

In the old days, farm work consisted so largely of drudgery, and offered so little scope for high intellectual talent, that the bright boys not only wanted to get away from the farm but were encouraged to do so by their own parents. The ranks of the doctors, lawyers, professors, ministers, and merchants, both in the cities and towns of their native land and away under a foreign flag in the United States, have been largely recruited from the farm boys of New Brunswick and her sister provinces. The success these men have achieved in every profession says a great deal for the ancestral stock from whence they have sprung and the air in which they have been reared. But they have been lost to a profession which is now known to offer great scope to the most active minds,—one that gives opportunities which other professions do not, for the maintenance of the ideal “healthy mind and healthy body.”

Many of the country lads who did not want to give up farming altogether were attracted by the glamour of the newly opened West. Some of these might just as well have stayed where they were; but there is no doubt that the hard and often rough work they were used to was the best possible preparation for the new lands to which they went. They were, in fact, the best settlers the West could have; better than most of the Old Country farmers, whose home surroundings and upbringing have fitted them rather for the older-settled districts in Eastern Canada.

This migration of young men from the East to the West, or from country to town, is not the only reason for the fact that improved farms are to be had at moderate prices in New Brunswick. Mr. Howard Trueman, himself a farmer of long experience in that part of the world, says in his book “Early Agriculture in the Atlantic Provinces”:

“England with Wales has a population of 440 to the square mile; Scotland, 122; the United Kingdom, 341; Belgium, 588; Denmark, 133; Italy, 293. New Brunswick has 12, Nova Scotia 22, Ontario 12, Quebec 9, while the whole of Canada has less than two to the square mile. The difference in density of population between Europe and America makes it difficult for Europeans to comprehend the readiness with which a Canadian or American will sell or desert his farm and take the chance of getting another one that will suit him better. In the older countries land is held by the same family for generations, or until it has come to be looked on almost as a part of themselves, and they rarely think of parting with it unless compelled by stress of circumstances to do so. In many instances it is entailed from father to son and cannot be sold without an Act of Parliament. Here it is entirely different. Very few farms in America have been in the possession of one family more than a generation, and if a man is offered what he considers a top price for his farm he is almost as likely to take it as he would be if he were offered a good price for a horse he wanted to sell. He says, “Farms are plenty in this country; I can buy another and perhaps a better one.” It must not be supposed that the men who offer their farms for sale are compelled to do so. This is only the case in rare instances. Mr. A. has heard of a better district to live in, it may or may not be in his own Province. Mr. B. wants to try the West. Mr. C. has concluded there is more money in trade. Mr. D. has had a bad year and perhaps has a touch of the blues, and Mr. E. may have fallen behind in his finances and thinks by selling his