writing so plainly to them about their own business. I do not of course propose any improvements to agriculturists who are perfectly satisfied with their management and the results obtained from it. I only write to those who think the climate and other difficulties over which they have no control, the cause of poor crops, and short returns from their dairy and live stock, instead of their own obvious mismanagement. A defective system of agriculture, if it extensively prevails, is a very serious evil, not only as regards agriculturists engaged in the business, who do not realize proper remuneration for their land and labor, but it is a general loss to the country, in proportion to the actual deficiency of the annual products below what they might be brought to by judicious management. Hence it is that every member of the community is directly or indirectly interested in the establishment of that system of agriculture in a country which shall yield annually the