

THE GLEANER:

AND NORTHUMBERLAND, KENT, GLOUCESTER AND RESTIGOUCHE
COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL.

OLD SERIES]

Nec araneorum sane textus ideo melior, quia ex se fila gignunt, nec noster vilior quia ex alienis libamus ut apes.

[COMPRISED 13 VOLUMES.

NEW SERIES, VOL. VIII.]

MIRAMICHI, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1849.

[NUMBER 4.

Agricultural Journal.

St. John Courier, Nov. 3.
ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE ST. JOHN AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY.

From the ease with which timber growing on every farm could be converted into money, the population have also acquired a taste for certain descriptions of food, not in themselves more nutritious or agreeable than the grains and other produce of the country, but which habit has rendered so essential that their use is persisted in, now even when the timber is gone, so that the farmer from whom we ought to expect not only all our provisions and clothing, but articles of export to pay for the few foreign luxuries we require, and cannot produce, are themselves the chief consumers of imports, without furnishing a single export in return.

It may be profitable to us to compare notes with our friends across the lines—they have no advantage over us in soil or climate, and we are all of the same blood. In former times, like us, they attended to lumbering, to the neglect of their farms.

Some thirty years ago they were very much in our circumstances: the lands worn out, no markets, and unable to compete with the produce of the new and fertile western country. The western fever seized them, and an almost general desertion of the farming population took place. We have read accounts of the northern States at that period, which might be applied word for word to our own country at this day. In process of time, numbers of the emigrants returned in impaired health, having found out that a fertile soil and mild climate (competition and cost of transport rendering money making out of the question) were dearly bought at the price of health. A new stimulus was given to agricultural pursuits, better modes of culture were adopted, improved stock imported, a sound education made accessible to all, and they are now a prosperous and happy people.

Let us compare their present state with ours—perhaps we may profit by taking a leaf out of their book. While they are furnishing a surplus of butter, cheese, beef and pork, as an export to the English market, we, with equal facilities, do not produce enough for ourselves.—While we are grumbling over our long winter, wasting our time in junketing, lounging about taverns or law courts, or what is as bad, cutting logs which will require the best part of the summer to get to market, and in the end run us in debt; their young men and maidens, taking the advantage of every waterpower, and daily inventing new machinery, are making palm-leaf hats, pairs, brooms, rakes, and axes, which they hand over to us in exchange for our dollars.—While we are pampering ourselves on Genessee flour and Yankee pork, the very people who furnish us with these articles pride themselves in living on corn, rye, and buckwheat. While they willingly task themselves to support a school system which surpasses all that the world has ever seen, and by which every child may obtain the education of a gentleman, we dole out such miserable pittance that no teacher who has strength to be a laborer will stay with us. While they give all honor and respect to the intelligent workers of all classes—while their farmers take pride in their occupation, and keep their scorn for the loafers who seek to live on the labor of others, we despise the horny hand and homespun coat, and those only who are fit for nothing else become farmers. While they love their country and the wise institutions which their own manly exertions have founded, and stir up their national pride by bragging about themselves and all that belongs to them, we, with natural advantages quite equal to theirs, with institutions such as we are pleased to make them, and which are inferior to theirs only through our own lethargy and stupidity, are contented to grovel on year

after year, in servile submission to those evils which are the effects of own spiritless and short-sighted selfishness, without the power to make that vigorous and united effort which alone is required to place us in a position quite equal to theirs; in the meantime, grumbling and disparaging a country, a climate, and a soil, which are but too good for such thankless ingrates.

To conclude, while they having exercised a rigid and wide economy in their domestic affairs, turn as one man to take the same care of their public matters, to see that no extravagant salaries are paid, and that their public, like their private, servants, give a fair day's work for a fair day's wages, we—but we must stop, as we are verging on politics.

In our Report of last year, we gave it as our opinion that the low price of beef in our markets might be attributed chiefly to undue competition amongst the producers of that article caused by the want of green crops, for winter feeding. We were agreeably surprised to find that Mr Macaulay, in his recently published History of England, after describing the state of agriculture in the time of Charles the Second, in words that might be applied almost literally to this Province at this day, adduces a similar reason for like circumstances then existing, and further corroborates others of our opinions by stating, that the agricultural prosperity of England, at a more recent period, might be mainly attributed to the introduction of green cropping on an extensive scale.

