

THE COLONIAL FARMER,

DEVOTED TO THE AGRICULTURAL INTERESTS OF NOVA-SCOTIA, NEW-BRUNSWICK,
AND PRINCE EDWARD'S ISLAND.

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HALIFAX, N. S., NOVEMBER 16, 1842.

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THE SEASON.

The months of May and June were cold and wet, rains being frequent, although there was not a single heavy rain sufficient to produce a flood or freshet in the rivers. The cold was mainly produced by the large quantities of ice passing past us, there being much of that kind of mist which earlier in the season would have been "silver thaws" or freezing rain. This very often in the fields of floating ice, appearing like a thick haze with a dark edge in the eastern horizon, the wind very chilly, blowing from that quarter, and shifting to southeast, south, and finally west, when it grows warmer and the black-edged haze disappears, the ice field having passed. If in the latter part of February there are two "silver thaws" in succession, it is probable that winter is broke, and that there will be no more severe cold of continuance. In the silver thaws the clouds generally rest on the earth, and it has often happened that directly after a warm rain which has completely thinned the branches of the trees, and while the drops of water were hanging to them, a kind of fog would spread the country, and a mist composed of minute drops, very visible to the naked eye, would begin to freeze on these unthinned branches, and soon cover them with ice, whose fine atoms are so small that had they fallen they left through the cold air as if they had never been there. If there are now Philosophers employed as Messrs. De Luc and Hutton were formerly, in attempting to explain the process of the formation of rain, we would advise them to spend a winter in New-Foundland, where they will have the advantage, in the "silver thaws," of trying their experiments in the winter, while the rain is falling. About the beginning of July the weather became very warm and continued so till the end of August, the wind generally blowing from a point a little south of east. Dry weather commenced with the hot weather, but the day was so forward near Halifax that it was not injurious, and proved a heavier yield than common, and persons who were strong-minded had fine weather for making their hay, but the drought was succeeded by rain before all the hay was made, the quantity of rain being such as to fall, and there was an unnecessary growth of water grass in some parts of the Province, the drought commenced earlier and dried the hay crops, however the weather was similar to that which Halifax it proved better than was expected in the spring, for the seedling open night had destroyed much of the Timothy and clover. Oats and Wheat generally produced a good crop, in any places above average. About the end of August we had an

eastly rain which cleared up with a North wind, the weather became cold, and continued so through September, stopping the growth of cucumbers, squashes, beans, &c., but with very little frost as the North wind generally continued all night attended with flying clouds. Early in October the weather moderated, and we had a kind of Indian summer for half this month, when after a rain storm attended at times with thunder the cold north wind returned, and on the night of the 21st we had the first frost sufficiently severe to kill the potato vines generally. Most of the potato fields were affected by the blight, but in general not till they were nearly ripe, so that all that were planted in proper season have yielded a fair crop, of good quality. Taken altogether the Farmers have rarely had a better crop, but we are sorry that we must say, that owing to dullness of business in town, they have seldom had a worse market to dispose of their surplus produce. Good potatoes have been sold at auction as low as 5d. per bushel, and good beef at 1 1/2 p. lb, but this is one of those circumstances which prove that all classes of the community make but one body, and that it is for the interest of all that all should thrive. Could tradesmen and laborers get constant employment, provisions would fetch a remunerating price, but when they cannot, the farmer is obliged whether he will or no, to supply them with food at a loss to himself, and it is well that he is able to do it, for it is better that his wife and daughters should wear their old gowns a while longer, than that any body should starve.

DULL MARKETS.

The market at Halifax is at present glutted with country produce, the tradesmen and laborers having but little employment, are obliged to purchase either on credit from retailers, or else to buy a very few days provisions at a time, while at the same time there is a large surplus of provisions in the neighbouring states, for which they can hardly find purchasers. At such a time it will be well for farmers to reflect that glutted markets are generally soon succeeded by scarcity, that it will be better for them to winter as many lambs as they can, than to sell them for four and sixpence a head—that it is better to winter more swine, than to pay freight for potatoes to Halifax, and then sell them at tenpence a bushel. All the stock that is kept on the farm furnishes manure, an article of which the Farmer never has too much, and if the inhabitants of Prince Edward Island were to adopt the practice of selling salt provisions and butter, instead of disposing of their oats and potatoes at such very low prices as they have realized for some years, they would undoubtedly raise the money to pay their rents more easily than they do at present, while at the same time a large addition would be made to their stock of manure, and consequently they would get larger crops with the same labour.

We have this year, generally, a large crop of straw. Some hardy cattle will eat it readily and keep in good order without hay, but all will eat it when cut and wet with acidling water containing a small quantity of mashed potatoes, as it is prepared by our German farmers. Horses have better wind when they are allowed this straw, about equal to half their hay, the straw being given with their grain. The horses on the Barbary coast and in part of Spain, are generally fed only with straw and barley, without any hay.