

## THE FARMER'S MANUAL.

SENVILLE, N. S., JANUARY, 1880.

## INTRODUCTORY.

WE launch to-day, our new venture upon the sea of Journalism, and in doing so it becomes necessary to say a few words in explanation of our aims and objects, and to give our reasons for introducing a new candidate for public favor.

In the first place, then, we think that this Province affords an ample field for a journal such as we intend the FARMER'S MANUAL shall be. At present, the "Journal of Agriculture" is the only periodical published in Nova Scotia in the interests of the farming community; and however valuable it may be as a means of communication between the Central Board of Agriculture—whose organ it is—and the Agricultural Societies throughout the Province, it will scarcely be claimed that it is the only agricultural paper that our farmers require. Still, we do not undertake our new enterprise merely with the intention of supplying a "long felt want," for while we are satisfied that the want actually exists, it has yet to be demonstrated that it has been properly felt.

In the early history of this Province, the position of the farmer was very different from what it is at present. With few wants, little competition, and a virgin soil, our forefathers were able to supply all their requirements by a very rude system of husbandry; but in those days of silent progress and keen competition,—with the cost of living greatly increased, and with farms that have lost much of their original fertility, it becomes imperatively necessary for our farmers to be thoroughly informed on all matters pertaining to their calling and to keep fully abreast of the age in which we live. Many of our agriculturists are well aware of the truth of this, and are ready to take advantage of all the modern improvements in farm stock, machinery, seeds and fertilizers, and to adopt any new system that has been proved to be advantageous. But, unfortunately, a large number of farmers appear to think it almost sacrilege to be wiser than their fathers, and tread along in the same old ruts and follow the same old systems which their ancestors made and adopted,—thus making their lives one continual struggle for existence, and driving their sons into other occupations and other countries. We desire to make the FARMER'S MANUAL a medium of communication between the farmers of this Province with a view to the promotion of improved agriculture. To this end we invite the co-operation of our progressive farmers, and we shall be happy at all times to publish brief communications giving the results of personal experience and observation in farming matters, or on any subject which has a bearing on successful husbandry. Our exchange list includes the leading agricultural journals of Canada and the United States, and from these we shall, from time to time, make selections for the benefit of our patrons. These selections will not be made at

random, but will be carefully chosen with a view to their fitness and adaptability to this country and climate, and we may add that while catering to the wants and requirements of the farmer, the farmer's family will not be forgotten. As the mechanical arts are closely connected with agriculture, we shall devote a portion of our space to the latest information in relation to the Arts and Sciences, and thus endeavor to make our little paper interesting to the mechanic as well as to the husbandman. We shall earnestly advocate the development of the natural resources of our country, and the encouragement of home industries, particularly those which are calculated to furnish a home market to our farmers. Thousands and thousands of dollars are sent out of this province every year for articles which might be manufactured in our midst, and which, if made here, would keep our men and our money at home and furnish a market for the products of the farm. To do all in our power to help to bring about such a desirable state of affairs shall be one of the chief aims of the FARMER'S MANUAL, and in the meantime it shall be our duty to watch carefully the foreign market reports, so that we may be able to lay before our patrons such information as may be of service to them in disposing of their surplus produce. To prevent any misunderstanding, we may as well confess that in adding another to the list of periodicals, we are not solely actuated by unselfish and philanthropic motives. Anything which advances the cause of agriculture in this province, cannot fail to benefit all classes, and in doing all we can to promote our agricultural interests, we are confident that at some future period our new enterprise will prove remunerative. Our terms of Subscription are very low, and place the MANUAL within the reach of all, so we confidently expect a generous support from the farmers and artisans of Nova Scotia; and as we shall honestly endeavor to pursue the course briefly indicated above, and give all our patrons the worth of their money at the very least, we hope that a large and profitable circulation will ultimately reward our efforts.

