

is subject to not so much risk as his fellow in the West, in a similar rank of life, with his farm ready made to his hands.

But, our Province is not to be judged by an isolated section of sea coast. All along the great valley extending from Windsor to Annapolis, all along the margin of the Bay of Fundy and of the streams which empty into the Bay, from Truro to Granville; along our Northern shores from the Province line to the Strait of Canso, on the river bottoms of the Southern and Western Counties and in many parts of the island of Cape Breton, are found extensive tracts of land, which for fertility and fitness for agricultural purposes may challenge comparison with the land of almost any country.

The first English settlers in Nova Scotia, who came here on the establishment of Halifax in 1749, were not tempted to seek its shores from any appreciation of the qualities of the soil for agricultural purposes. They consisted mainly of men discharged from the military and naval services, and could hardly be expected to excel in agricultural pursuits. They were sent here when no longer needed for the purposes of the State—to get rid of bold and uneasy spirits, who, if discharged at home, might not easily be absorbed into the general mass of the population. To this add the fact that they were settled on the inhospitable shores bordering the new capital. The idea then entertained in England of the barren and forbidding character of the Province was bad enough. Is it any wonder that it was not much changed for the better by the efforts of men unacquainted with farming on land unfit to farm? But the time came when an act of very doubtful justice; an episode in the history of Nova Scotia, painful in many respects to dwell upon, nevertheless had one good effect, that it opened for the occupation of English immigrants the valuable tracts which the old French inhabitants had redeemed from the tides of the Bay of Fundy. From that time may be dated the commencement of farming in any proper sense of the word.

Still little progress was made till about 50 years ago, when the late John Young, the father of our excellent Chief Justice, in a series of letters published in a newspaper of the day, and subsequently collected in a volume dedicated to the Earl of Dalhousie, then Governor of this Province, letters equally remarkable for eloquence of diction, for earnestness of tone, and for the sound views they enunciated on Agricultural affairs, aroused the people of Nova Scotia from their lethargy and gave a new impulse to Agricultural pursuits. Societies were formed all over the Province, and an interest and a pride in Agricultural affairs excited which did great good to the country.

The next great stride was made in 1853. The late Rev. Dr. Forrester is entitled to much of the credit of this effort. He was one of the ablest and most energetic of the many able and energetic Scotchmen who have settled in this country, and whose exertions have done so much to make the land of their adoption worthy of the land of their birth, after which it is named in the pedantic latinity of the 1st James. In a lecture delivered by Dr. Forrester at the Mechanics' Institute the year before, he had pointed out the many advantages to accrue from a Provincial Exhibition. Following up the idea, and aided by the powerful influence of the present Chief Jus-

tice, then Speaker of the Assembly, so general an interest was created in the project that there was raised by a subscription extending to all parts of the Province, the liberal sum of \$1600, which, added to a small Legislative grant, gave an aggregate of \$2000, the greater part of which was available for prizes.

The Exhibition took place in the gardens of the Horticultural Society, and, though small and insignificant, it was considered so much a success that its friends were emboldened to attempt one next year on a larger scale. On the 4th of October, 1854, just 20 years ago day before yesterday, the 2nd Exhibition was opened, in the Province Building and the grounds adjoining, by Sir Gaspard Le Marchant, who had given cordial and valuable aid in getting it up as well as the one the year before.

The opening was ushered in by a grand procession of national and other Societies, by music and imposing ceremonies of all kinds. To a Legislative grant of \$4000, were added subscriptions which, with admission fees, gave a gross fund of \$13,000 for the purposes of the Exhibition. It was a grand success.

Fourteen years elapsed before another and third Exhibition was attempted. This was held in 1868, on the same grounds as are occupied on the present occasion. The Legislature gave \$9000 towards the expenses, to which a subscription of the different Agricultural Societies added \$1500. This Exhibition was successful in the highest degree.

