

## AGRICULTURAL PURSUITS

In the Lower Provinces.

ONE does not see many fine farms during the first few hours from Quebec towards the so-called Lower Provinces, but this is not because the country generally is barren, but because the railway does not pass through the best farming districts. There is good farming country, some of it well farmed, along the St. Lawrence down through Bonaventure and along the Baie des Chaleurs. The people here, until lately, paid too much attention to other things, but the acreage under cultivation is yearly increasing, and what is more to the purpose the cultivation is more careful and systematic.

This country is pierced by rivers, and these streams afford fine fishing. But the presence of these rivers also means large tracts of the very finest agricultural lands, whose soil is deep and rich. The farmer who settles on these bottom lands and pays attention to his business is sure to become an independent citizen. There are in northern New Brunswick and eastern Quebec thousands of square miles of virgin soil as rich as a western prairie, and after the first timber is cleared away as easy to handle. The presence of timber is sometimes regarded as a hindrance, but it is more likely to be a blessing, for the Eastern farmer never fears a coal famine. His country is not subject to the destructive floods, and still more troublesome droughts of the treeless plains. He has beside him the raw materials for his buildings and his fences, and lives amid the agreeable variety of scenery which is more than half the charm of rural life.

The shores of the tidal rivers which are reached at Moncton are a greater source of wealth than the alluvial lands on the fresh water streams. The soil of these marshes is practically inexhaustible. If it should show signs of failure the dykes which keep out the salt water may be cut, and the tide soon covers the land with a coat of top dressing, which makes it better than ever. The dykes mostly on the Meuramouche, Petitcodiac and Saguenay, the Amherst and Nappan and Miramichi marshes, and those near Truro, and those on the other side of the Basin of Minas, in Kings and Hants Counties, are simply inexhaustible. They are almost entirely in hay, and as they require no fertilizing they afford the means to keep the neighboring upland farms in a high state of fertility. Much hay is exported for use in cities and towns and other parts of the Province, and large quantities are shipped. The owner of a block of marsh has a

portant, but the farming population numbers three persons for every two engaged in all other occupations. This is a much larger proportion than is found elsewhere in the Dominion generally or in other countries. Of the 70,000 or so of people who live on farms about two-thirds represent families, probably about 10,000 in number, who occupy over 40 acres of land, and they may be said to depend on the farm for a living. The ten or twelve thousand farmers turn out from three to four million bushels of oats, and double the quantity of potatoes annually. Though Prince Edward Island oats and oatmeal, potatoes and meats, go to all parts of Canada—which local sales are not reported in the official returns—the shipment of these articles to foreign parts, as shown by the trade tables, is very large. Of the crop of 1891, no less than 1,152,000 bushels of oats were sent abroad, nearly all to England.

About the same quantity of potatoes was shipped the previous year, and the sales were not considered large, though these roots are mainly raised for feed, and large quantities are used in the starch factories. Pork, beef and other meats are packed for shipment to other provinces, while live animals and fresh meat are sent to the mainland or exported in large quantities, considering the size of the place. This is not surprising when it is considered that more than half of the total surface of the province is under cultivation. As much as 3,000,000 bushels of potatoes and 2,000,000 bushels of oats are sometimes grown in the county of Queens, P. E. I., alone, though the population outside the city of Charlottetown is not above 35,000, of whom perhaps 25,000 are farmers, having say 5,000 farms. No county east of Lake Superior, and probably none in the United States, can make this showing.

Passing over again to the mainland we are brought by the Intercolonial through the large farming district of Central New Brunswick and into easy access of the St. John River valley, which includes great stretches of interval, flanked by fine upland in the lower basin, while farther up, in Carleton and Victoria, there are wide, level stretches of upland, the superior of which for hay and crops is hard to be found, even in the west.

The immigrant in search of land suitable for mixed farming can be satisfied in any of the Eastern Provinces if he exercises care in selection. Uncleared land may be had from Government by settlers paying the cost of surveys and performing a few days work in improving the neighboring highway. This is in New Brunswick, but the terms are equally easy in Quebec. There is little ungranted land in Nova Scotia, and none in Prince Edward Island. But improved land with buildings is always to be obtained in any of the Eastern Provinces at prices which would shock a person accustomed to English values. Good farms producing 100 bushels of hay and containing two or three hundred acres of land with excellent buildings may be purchased at from \$3,000 to \$6,000. Such an estate well managed would enable the owner to live in a considerable degree of affluence and to surround himself with all the comforts of a

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property whose value is as certain, and will yield its interest with almost as little trouble as a sheet of Government bonds.

