

THE AGRICULTURIST

AND CANADIAN JOURNAL.

Devoted to Agriculture, Literature, Education, Useful Improvements, Science, and General News.

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WM. McDUGALL & Co., PROPRIETORS.

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OUR DIFFICULTIES.

Many of our subscribers will no doubt be disappointed at not receiving the eleventh number of the *Agriculturist* sooner. But when they are made acquainted with the true position of its affairs, we trust they will be disposed to admit the necessity of the changes we are about to announce.

When the *Farmer* and the *Cultivator* were merged in one at the commencement of the year, certain calculations were made, and arrangements entered into, based upon what had been done during the last year, and what it was therefore expected could be done this year. The question was discussed between the proprietors, whether the paper should be *monthly*, like the *Cultivator*, or *semi-monthly*, like the *Canada Farmer*. We had no doubt, from our own knowledge, and from the representations of our agents, that a *semi-monthly*, containing a variety of matter, but still adapted to the agricultural reader, would be more generally acceptable than a monthly paper, exclusively agricultural. But the expense of printing and conducting such a paper, we knew would be considerably more than double that of a monthly, and the question then was, whether we could get a sufficient number of subscribers, at so low a price as one dollar, to pay that additional expense. We came to the conclusion that, by sending active agents into every District in Western Canada and allowing them a sufficient commission to induce them to work—our subscription list could be so increased as to cover the expenses at least—and that by requiring our share of these subscriptions in *advance*, or at the time the orders were sent us, we should be able to pay as we went along.

Accordingly, we commenced with an edition of 8000—(which would just about pay all expenses, if we could get our share of the money when we were entitled to it)—and sent out our agents. Six months of the year have now passed; and instead of having got rid of our edition of 8000, as we anticipated, we have only sent off a little over 5000. Instead of getting our share of the subscription money in *advance*, we have received not quite enough to pay for the paper! We have on our books, charged against Agents and Societies over £300, but when we will get it, or whether we will ever get it is, we are obliged to say, not very certain. Agents say there is no money in the country. Some have given up, because, though they can find plenty of persons who would take the paper, yet they cannot collect money enough to pay their travelling expenses! Three or four Societies paid according to our terms, but several others wished us to wait until they received the Government allowance, for otherwise they could not take the paper. Anxious to circulate our paper as far and as wide as possible, and thinking the amount coming from Societies, at all events *safe*, we have, so far, complied with their request. But whether they will get any money at all from Government this year, is, in our opinion, very doubtful; and whether these Societies will, in such a case, be in much of a hurry to pay us, is also we confess, having regard to past experience, open to some doubt.

Thus, all our calculations on one side have been disappointed,

chiefly, we believe, from the extraordinary scarcity of money in the country; and on the other side, our *expenses* and the *labour* of carrying on the work, have considerably exceeded our calculations! But the worst of the matter is that we see very little hope of *reversing this state of things*. Even with a circulation so much less than we had expected, if we had realized by the middle of the year what was due us, we could have weathered out the gale by knocking down our edition to something nearer the number circulated, and looking to another year and better times for remuneration. As it is, we have arrived at a crisis when we must either give up the publication, or make some change that would afford a better hope of our being able to overcome the difficulties that surround us. If we abandon it entirely, we must lose a very large amount, in addition to breaking faith with our subscribers, both of which we anxiously wish to avoid, if it be possible. What we propose is as follows:—After the next number, which will not be published till the 15th July—we will alter the form of the work so as to make it more like a book, and publish it *monthly*. To all *paid* subscribers we will send the new monthly *Agriculturist* complete for the year. Those who have not yet paid may, if they do not wish to patronize the work, pay for the half year, or twelve numbers sent, and order their names taken off our books. But this must be done before the 1st August next.—Payment must either be made to us or to our authorized agents.—We must again insist upon all letters to us being *post paid*.

In making this change we trust to meet the approbation of the great majority of our subscribers. We have neither grumbled nor complained to excite sympathy from the public. Since the writer has had charge of the Editorial department, he has endeavoured to avoid such expedients. It was preferred to let the paper stand upon its own merits, but the pressure of the times has been such, and our well-founded expectations (as we thought) have been so sadly disappointed, that we are driven to let our readers know the real position we are in, and to solicit real support for an agricultural paper, which many think has done good, and all admit is much needed in the country. By the arrangement above mentioned, we think we shall be able to set agents to work in those parts of the country where none have yet been, and at a time when we trust there will be more money afloat; and we shall also be able to keep faith with our subscribers, so far at least as sending them twenty-four numbers of an agricultural paper. Our agents will be able, we hope, to collect and transmit what remains unpaid, and by adhering strictly to the cash principle hereafter, we may manage to live till better times.

It has also become necessary that a change should take place in the proprietary of the *Agriculturist*, but what it will be we are unable to state until the next issue. Circumstances connected with this latter change have caused the delay in the present number, which could not be avoided.

GUANO DESTRUCTIVE TO THE WIRE WORM.—Amongst the communications lately sent to the Council of the Royal Agricultural Association, was one from Mr. Dickinson, on the application of volatile alkali as it exists in guano, for the extirpation of the wire worm.