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*Nec arancorum sane testus ideo melior, quia ex se fila gignunt, nec noster vilior quia ex aliens libamus ut apes.*

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## Agricultural Journal.

### On the General Management of a Farm in Lower Canada,

SHOWING HOW AN EXHAUSTED SOIL MAY BE RENDERED PERFECTLY FERTILE WITHOUT THE AID OF CAPITAL.

BY A FARMER IN THE DISTRICT OF MONTREAL.

Translated and published with additional Notes, under the superintendence of the New Brunswick Society for the Encouragement of Agriculture, Home Manufactures, and Commerce, and by that Society presented and recommended to the Farmers of this Province.\*

#### PLOUGHING.

If it be thought absolutely necessary to summer-fallow, that is, to plough without sowing, which only happens when the soil is so hard and heavy that it cannot be pulverized in any other way, you ought not to spread the manure on the land in the preceding fall, but plough the land and ridge and furrow it with as much care as for a crop. You need not touch it again before the month of June, when you must plough it again and harrow it so as to render it even, and destroy the roots of the weeds. You may then draw the furrows in a straight line, giving them a uniform breadth, and so as to facilitate drainage. About the middle of July you must plough it again, and sow it with plenty of buckwheat. At the end of September, plough it again, having previously spread it with dung. In this case the buckwheat is spread under with the manure, and serves greatly to increase the latter. The land thus prepared ought to be sown with wheat the ensuing spring, and you may add a little timothy and clover. A bushel of timothy will suffice for four or five acres, and three or four pounds of clover to each acre.

By following the method above described, you will have, in the year 1851, quadrupled, or more than quadrupled the fertility of the soil.

I have now done all that I can for field A. I have weeded and manured it as well as I can; and after having taken the crop of roots and the crop of wheat or barley next year, I leave this field to rest until the other fields have been improved in the same way, and according to the method above described. When this shall have been effected, that is to say in the space of six years, or in the year 1856, the worst will be over, and the battle may be considered as gained. The fields will then be in a clean and fertile condition, and their value will consequently be greatly increased. The Farm of 70 or 80 acres, which in 1849 only sustained three or four miserable cows, and perhaps no more than an equal number of sickly sheep, will be capable in less than ten years of furnishing an abundant subsistence for ten or twelve cattle, and other stock in the same proportion.

One of the great advantages of this system of rotation of crops is, that the pastures, which in summer furnish summer-feed for the stock, are in due proportion to the quantity of roots and hay destined to winter-feed them, and in due proportion to the straw which the grain-crops yield for their bedding. I will observe here that farmers—except those who live near towns, where they can easily procure manures—ought never to sell a single load of their hay, straw, or roots, since the whole ought to be consumed on the farm, with the view of procuring a sufficiency of manure therefrom, whereby the fertility of the soil is to be sustained. But if the farmer is not to sell hay, or straw, or roots, what is he to sell? I answer, the third of the land being under this system appropriated to grain crops, he will always be able to sell a large part of them. The half of the farm being in hay and pasture, will allow it to produce a large quantity of butter, cheese, butchers' meat and wool, and to sell a considerable part of these after having supplied the wants of the family. It may be said, that six years is a long time to wait for the renovation of the whole farm; but I will reply, that I know of no other means by which it may be done in less time, from its own resources; and it is worthy of observation that the land is improving every year. The produce is larger, even for the first year, under this system than it is under the present method of culture, and from year to year, the land is improving, field by field, and is producing more and more, so as to pay the farmer better than it does at present, and to recompense him doubly afterwards when the whole shall have been improved under a system of rotation.

It may be objected that two years of pasture is a long time of rest for the land; but you will observe that the land does not remain unproductive during this period of repose. This plan not only contributes to re-establish the almost exhausted fertility of the soil (and it will be admitted, that this is the only one now practised by the Canadian habitants), but it is also the best means of furnishing the farmer with the first necessities of life, and the articles which, so to speak, will most readily find an outlet in our markets, such as beef, lamb, mutton, butter, cheese, wool, and other products already named.

#### MANURES.

Manures are of the first importance to the farmer, and he must do everything in his power to increase their amount. The system here proposed is calculated so as to increase the quantity of manure in proportion as the soil becomes improved. As already said, the farmer ought not to sell a particle of his hay or straw, because these are the principal materials for manure, and consequently it is infinitely worse to sell the manure itself. The manure thus economised will suffice each year for the field which is to receive the root crop (No. 1).

After the crop of Oats (No. 6), the land is not yet exhausted, and might even yield another grain crop. It is better, however, to preserve this fertility than to be obliged to bring back continually this degree of fertility.