But we may be required to show where the capital is to come from that is necessary for carrying out this improved mode of farming, and although the subject is a difficult one, we do not shrink from the task.

The Divine truth, "Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance, but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath," is as applicable to temporal as to spiritual things. Conducting the inquiry on this principle, we may ask—Do our farmers make a good use of the capital they have?—Do they take advantage of the light shed by science and increased knowledge on their pursuits?—Do they seek to profit by the experience of others?—Do they add the profits derived from farming to the capital, and invest them in further improvements?—Or do they, on the contrary, regularly loan their profits on mortgage, invest them in more land, build saw mills, or expend them in fitting out their sons as lawyers or store-keepers?—Or to leave generalities and go into particulars—would not the difference in produce arising from a proper rotation of crops, and the present exhausting system, soon increase capital?—Could not each farmer in the country, by the mere exercise of his common sense applied to the matter, at least double the quantity and quality of his manure?—Would not the difference between raising cows of the value of £5 and £10, between a dairy of cows yielding 4lbs. and 8lbs. of butter each per week, between beef selling at 14d and 5d. per lb.; cheese at 3d. and 6d.; butter at 8d. and 1s.; oats at 1s. 6d. and 3s.; all such differences being the result of different management merely, soon leave a surplus of profits which would change the country from a poor into a rich one?

Another mode of obtaining capital, however, is open to us, by means of banks. Banking capital in this country has hitherto been available only to those engaged in commercial pursuits. Farmers have been rigidly excluded from it, and this chiefly because our Banks were originated for the express purpose of accommodating the mercantile and lumbering interests.

The plan on which they are formed being a combination of the business of the exchange broker and money lender, forces them to have their main dealings with those who can furnish them with Bills of Exchange drawn against exports, and causes the accommodation which they can afford to the general interests to be to a limited extent in amount, and temporary and uncertain in duration.

Were our farmers to furnish an export,

which they will do sooner or later, say of beef, pork, butter, cheese, wool, hemp, or vegetables, the banks, as now constituted would, no doubt, be as ready to deal with them as with other producers. We may mention, as an instance of what may be done in this way, that the farmers' wives in the state of Maine export a greater value of poultry and eggs than we do in timber.

But Banks are wanted with a constitution so founded as to enable them to advance capital to farmers without, at least the immediate necessity of such a return; and what is called the Scotch Banking system precisely meets our case.

This system was founded for the encouragement of agriculture, and has not hitherto extended beyond that capital. On this system, productive land, instead of gold and silver deposited, is the value pledged on which the banks are allowed to issue notes, and money is principally loaned on what are called cash credits—the borrower being allowed to draw to a certain extent, and paying daily interest on the amount at his debit.

But before farmers can obtain loans on this or any other system, they must first generally deserve and obtain the character of being prudent, industrious, frugal, upright, honorable men, willing and prompt to fulfil all engagements at whatever sacrifice; and, second, shew that they can make a profitable use of capital loaned to them.

That there are many farmers who come up to the first condition we are happy to be able to bear testimony; still from the demoralising nature of the timber trade, in which so many have been engaged, we are not prepared to say, that the above can as yet be held as the general character of our people. With regard to the second, any one who travels through the country and sees the mere playing at farming which generally prevails; the main part of the farms lying in weedy and worn-out hay-fields, and stunted pastures, with little pocket-handkerchief patches of green crop; the scratching of the earth, which serves as an excuse for ploughing; the starved mongrel race of cattle, unfit either to yield milk or take on beef; the manure heaps exhaling their gases to heaven, and the precious liquid draining into the nearest brook—and all this with a listless desponding people, afraid to take hold of work for fear it will not pay, so much accustomed to the high wages and profits of a protected timber trade, that they despise the slow returns and prospective benefits resulting from the cultivation of the soil, worshipping money as the one thing needful, as the only thing to be desired, and ignorant of, and, therefore, incapable of appreciating, the glorious privilege of being independent, of having enough, and to spare of those things which are ever the reward of frugality and patient industry, and of which money is the only representative.

