

parts. A description of the climate, scenery and other parts of the province, is not applicable to those portions bordering on these bays. The vicinity of Minas Basin and the valley of Annapolis is a paradise for farmers. Here are raised all the products of the more favored districts of Maine, New Hampshire and Massachusetts. Fruits, with the exception of peaches, are raised in great plenty, and the grains, and especially the vegetable are very superior and abundant. Large tracts, rich with the deposits of the tides, are reclaimed from the sea by means of dykes, and teem with the products of the husbandman.

This is the site of the French settlements, which are described in Longfellow's *Evangeline*, and the dykes raised by the first French Acadians are still used. Many also of the orchards now yielding good returns were first planted by them.

Land here is valuable. Having water communication with Halifax and with the States, and land communication with Digby and Yarmouth, the farmers never want for a market. Thousands upon thousands of bushels of potatoes are sent to Boston every Fall and Winter. One variety of potato, the 'blue nose,' has given the name to the people, and they are not ashamed of it. No amount of careful culture by the farmers of the States, has ever availed to produce such potatoes and turnips as those of Nova Scotia. The best vegetables are raised on what is called "burnt land." This is land on which the forest has been newly felled, and then the brush and turf burned over. Where the land is cheap as in most parts of the country, but little attention is paid to manuring; but the field which has borne three or four successive crops is abandoned for the time and a new piece selected and cleared. One kind of potato successfully cultivated called the "pogy," similar in appearance to our kidney potatoes, has the quality of remaining perfectly good till the next year's growth is gathered. The turnips called "Lapland turnips," are in form like our French turnips, but of a deep yellow color. They are a standing dish in Nova Scotia, and are far superior to any I ever ate here. The quality of these vegetables is dependent more probably upon the nature of the soil than upon difference of seed or careful cultivation.

I mentioned in a former article that farming was carried on in a slovenly, shiftless manner. That man who expends his income on his farm is looked upon as a curiosity, if not as partially demented. The ambition of every Nova Scotia farmer as well as of most others, is to own in a vessel, and money and other exchange for the products of the farm, is almost always invested in a ship. The Province contributes largely to the carrying trade of the world, and if any one wants to know of the prosperity of the country, he has only to ask whether freights are good. It is wonderful that the returns of the agriculturist are so abundant and certain,—where he can be assured of selling at a fair price all his surplus produce, he will still pursue the suicidal policy of investing in the dangerous and uncertain business of shipping. Many have been financially ruined, not only by the loss of vessels, but by the depreciation of freights. But so long as fortunes can be occasionally made by one or two lucky voyages, so long will the people hazard their property in this kind of marine lottery.

## 6. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF TASMANIA.

Tasmania having voted £5,000 to cover the expenses of a geological survey of the island, has applied to the Crown for a competent scientific surveyor. The Colonial Office very properly consulting the School of Mines, Sir Roderick Murchison at once recommended Mr. Charles Gould, son of the ornithologist. Mr. Charles Gould was a student at the Government School of Mines, and a successful competitor for the Duke of Cornwall's Exhibition, the Board of Trade Exhibition, and for the Forbes Medal. He has already sailed for the scene of his new labours.

## 7. QUEENSLAND—THE NEW PROVINCE IN AUSTRALIA.

It has been decided to erect into a new colony the district of Moreton Bay, now a portion of the government of New South Wales. The formation of this district into a separate colony has been for the last six years urgently and repeatedly pressed by the inhabitants on the home government. A delay in acceding to their petitions was occasioned by the necessity of an arrangement for apportioning the public debt as between Sydney and Moreton Bay—a point now satisfactorily adjusted. The separation now effected will no doubt lead to a great and rapid development of the colony thus created, which will take the name of Queensland. The governor selected to preside over the new colony is Sir George Ferguson Bowen, K. C. M. S., at present chief secretary to the Lord High Commissioner of the Ionian Islands—a post he has held for some time to the approbation of his superiors. Sir George Bowen was formerly a fellow of Brazenose College, and a first-class man, and has

obtained considerable distinction in literary as well as in official circles. His appointment is likely to be popular in Australia. Sir Benjamin Pine, now Governor of the Gold Country, has been appointed Lieutenant Governor of St. Christopher's. It will be seen from the foregoing, that Sir Edward Lytton has adhered to the principle of promotion in the service as the best means of securing to our colonial empire the most efficient servants that can be obtained.—*London Standard*.

