

[RECEIVED JULY 25.]

Kentville, June 27th, 1879.

DEAR SIR,—The general impression about Truro and Onslow, in which I concur, is that the hay crop of this year will fall far behind the yield of last season, though the grass upon the marsh lands looks very promising, and betokens abundance. The upland grass has suffered materially from a long spell of cold, frosty, dry weather, during which time vegetation appeared to be at a stand still, and haying is so near at hand, it cannot be expected that the period of no growth will be made up in the few days of warmer weather, before the music of the moving machine is heard far and near. No doubt some heavy showers, accompanied by warm cloudy weather, will do much to advance this crop, and counteract the bad effects of cold, frost and drought. With a light hay crop, it is gratifying to report, that more grain and roots are growing this season, especially spring wheat and potatoes, than were ever seen in any former year. Potato fields are larger than usual, one farmer, with that fine esculent upon the brain, having planted twenty acres; and the absence of a large field of spring wheat from a good farm is an extraordinary circumstance. These, and other crops always grown, are doing well, so a short hay crop will not be felt, especially on account of a large quantity of old hay being still in the country. But a short hay crop in Colchester should not be a matter of serious moment to the Province at large. To-day I was on the Middle Dyke of Cornwallis, and had a fine view of a splendid crop of grass waving to a gentle breeze on fifteen hundred acres of first-class marsh land, in the district made immortal by Longfellow's *Evangeline*. Doubtless to the grand scenes of rural beauty and plenty this magnificent region presents to the tourist at this season of the year, are we indebted for the finest passages in the poet's wonderful production, more than to any other cause. Let our restless young men, who despise the agricultural capabilities of their own Province, and look to Manitoba as the farmers' Paradise, ramble through King's and Annapolis, and inspect the magnificent stretches of marsh land, the numerous and really splendid fields of winter wheat and winter rye, and potatoes, the large and extensive orchards, producing in many instances two thousand barrels of apples to the owner; and also visit and put down Mr. C. F. Eaton's splendid herd of Durham's, and Colonel W. E. Starrett's equally fine one of Ayrshire's, and Mr. Strong's magnificent lot of fat steers, as the type of cattle this country is capable of producing; and if they still entertain the idea that the "far lone land" is the only place in which they can make

a spoon or spoil a horn, far better let them depart, as Nova Scotia can receive no benefit from the services of wooden-headed and leather-hearted inhabitants.

Yours, &c.,

I. L.

AGRICULTURE AMONG THE ANCIENTS.

FROM A CORRESPONDENT.

"Revere the sacred plow; for fathers of mankind and Kings,
Who have stemmed the tide of war and ruled the state,
Have thrown aside the sword and sceptre,
Seized the plow,
And nobly independent lived."

In order to see how Agriculture was respected and followed out in ages past, let us glean from the testimony of the sages of antiquity, as well as the historians of modern times. In Egypt, for instance, the most ancient country in the world, we shall see how the tillers of the soil were regarded long, long before the Christian era. M. Rollin, in writing of "The Manners and Customs of the Egyptians," says, in regard to Husbandmen, Shepherds, and Artificers, that they formed the three classes of lower life in Egypt; but were nevertheless held in very great esteem, particularly husbandmen and shepherds. * * * * I have said, that husbandmen particularly, and those who took care of flocks, were in great esteem in Egypt, some parts of it excepted, where the latter were not suffered. It was indeed to these two professions that Egypt owed its riches and plenty. It is astonishing to reflect what advantages the Egyptians, by their art and labor, drew from a country of no great extent, but whose soil was made wonderfully fruitful by the inundations of the Nile, and the laborious industry of the inhabitants. It will be always so with every kingdom whose governors direct all their actions to the public welfare. The culture of lands and the breeding of cattle, will be an inexhaustible fund of wealth in all countries, where, as in Egypt, these profitable callings are supported and encouraged by maxims of state and policy; and we may consider it as a misfortune that they are at present fallen into into so general a disesteem, though it is from them that the most elevated ranks (as we esteem them) are furnished, not only with the necessities, but even the delights of life. * * * * But we need not have recourse to Plato's Commonwealth for instances of men who have led those useful lives. It was thus that the greatest part of mankind lived during near four thousand years; and that not only the Israelites, but the Egyptians, the Greeks, and

the Romans; that is to say, nations the most civilized, and most renowned for their arms and wisdom. They all inculcate the regard which ought to be paid to agriculture, and the breeding of cattle; one of which (without saying anything of hemp and flax, so necessary for our clothing) supplies us, by corn, fruits, and pulse, with not only a plentiful, but delicious nourishment; and the other, besides its supply of exquisite meats to cover our tables, almost alone gives life to manufactures and trade, by the skins and stuffs it furnishes. In "A view of Ancient History," by William Rutherford, D. D., (vol. 1, page 41) we find the following:—"The Egyptians early applied to agriculture, which, by introducing the complete idea of property, lays the foundation of law. The most nutritious vegetables flourished on the banks of the Nile, the light soil is easily cultivated, and the warm climate gives them two, and sometimes three, crops in the year. When man, ceasing to roam, becomes an inhabitant of the soil, and a possessor of land, laws and regulations become necessary to transmit possessions, and dispose of inheritances. This gave rise to established rights, to jurisprudence, and to the civil code. It is the plough that hath civilized mankind. When the ancients gave Ceres the title of legislatrix, and called a festival celebrated in her honor by the name of Thesmophoria, they gave the people to understand, that agriculture, by establishing property, laid the foundation of law. From law arises security, leisure; from leisure, curiosity; from curiosity, the arts and sciences."

Agriculture was honored among the Medes and Persians. The Abbe Millot, in his "Elements of General History," (part 1, vol. 1, page 76), says:—"Population and agriculture, two of the most important objects, and essentially united, attracted the attention of their government; and her religion went hand in hand with politics. The Persians looked upon a numerous posterity as a heavenly blessing, and the King bestowed rewards annually upon those who had many children. That population may be a blessing, it is necessary that the earth should supply sufficient nourishment for its inhabitants. Agriculture, that nurse of the human race, that source of plenty, health, and innocent pleasures, that preserver of morals, and, as Xenophon calls it, that school of all the virtues, was in an eminent degree honored and encouraged in Persia, as well as in Egypt. They even esteemed the fertilizing of the earth as an act of religious merit. They acquainted the King with the state of cultivation, who punished the remissness of some, while he rewarded the industry of others, and one day in the year he partook of