

days of railroads). "To aggravate this misfortune the abandonment of tillage was defended by a numerous body of advocates, on the ground of barrenness of soil, and inclemency of the heavens. The country they maintained was only fit for pasturage, and would never repay the expense of regular cultivation. Beef and pork might be raised but flour and pot barley and oatmeal were beyond the utmost efforts of the climate."

While farming in the province was in the condition as above described there landed at Halifax a Sterlingshire Scotchman by the name of John Young. His father had intended his son for holy orders in the church but the young man declined to be a minister and finally after studying law drifted into trade and eventually decided to try his fortune in the new world, and the year 1814 found him in Halifax with such a stock of goods as he hoped would be suitable for the market in which he intended to offer them.

Mr. Young came from a country that throughout Europe, at that time, was looked upon as the home of the most skilful agricultural practice to be found anywhere. Speaking of Scotland at that time or later Prof. Johnson says: "Its climate has been tamed and deprived of its terrors. Its most northern portions in Caithness and even in the Orkney Islands have been subdued into the culture of wheat. Its plowmen are ranked among the best in the world, its thorough husbandry is universally praised, and its fat cattle and sheep from its northern counties are shipped regularly to the London market. Instead of indifference and contempt the art of culture was treated with respect and almost every proprietor was at once anxious to promote it and ambitious to know something as to the best mode of cultivating his estate."

Mr. Young had not been many years in this country before he noticed the great contrast between the Nova Scotia and the Scotch system of farming. He also took note of the widely different manner in which the people of Nova Scotia and those of Scotland looked at the respectability of the business, and apparently came to the conclusion that he would do what was in his power to lift the agriculture of his adopted country out of the degradation into which it had fallen. With this end in view he began in the year 1818 to write a series of letters on subjects relating to agriculture over the signature "Agricola." These letters were published in the *Acadian Recorder*, a Halifax newspaper, and at once caught the ear of the public. There were thirty-eight of the letters and they dealt with almost every phase of agricultural practice as at that time followed in the most advanced European countries. The first letter describes the low state of agriculture and the general commercial depression in the province. The second recommends the establishment of agricultural societies; the sixth takes up the climatic conditions, describes the causes that influence it; the ninth combats the prejudice which exists against the climate and shows from the nature of its vegetable productions that it will ripen all the principal grains. Then follows a series of letters on soil with a particular description of Nova Scotia soil. The sixteenth letter enumerates the purposes in agriculture of the different instruments of tillage.