Six years more have since gone by, and a fourth Exhibition is about to be opened under the provisions of an act which authorizes the Board of Agriculture to hold, every third year, or oftener if they think fit, a General Provincial Exhibition of Agricultural and Industrial products, animals and domestic manufactures.

The range of this Exhibition is therefore, by the provisions of the act, more limited than that of any Exhibition except the first. The second and third included not only what are known as domestic manufactures, but also various others in metals, wood, and leather; also Indian work, besides minerals, fish and furs, the productions of the fine arts, and even Provincial literature. So that in instituting a comparison between the different Exhibitions, it is necessary, if we would understand the actual progress and growth of the industry now exhibited, to eliminate from the records of previous Exhibitions about one-third of the entries, which refer to objects not included in the present.

Of the value of Exhibitions like this there can be no question. Their influence for good has been felt in every country where they have been introduced. The annual Exhibitions of England—of the different States of the Union—of the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec, have been closely connected with the improvements in agricultural operations which have taken place in these several countries. The Exhibitions of Ontario are now conducted on a splendid scale. The entries at the first of these in Toronto in 1846 did not much exceed 1,000. The field and garden vegetables displayed were not beyond the capacity of a single building to hold, and that not a very large one. From that period to this I understand there has been an annual exhibition in one or other of the large agricultural centres of Ontario. In a speech made on a recent occasion by the then President of the Board of Agriculture

of that Province, who, bye-the-by, is at this moment the President of the Senate of the Dominion, he declares that in agricultural and horticultural productions, and in quality of stock, the Exhibitions of Ontario have no superior on this continent. From 1846 to 1872—a period of 26 years—the interest in these Exhibitions has continually increased, and the entries which in the first year were, as I have already stated, scarcely over 1,000, were swollen in 1872 to 7,714. As evidence of improvement in a single branch of industry, the department of stock-raising, take the case of short horned Durhams, the entries of which were, in 1846, from 25 to 30 only, while in 1872, they had risen, by a steady and gradual increase, to 269. A similar progress has taken place in other breeds of cattle. This marked improvement in the higher grades of stock is significant in a country which counts its increase of neat cattle in a single decade at somewhere about half a million. It would not be fair to trace all this improvement to the operation of Annual Exhibitions. Our own Province has made advances in every department of Agriculture, notwithstanding the intervals which have elapsed between the different Exhibitions. In the very department to which we have alluded, it has made a progress beyond what would appear by the returns. In the Exhibitions of 1853 and 1854 we had no entries of superior breeds of cattle. There were few or none in the Province to enter. But the spirit evoked by these Exhibitions led to the cultivation of superior breeds, and in 1868 a considerable number of entries were made. But on that occasion little attention was paid to ascertain the genuineness of the stock, and many animals were exhibited of very doubtful pedigree.

Now, however, a herd-book has been established, and stock is registered; so that whatever is now exhibited may be relied upon as of genuine and unmixed breed. This Exhibition may not, therefore, compare with its predecessors so favourably in numbers as it does in value. The animals exhibited on this occasion as of superior breed are of unquestionable pedigree, and have a value far beyond those whose pedigree is open to doubt. Still, notwithstanding the progress we have made, there cannot be a doubt that the true way to stimulate improvement is to have these displays either every year or at frequently recurring periods. The spirit of emulation which is begotten at an Exhibition of this kind would operate more powerfully if the opportunity for its exercise were given without too much delay. The man who comes here with the best of his products for display, when he finds himself excelled in the department in which he hoped to shine, returns home to make a greater effort for success next opportunity. But, if his fortune can be retrieved only by waiting till one of Shakespeare's "seven ages of man" elapse, if he can vindicate his fame only when his boy now at school shall have arrived at maturity, it is very obvious that we lose much of the benefit which these Exhibitions would afford if they recurred at shorter periods. Still, whether at longer or shorter intervals, they are of great value. Men who see only the products of their own or their neighbours' farms, are apt to set up for themselves very imperfect standards of excellence; but show them the best products of an extended area and they will begin to form