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*Omnium rerum, ex quibus aliquid acquiritur, nihil est agriculturâ melius, nihil uberius, nihil homine libero dignius.—Cicero : de Officiis, lib. I, cap. 42.*

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HALIFAX, 6th March, 1877.

THE mild spring weather of February, although very pleasant, must have been injurious to the bare grass fields and to unprotected plants in gardens. We shall not look for an early growth of grass this season. At present, hay appears to be very scarce in Hants and some other counties, whilst in Cumberland there is plenty to supply the market. If our farmers were to feed more grain they would find it less expensive than hay, and we should be relieved of those local fluctuations in the hay market which even slight changes in the proportions between demand and supply are sure to bring about in the case of such an unwieldy article of commerce. The judgment in favor of hay for cattle feed is one of the most baneful with which we have to contend in this Province. Hay is looked upon as a necessity; in most countries it is a luxury, and a very extravagant one, reserved for horses alone. The Western Canadian and American farmers do not feed hay to their horned cattle, the British farmer could not pay his rent if he did, and the French and German farmers never dream of such a thing. Roots and straw and oilcake in winter, with green fodder in summer, are the proper rations of cattle and sheep. Hay is the crop which requires the least possible amount of labor,—next to unenclosed pasture, which requires none at all. But it is likewise the crop that gives the least possible return of feed per acre. Wherever there is a want of capital or energy among the farmers of a

country, hay will be the leading crop. On the other hand wherever there is energy and skill and necessary appliances, hay will cease to occupy a prominent place. A farm can never be made by growing hay, and cattle feeding with hay can never be made to pay. The "apparent" profit is simply so much capital taken out of the land. This can be proved by an examination of the accounts of any farm if they have been carefully kept over a series of years.

These remarks lead us naturally back to the subject of our leading article in the February number. We then endeavored to show the importance of ascertaining what crops should be cultivated, what kinds of stock should be raised, in short what is the "system" of farming most likely to be profitable in Nova Scotia. We pointed out that notwithstanding occasional fluctuations the prices for cattle and meat will be permanently maintained, that cattle feeding is more likely to pay in the future than it has done in the past, that the opening up of European markets for American beef will lead to an immense development of cattle raising on this continent, that with the facilities for root-raising which we possess, so much superior to Ontario and the Western States, with our green summer pastures, and the wharf of the Dominion at our door, where our farm products, alive and dead, can be shipped, summer or winter, to the uttermost ends of the earth, we have advantages unequalled by any other Province of the Dominion. Moreover, for twelve years

the Board of Agriculture has been importing thorough-bred cattle for the improvement of our native stock, so as to enable the meat produced to take a fair place in the market with that of other countries. If we do not avail ourselves of these advantages we cannot hope, and do not deserve, to prosper.

Our urgent appeal in favour of Potato culture, last month, has, we are glad to say, elicited favorable comment. We hope it will take root in many a fertile field. For the present, the price of potatoes has gone down, in accordance with the law of pendulum oscillation which we endeavored to explain, but they will not sell at 30 cents a bushel in the planting season of 1877, as they did in 1876. The price of market potatoes will be permanently maintained over America, for the reasons so fully given last month. It is not, however, for the purpose of converting our farmers into market gardeners that we urge attention to potato culture. It is mainly with the view of leading to more extensive stock feeding. It is by means of stock feeding that farms are to be built up; it is by stock feeding that farming is to be made to pay, and to be converted from a clod-hopping mechanical routine into an attractive and scientific pursuit, and that the farmers are to be raised from their present position to be the true aristocrats, the best and strongest men, of the state.

We have a long argument ready on this subject, but our printer warns us that there is already enough copy set up, so we must defer the discussion.