In this short treatise, it is impossible for me to mention one

Concluded.

hundredth part of the means which we have of increasing our stock of manure. I shall content myself with alluding to the rich deposits of bog-mould which we possess, and the limestone which can be had every where. The very weeds even, which are the curse of our fields, may be converted into good manure.

#### DRAINING.

Although Drainage is a profitable improvement of the land, it is so expensive that I will say nothing more about it than what the Canadian farmers know already, that is, that the land ought to be so ditched that water cannot lodge and render the soil unproductive.

There are always spare days, however, such as a damp day in harvest, or when the frost stops the ploughing in the fall, when underdraining might be done to a considerable extent. All drains in this climate should be at least 3 feet deep, cut as narrow as possible, and filled with eighteen inches of broken stones, or laid with draining tiles. Whenever the land is springy, or the subsoil heavy and retentive, draining will do good. The drains should be cut parallel, from 20 to 30 feet apart, and should run in the direction of the lowest level.

#### STOCK.

As for the sort of Stock which ought to be kept, I would advise a regular proportion of all the animals which prosper with us, because one sort may be fed on the food which another will not touch. For instance, Sheep eat greedily and get fat upon French beans, which no other creature but man use.

#### HORSES.

The Canadian Horses are, everything considered, the best breed for the country, but we ought to take care to raise only the best sorts: the system of leaving entire all the small miserable stallions, is sure to deteriorate the breed: Colts ought to be fed abundantly, particularly during the first winter after weaning. Nothing can be more absurd than the idea of starving a young Colt, for the purpose of making it hardy: still the idea is rather commonly entertained. Colts like children, require ample liberty and ample nourishment.

#### CATTLE.

The Canadian breed is perhaps the best for the country, and the best to yield milk, butter, &c., provided care be taken to select the best bulls and cows to breed from. Too much care cannot be given to this point, and the calves must be supplied with good and abundant food. It is desirable to cross the breed, so as to increase the quantity and quality of the milk, this can only be done with the Ayrshire breed, seeing that the larger breeds do not do so well for the country, at least in the present condition of its pastures.

By keeping a thorough-bred Bull, and changing every three or four years, and rearing only the best heifers, the stock would gradually be brought up nearly approaching to the breed of the sire.

A good Canadian Cow will, in my opinion, give more milk for the same allowance of food, than any other breed which I know.

The profits of the dairy depend almost entirely on the care taken of the cattle during winter. Cows, warmly housed and well fed through the winter, and put on good pasture in summer, will yield much more than sufficient to pay for the difference of keep. In the Province of New Brunswick, cows are generally fed on dry hay in winter, kept in cold stables, and are pastured in the woods, or on fields which have been impoverished by excessive cropping. The consequence is, that, as reported by the Farmers themselves to Professor Johnston, the average yield, per cow, for the season, is only 89 lbs. Butter, or 140 lbs. Cheese. In Ayrshire, as reported by Mr Colman, Commissioner from the United States, the yield is, per cow, 300 lbs. Butter, or 500 lbs. Cheese. To ensure a similar yield, the following treatment is requisite:

Select good, well shaped, healthy cows. In winter, provide for them a warm stable on the south side of the barn. Water them in their stalls. Boil regularly for them a mixture composed of turnips, mangolds, or carrots, with chaff or cut hay, and a small allowance of barley, oats, or linseed: of this let them have two pailsful each, daily—and as much oat-straw or hay as they require. In summer, turn them into fields where they can have as much grass as they can consume. The cows should calve in April: the calves to get the milk for a month, and afterwards to be weaned off with skimmed milk and boiled linseed.

#### SHEEP.

The Leicester breed is the best to give large and fat sheep, but it is not so advantageous as regards wool, which is perhaps the principal object for which sheep are kept. That breed which would possess a combination of the two qualities of fat meat and fine wool, and a vigorous constitution withal, would be the best for Lower Canada. To attain this object, you might cross the common sheep of the country, first with a Leicester Ram, so as to get a large breed, and then mix the product of the first cross with a Cheviot Ram, so as to get a finer wool, or first with a Cheviot and then with a Leicester Ram. In this way I have procured hardy sheep, any one of which will yield six or eight pounds of fine wool, and from twenty-two to twenty-five pounds of mutton per quarter. In breeding, the greatest care must be taken always to choose the finest Rams, and to preserve the finest Lambs; and on no pretext ought the finer individuals to be disposed of.

#### ON KEEPING SHEEP.

As this is of the greatest importance, and but little known, I will add a few remarks, which will be excused, since this has been the business of almost my whole life.

Sheep ought not to be allowed to run from field to field, as this gives them wandering habits, which injures them the whole summer through. When sheep are well led and well treated, they will follow the person who has charge of them wherever he pleases; and if they are taken and enclosed in good pasture, they will give less trouble in looking after them than any other sort of stock. It is also of the greatest importance to smear sheep about the middle of November: for which

purpose I have made use of the following mixture, which succeeded wonderfully well. The quantities here indicated will suffice for twenty sheep.