## BUTTER MAKING.

Butter making is quite an important industry in this province, and might easily be made much more profitable than it is at present. If we were to say that one half of the butter sold in Nova Scotia is unfit for table use, we should have little fear of contradiction from any of those who purchase their butter at the shops. The manufacture of poor butter is as unprofitable to the producer as it is annoying to the consumer. In some of the cities of the United States fancy, or "gilt-edged" butter will readily command from seventy five cents to one dollar per pound, while an inferior quality will not bring more than twenty five cents. The difference in price is not so marked in this country, but even here a first class article of butter will always find a ready market at fair figures, while the poor kinds have to be sold at low rates,

and in many cases will not sell at all. The makers of poor butter not only suffer loss from their ignorance or carelessness, but they injure those who manufacture a superior article, for the flooding of the market with the trash often sold under the name of butter has a tendency to keep prices down. It is impossible to defend the manufacture of inferior butter on the score of economy, for it costs very little more to produce the best quality than it does to make the wretched stuff which is only fit for soap-grease. Extreme care and cleanliness are required for the production of the best of butter, and without these qualities no amount of skill will suffice to turn out a really first class article. We intend, from time to time, to publish useful hints on this important subject, and we shall be duly thankful if our efforts have the effect of making an improvement in the manufacture of an article which modern civilization has placed among the necessities of life.

## CUT FODDER.

The cutting of hay and straw for feeding farm stock is not practised in this province as extensively as it should be and has not received anything like the attention that its importance demands. The trouble and expense of cutting feed are undoubtedly considerable, but the saving of fodder and other advantages amply compensate for the outlay. Some of the coarser sorts of hay and straw are, in their long state, almost worthless for fodder, but when cut and mixed with bran or meal they can be fed with advantage, and without loss. For feed made, and every one who owns a horse should use a hay cutter. By the use of cut feed horses can be kept in good condition on a much poorer quality of hay than would otherwise be required, and less time is occupied in eating, thus affording a longer period for rest, while by the method of using short feed usually adopted, the injurious effects of cast are entirely obviated. Cut fodder produces excellent results when fed to milk cows, increasing the flow of milk, and keeping the animals in good condition. Another beneficial result of feeding cut fodder is the improved quality of the manure, the difference being almost enough to pay the cost of preparing the food. On small farms, and in villages, the amount of hay and straw required can be cut by hand at odd moments without much expense; and wind mills may be profitably employed wherever large stocks of cattle are kept. We hope to see the practice of cutting fodder become much more common in this country, and we have every reason to believe that all who give it a fair trial will be satisfied with the results.

## PRICKLY COMFREY.

This new forage plant is attracting a large amount of attention at present both in the United States and Canada, and if one half be true which is said and written in its favor, it certainly merits all the notice it has received. The enormous yield of this

plant, and the number of cuttings it will bear in one season, seem to make it admirably adapted for the requirements of this Province where something of this sort is imperatively needed to supplement the pastures during the month of summer; while its rapid habit of growth and its great productiveness must render it invaluable as a soiling plant. As a rule, we are inclined to look with some suspicion upon a new varieties of plants, for which remarkable qualities are claimed, for past experience has taught us that the merits of some of them are greatly exaggerated or that they are unsuited to our climate. Some plants which produce excellent results, under certain conditions of soil and climate, prove very disappointing when these conditions are lacking. The Prickly Comfrey, however, has been tested over such a wide range of country, and under such a variety of conditions, and has been endorsed by so many of the leading Agricultural journals that we feel justified in recommending it to our farmers and advising them to make a trial of its merits. It will cost but little to make the experiment, and if the new plant possesses one half of the virtues ascribed to it, there can be no doubt that it will ultimately work a revolution in the agricultural affairs of our country. We trust, then, that all our farmers will give the Prickly Comfrey a fair trial during the coming summer, and thus be in position to take advantage of any benefits which may arise from its cultivation and use.

We respectfully invite the farmers and mechanics of Nova Scotia to send experience and observation in reference to any subject calculated to be of general interest to our readers. We wish to make our paper thoroughly practical and useful, and we know of no better method of attaining the desired end than by publishing the opinions and deductions of practical men in our own province who know the truth whereof they affirm. We trust the friends of progress and improvement throughout the country will comply with our invitation confer a mutual benefit by helping us to make the FARMER'S MANUAL really valuable medium for the circulation of useful information.

OUR NOVELLIST.—Ouida's name is de la Rama, and she is the daughter of a Frenchman. More information than this the most intelligent interviewer has not been able to get from the author. She lives in a villa about two miles from Rome, where she is surrounded by books, pictures and what she more than both of these, a dog has a burying place on her for dogs, where they are buried with a tenderness that is bestowed on the human race was an unknown writer. She writes a page for her magazine when her novel of "Granville" made her reputation, and every novel she writes finds a market at \$8,000.