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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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WE have now arrived at the period of the year when plans for the season's operations on the farm require to be matured. It will be perceived that we are not now writing for the hap-hazard happy-go-lucky farmers who plod on under a sense of the inevitable, but for those who have a system, as men in all kinds of profitable business have, and who mean to work it out. Such are now (as we have said) maturing their plans for the season. Before doing so it is well to "take stock," to consider carefully the financial position of the farm, the extent of the available capital, the condition of the various fields as regards fertility and cultural condition, the probable extent of crop that may be profitably raised during the season, the number of animals of different kinds that may be kept, reared, and fed off. All these are factors. From them, and others depending upon, and related to, them, may be determined the extent of cultivation, and other work for the season.

Having settled in his mind the general scope and extent of his business operations for 1877, the farmer, like any other business man, will then turn to matters of detail. If he has land to cultivate, he will determine what crops will be most profitable, keeping in view the two distinct sources of farm "profit" that must ever run parallel in a judicious system, viz., the realized and the potential, that which shows itself in an immediate cash return, and that other which consists of an in-

crease in the fertility of the field cultivated. If he has animals to fatten, he will consider what feeding material may be most profitably employed for this purpose, and to what extent it is to be purchased, and to what extent raised on the farm. If engaged in the dairy business, in producing milk for market or for the cheese factory, or for butter, he will now determine how many cows are to be kept, and make his selection. He will likewise estimate the food required, and the breadth of cultivation necessary to supply forage, as well as the extent of pasture capable of supplying herbage for the season. It is true that all agricultural estimates are to some extent at the mercy of the weather, but they are not more so than estimates in other branches of business are at the mercy of commercial tides, strikes of operatives, variations in raw material supplies, and fluctuations of markets.

If our Farmers in this Province were all settled down to a well-established and profitable system of farming, we should stop here, and leave them, each one to form his plan according to his particular circumstances, and carry it out according to the industry and energy with which he has been endowed. But at this time the serious questions should be pressed upon our Farmers, and by them discussed in their clubs,—What crops shall we cultivate? What kind of stock shall we raise? What is the most profitable system of farming in Nova Scotia? These are no new questions. They were probed to the bottom in the time of Agricola,

sixty years ago. But now they come up again, as fresh as ever, under the altered internal condition of the Province, altered conditions of transit, altered relations in many ways with neighbouring countries, altered possibilities of scientific applications to culture, and altered markets both for the sale of produce, and for the purchase of supplies needed for carrying on farm operations. It is not only desirable, but absolutely necessary, if Agriculture is to prosper in this Province, that there should be a full and free discussion of them, and we propose in these columns to offer a few occasional observations with the view of leading to such a result.

That such matters are not only discussed, but energetically acted upon, in other Provinces of the Dominion, is being placed prominently before our eyes. The Western Ontario and Quebec farmers are now supplying the English markets with fresh beef, live cattle, sheep and horses. Canada beef is now sold in large quantities even in Aberdeen, the very centre of the cattle feeding district of Scotland which has hitherto been supplying the London market. We are told in the newspapers that six steamers of the Anchor Line are already fitted up for carrying fresh meat across the Atlantic. All this means that prices will be maintained, that cattle feeding is more likely to pay in the future than it has ever done in the past, that as a branch of industry it has entered upon a new phase of development, the full end of which cannot now be even conjectured. With such evidences of activity on the