

sion. Indeed, according to the official document in which the Imperial government announces their determination to establish a civil administration in Nova Scotia, a copy of which is now on the writer's table, the expedition was to consist of "officers and men lately dismissed from his Majesty's Land and Sea Service." Each seaman or private soldier was to receive, in fee simple, 50 acres of land, and ten acres in addition were allotted to every member of a family—the same conditions being allowed to tradesmen whose services might be required for building. To the agricultural class, or other kinds of settlers, no encouragement whatever was at this time given, so that probably not one farmer landed with Cornwallis. Against this policy Governor Laurence had both the good sense and fortitude to remonstrate, declaring that soldiers were the least qualified, from their profession, of any living men, to establish a new colony. The government appreciated the force of the objection, and the Governor was permitted to adopt measures to bring a more suitable class of immigrants into the Province.

The settlers who arrived in the *Hector* in Pictou in 1773, were a different class, but not by any means fitted by previous training for clearing and cultivating the land. For centuries Scotland had been divested of its ancient forests, and the Highlanders who came from Ross-shire, and other counties, in the *Hector*, had no experience whatever in wielding the axe, or steady agricultural work. In the Northern counties, to which they belonged, the system of agriculture was extremely limited, and of the rudest kind. Sheep and black cattle occupied almost exclusively the attention of the professedly farming class. The total want of experience in clearing the land and preparing it for seed, on the part of the early settlers, in conjunction with their general poverty, rendered their trials peculiarly severe. In Dr. Patterson's History of the County of Pictou, unexaggerated details are given of the nature of the difficulties encountered, and the privations endured, the very contemplation of which makes one shudder. Mr. Israel Longworth, also, in delivering the closing address at the Colchester County exhibition in 1877, supplied information as to the poverty and absence of agricultural skill by which many of the British settlers in that fine county were distinguished, and the trials and suffering they consequently experienced. One or two cases of absolute starvation were reported, and in some instances the potatoes planted were dug to preserve life. But the Letters of John Young led to the formation in the county of an agricultural society, and Colchester has ever since made progress in the noble art of husbandry, and stands in this, the

year of grace, 1881, in the van of Provincial agricultural progress and public spirit.

The remarks made in regard to the class of emigrants who arrived in Pictou, and who were followed by hundreds of a similar type, are equally applicable to nearly the entire population of Cape Breton. Indeed the latter were still less fitted, by previous habits and training, for the kind of husbandry required in the land of their adoption. The great body of them came from the Hebrides— islands where the land was consigned by the larger proprietors—the heads of clans—to "taxmen," who sublet it in very small sections to "crofters," who united to the cultivation of a few oats and potatoes, the occupation of petty fishermen, and whose distinguishing characteristic was devotion to the chiefs of the respective clans, being ever ready at their call to sacrifice their lives in behalf of any cause which was to be vindicated by the sword, and who, moreover, had a constitutional antipathy to earnest agricultural labour. We might refer to the 16,000 emigrants who attempted to settle in Shelburne, as furnishing striking evidence of the general absence on the part of a very large proportion of the early settlers of the qualities necessary to constitute hard working and skillful agriculturists. Governor Parr, in writing to Lord North in 1783, estimated the number of Loyalists who arrived in Nova Scotia in a few months at 13,000. Many of them were able and enterprising men of business, but few of them had experience in the kind of labour required in the forest primeval.

We cannot pursue this branch of the subject further at present. Enough has been said to account for the low state of agriculture in the Province when the father of the art in Nova Scotia—John Young—began to write on the subject, as well as for the absolute contempt in which the occupation was held, as graphically described by its able advocate.

John Young was a native of Falkirk, a town situated about twenty miles west of Edinburgh. He was educated in the Glasgow University, and, as a student, distinguished himself by his classical attainments. His father intended that he should become a minister of the Church of Scotland, but the young man's inclinations did not lie in that direction. In Glasgow he devoted himself, with moderate success, to mercantile pursuits. When twenty-five years of age, Mr. Young married a lady in all respects worthy of him, who presented him with nine children, six of whom died in infancy. In 1814 he resolved to remove with his wife and family to Nova Scotia, where he arrived in April of that year. He had been only four years in the Pro-

vince when he began to write those Letters on Agriculture in the *Acadian Recorder*, which rendered his name famous. The first of the series appeared on the 18th of July, 1818. The peculiar vigour and scholastic character of his style, as well as the accuracy and extent of his information, at once arrested attention. We give the concluding sentences of his first letter in his own words: "The absence of agricultural societies is a decisive proof of the low and degraded state which the profession occupies. The first grand step towards internal improvement must be the establishment of such societies in every county, and in most of the townships, which should hold stated meetings for the discussion of all matters of common interest, and for the adjudging and distribution of prizes, on subjects which have been previously announced and published in the newspapers. These institutions would dignify rural affairs, would draw attention to useful discoveries, and would gradually introduce a more effective and enlightened mode of practice." Dr. J. W. Dawson, in writing respecting Nova Scotian agriculture, bears testimony to the excellence of Agricola's letters. "In the earlier days of agriculture, he writes, our Province could boast of one of the ablest writers on the subject, and even now, after all the rapid progress of agricultural chemistry, every reader of Young's Letters of Agricola must be astonished at his clear appreciation of facts and principles scarcely thought of in his day, even by the ablest chemists and agriculturists of Europe."

But Agricola's Letters were peculiarly valuable on account of their practical results. They led to the organization of societies, which still continue in active and beneficial operation in the province. The first of them was formed five months after Agricola's first letter was published. At a meeting held in Halifax in December, 1818, for the purpose of instituting a central society of agriculture, Lord Dalhousie presided. In the course of his Lordship's remarks he paid a deservedly high complement to Agricola for his admirable letters, and proposed that he should be Secretary of the board. Fifteen hundred pounds had been voted by the legislature for agricultural purposes, and Brenton Halliburton, who had consented to occupy the position of Secretary, *pro tempore*, was anxious to give place to Agricola, who had hitherto concealed his real name. At length Mr. Young very reluctantly made himself known, and assumed the position to which he had been appointed, and for which he was so well fitted. In April, 1819, the first meeting of the society was held in the House of Assembly, the Lieutenant-Governor in the chair.