Rosin,	4 lbs.
Common Oil,	3 pints.
Butter,	3 lbs.

The oil ought to be heated to the melting point of the rosin, and the butter then added after the oil has ceased to boil, which is a point requiring attention. The whole ought to be stirred until they become thoroughly mixed; and should the composition prove to be too thick to be used, buttermilk or cream may be added, taking care to mix well. This ointment is to be smeared on the skin of the sheep in parallel lines, distant one inch from each other, and for the whole length of the creature. This application destroys vermin, invigorates the growth of the wool, and protects the animal against cold. This precaution is absolutely necessary if we wish to secure a good flock of sheep.

Another thing of great importance is, never to shut up sheep in a close, ill-ventilated place. It would be better to pen them up in some corner of the barn rather than to treat them so. The sheep can naturally endure a considerable degree of cold, but it cannot do without fresh air; consequently the fold ought always to be well ventilated.

It is a very bad practice to let the rams walk with the sheep in autumn, because that is the reason why the ewes drop their lambs too early in the spring. The ram (and a single one will be enough for five farmers,) ought to be kept apart from the 15th of September till the 23d November, and if, at this latter period, he be allowed to go to the sheep, the lambs will appear about the 17th of April, and the ewes will not have had time to get worn out with suckling before going out again to the pasture.

#### PIGS.

The best breed for the country is that called the Berkshire, or Chinese, and as many as possible ought to be kept upon every farm, (that is as many as will consume all the milk and other remains of the dairy,) and which may be fattened in the fall. That lean, hungry, long-legged, long nosed animal, styled the Canadian Pig, ought to be forever banished. A good breed will produce double the lard with half of the food. The Chinese or Berkshire Boar, crossed with the breed of the country, for three or four years, will effect the necessary change.

#### AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS.

Those which are generally made use of, with the addition of the two mentioned above, viz., the Roller and Cultivator may suffice until new improvements require the use of new implements.

#### DAIRY.

The Canadian women are industrious and cleanly, consequently they are well fitted to make good butter and cheese, as soon as they know how, but this does not come within the limits of the present little treatise; besides, the cattle ought to be well fed before we can hope to get milk sufficiently rich for the purposes of the dairy. I limit myself, therefore, to indicating these preliminaries.

#### CONCLUSION.

It may be said, that the Agricultural Societies are intended to bring about the improvements required by the country; but if these societies content themselves with offering prizes for the finest animals and the heaviest crops, without teaching the way to produce fine animals and fine crops, these will be acting like a person who shows another a fine bunch of fruit on the top of a wall, without offering him a ladder whereby he might reach it. He would be reduced to the necessity of looking at it, and wishing for it, without the hope of reaching it. The publication and circulation of practical advice like the foregoing, is that which would become to this individual the ladder of which he is in want.

## European News.

From Willmer & Smith's European Times.

### FEARFUL BURNING OF A TRANSPORT SHIP.

The Overland Mail brings an account of a frightful catastrophe, the destruction of one of the largest Indiamen by fire, called the Buckinghamshire, formerly belonging to the East India Company's service, while on her homeward voyage to London. She was a splendid looking ship, nearly two thousand tons burthen, with high poop decks, and her loss was high being attended with the most fearful consequences. There was on board upwards of two hundred individuals, consisting of troops, passengers and crew, whose preservation from a horrible death may be considered truly marvellous.

The details of the burning of the vessel are as follows:—The Buckinghamshire set sail for England on Thursday, the 1st of March last, under the charge of Captain Macgregor. Her crew amounted to nearly one hundred hands, thirty being Englishmen, and seventy Lascars. She had on board as steerage passengers, about of the 80th regiment of foot, invalids and their families, and thirty three cabin passengers. The passage from Calcutta down the Hooghly passed agreeably, and on the evening of the following Monday, the 4th March, she was brought up for the night, and to discharge her pilot off Canterbury Point, about ten miles beyond Diamond Harbor. The weather was fine, and most of the passengers were on deck, singing, dancing, and otherwise amusing themselves—all seemed happy and cheerful. As night approached they one by one disappeared below, and by half past nine all was quiet, with the exception of the watch on deck, all were turned in and asleep, and nothing was heard but the rippling of the water against the ship's bow. Suddenly, however, a thrill of horror ran through the ship, by the cry of fire, and the decks were crowded with passengers in a state of nudity. The first intimation Captain Macgregor received of its existence was about ten minutes before ten o'clock, when a man reported to him that he feared there was something wrong in the hold, as smoke was coming