## 8. SOVEREIGNTY OF THE FEEJEE OR FIJI ISLANDS.

A new sovereignty has been offered to her Majesty the Queen of England, namely, that of the Feejee Islands, in the Pacific. The bearer of the offer is her Majesty's consul in Feejee, Mr. Pritchard. One cause of the offer being made is, that the King of the Feejee Islands is unable to pay a fine of £9,000, inflicted by an American captain. The Feejee Islands are a group numbering 211, of which 80 are inhabited. The largest is about 360 miles in circumference, and the next about 300. They spread over about 40,000 square miles of the Pacific Ocean, directly on the track between Australia and Panama and British Columbia. Almost every island has a harbour; many of these are capacious enough for a whole navy. Feejee is 1,500 miles from Sydney, and about 1,000 from New Zealand. The group is the key and centre of Polynesia. The area of the two large islands is computed at about equal to that of Belgium, and of the whole group about equal to that of Holland. The climate is described as not unlike that of Ceylon. The productions are diversified and rich. Yesterday, a deputation from the Manchester Cotton Supply Association waited upon Lord Malmesbury, to urge the acceptance of the proffered sovereignty, on the ground of the value of the islands commercially. Samples of cotton grown in these islands were transmitted by Lord Malmesbury to the committee of the Manchester Cotton Supply Association, who value them at from 7d. to 12d. per pound. On the 11th September last, a formal deed of cession of the Feejean Archipelago to Her Britannic Majesty was executed by Thakombau, the Vunivalu of Bau, claiming supremacy, as Tui-Viti, (King of Feejee) over the entire Archipelago and its inhabitants. The deed of cession finally executed contains stipulations, we believe, to the following effect:

1. That the American claims against Feejee shall be paid or settled by her Britannic Majesty's Government.
2. That Thakombau shall be allowed (as Tui-Viti) to retain his position as chief of the aboriginal tribes, but to govern under instructions from the local representatives of Her Majesty.
3. That in consideration of the \$45,000 paid to satisfy American claims, 200,000 acres of land shall be made over to Her Majesty's Government; such 200,000 acres to be selected by a British appointee.
4. That in addition to this grant of 200,000 acres, there shall be grants of such other lands as may be needed for local governmental purposes; such requirements to be agreed upon by a Commission, to consist of two Feejean chiefs and two British gentlemen, presided over by the local representative of her Majesty, the latter official to act as umpire in all disputed questions.—*Sydney Herald*.

## 9. STATES AND COLONIES—A COMPARISON.

In the year 1700, the population of the United States consisted of 3,223,629 free people and 697,697 slaves. In the year 1858 the population of the provinces of British North America, numbers 3,441,354 free men, without the luxury of a slave. In the year of the union the imports of the United States were valued at £4,955,765. In the year 1858 the imports into the British Provinces amounted in value to £15,138,834. In 1858 the exports of those provinces amount to £11,701,184, so that at this day these British provinces, this future "North American Federation," rank third in the list of the trade and commerce of the world, taking precedence of France and Russia. These are some of the circumstances on which the advocates of union between the British provinces rely as an evidence that the colonies are now of such maturity as would justify the creation of a national existence, by a North American Federation and a free commonwealth, in which it is believed that a federal union must merge.—*London Post*.

## VI. Papers on Natural History.

### 1. IRRITABLE PLANTS.

The name of irritability is given by botanists to the movements made by certain plants when touched. These movements are influenced chiefly by light and heat; but like many phenomena occurring in organised beings, they cannot at present be explained by merely