Any one witnessing such a state of things can have little hesitation in saying that until an entire change can be brought about, there is already quite enough of capital employed in farming for all the good that is done with it.

That these circumstances are not the effects of any inability in the soil to reward the intelligent cultivator, or any other insurmountable barrier to prosperity, is rendered evident by the fact, that the almost universal answer from every part of the Province, to an enquiry which has been recently made, is, "That farmers who have devoted themselves exclusively to their business have invariably accumulated property, and with ordinary prudence and industry, have generally become rich."

Our former remarks regarding improved stock perhaps require further explanation. They have been understood as if we wished to introduce foreign stock to take the place of native, from, it may have been supposed, our foolish preference for things from abroad, many alleging, that native cows give as much milk as foreign, thrive better, and are more suited to the country.

Now, be it observed, that we pronounced no opinion as to one breed of cows

being better than another; and the reason why we prefer others to the cows of this country is, that there is no distinct breed here, they are all mongrels, or derived from crosses between cows brought into the country with the first settlers, and other since introduced from all parts of the world.

As such, although their may occasionally be good milkers amongst them, the progeny cannot be calculated upon, and the more especially on account of the carelessness that prevails regarding what bulls are kept—anything in the shape of a bull being reckoned quite good enough. Those making a business of it, and depending on the produce of the dairy for the means of paying a heavy rent, could not afford this playing at farm. With them it would be a matter of life or death. Every cow would have to do its duty, and produce so much or the rent could not be paid.

There are common cows in Britain as well as in this country. Particular breeds are thus made. A farmer may have in his dairy of twenty cows, say five, that with the same feed will yield more milk and butter than the others. He is aware that it would pay him better if all his cows were equal to those, and to effect this, he breeds his future stock from them only, taking care that the bull is also from a good milker, it being a rule that "like begets like," and killing off any that may not come any that may not come to the mark. By careful breeding in this way, for many generations, have breeds been formed, possessing distinctive qualities, color, and shape—the produce of which retain the characteristics.

None of these breeds are ever crossed for breeding purposes, nor are they allowed to be mixed with common stock. Some breeds have also been made up on account of their size and fattening propensities.

There are in England three celebrated breeds—the Durham, Devon, and Hereford. In Scotland but one—the Ayrshire. The Galloway, Angus, and West Highland are not used for the dairy.

Now, if our farmers choose to take the trouble, and are willing to leave the benefit as a legacy to their children, they may make a breed of their own too; the same care and time would produce the same results. But common sense suggests that it will be cheaper to take the benefit of the labor and care of others. He must be a poor farmer, however, who is contented year after year to go on with an inferior race of cows without selection or an attempt at improvement.

One cause of the prejudice against the imported breed in this country is from bulls only being introduced into particular districts. The produce of a cross cannot be calculated on, it may take after either parent, or be worthless.

No correct judgment can be formed of the value of any breed unless it is kept pure; a little care and attention in the beginning is all that is required to effect this; and those only who have seen herds of well-bred and well-fed cattle, can understand why such prices should be paid for them.

In Britain and the United States, cattle of the improved breeds are always valued at double the price of the common kinds, and bulls are often sold at from £20 to £100. Does any one suppose that the rent paying farmer of Britain can afford to do this to gratify a fancy?

At all the cattle shows in Britain premiums are given only for the above breeds. We observe also that at the last New York State Show at Syracuse, no other breeding cattle were admitted to compete than pure-bred Durham, Devon, Hereford, and Ayrshire. Native cattle and grade or crosses were excluded. Our Agricultural Societies may take a hint from this. Some of them this year excluded all but native cattle from competing! Our neighbours of the United States have no want of national pride; and they rather surpass us in a knowledge of what will pay. We may presume, therefore, that in this they are right and we are wrong.

These breeds, however, will be no better than our own, unless they are better