The streams in Nova Scotia are still more numerous, though they are smaller than those of New Brunswick and Quebec. As a consequence, while there is much hill country and much rocky land, especially on the Atlantic coast, there are innumerable stretches of intervals, meadow and marsh, while sloping towards the river are areas of fine upland, almost always with timber in the immediate vicinity. Eastern Nova Scotia is likely to be the paradise of the dairyman and the sheep farmer, as the western part of the province, between the mountains, is a paradise for fruit growers.

And speaking of fruit; while the Cornwallis and Annapolis valleys and the shores of the Basin of Minas have become famous for apples, plums, peaches, peaches and other orchard products, it is claimed that other parts of the province, notably Antigonish, are almost equally deserving of fame, though they have not as yet been given the chance to win it. Quebec Province has immortalized the Fameuse apple, which nowhere else is so luscious as in its home by the St. Lawrence. Carleton county in New Brunswick has one of the finest plum orchards, if not the finest in the Dominion. But Kings, Hants and Annapolis are par excellence the country of the Gravenstein, which is by universal acceptance the greatest apple in the world.

The rapid development of fruit growing for export may be shown by the official returns of the sales from Nova Scotia. During the three years from 1875 to 1877, inclusive, 14,000 bushels of green fruit were shipped from Nova Scotia. Passing over an interval of three years we find that in 1880, 1881 and 1882 no less than 125,000 barrels were shipped. The exports for the three fiscal years ending in the spring of 1892 show the still more remarkable aggregate of 250,000 barrels. The shipment of the crop of 1892 is not included in the return. Nearly all this fruit goes to England, and includes the best variety of apples grown on the continent. It should be remembered that the fruit exporting interest is really in its infancy, and is capable of an enormous expansion, and that as yet it is nearly all earned on by two or three counties in one of the Eastern Provinces.

Nothing has yet been said about Prince Edward Island, which has frequently been described as the "Garden of Canada," or the "Garden of the Gulf." This garden plot, which has an area of 2,000 square miles, is inhabited by a population almost exclusively agricultural. The soil is less broken than elsewhere in the east, and as a rule it is more easily worked. No where will one find a more comfortable class of farmers, and it would be difficult to discover an equal area in America whose aggregate agricultural product is of greater value. Taking the average of farms, large and small, it will be found that the province over there is an average of two or three horses and five or six cows to each place.

As will be shown later, the Prince Edward Island farm is a very im-

portant, but the farming population numbers three persons for every two engaged in all other occupations. This is a much larger proportion than is found elsewhere in the Dominion generally or in other countries. Of the 70,000 or so of people who live on farms about two-thirds represent families, probably about 10,000 in number, who occupy over 40 acres of land, and they may be said to depend on the farm for a living. The ten or twelve thousand farmers turn out from three to four million bushels of oats, and double the quantity of potatoes annually. Though Prince Edward Island oats and oatmeal, potatoes and meats, go to all parts of Canada—which local sales are not reported in the official returns—the shipment of these articles to foreign parts, as shown by the trade tables, is very large. Of the crop of 1891, no less than 1,152,000 bushels of oats were sent abroad, nearly all to England.

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Mention has been made of the rapid development of fruit growing for export. Something might be said in this place about the still more rapid growth of another industry allied to farming. This is the co-operative dairy industry. Ten years ago there were many cheese factories in the Eastern Townships, so called, of Quebec, but there were few or none in the Lower St. Lawrence. None were reported in Prince Edward Island. In 1881 there were thirteen in Nova Scotia and four in New Brunswick. In 1891 there were a few factories in Kamouraska and neighboring counties, ten in New Brunswick, fourteen in Nova Scotia, and four in Prince Edward Island. During the season of 1892 the New Brunswick factories increased to sixteen, those of Nova Scotia remained, and a movement was set on foot in Prince Edward Island. At the beginning of the season of 1893 a number of factories sprung up in the Lower St. Lawrence. No less than twenty-three new ones were started in New Brunswick, making thirty nine in all in that Province. In Nova Scotia twenty-four were in operation, and ten new factories were put in operation in Prince Edward Island. In an area which had twenty-five factories in 1891 the seventy five in 1893. Each of these establishments circulates between \$5,000 and \$7,000 annually among the farmers. Carleton county, New Brunswick has taken the lead in cheese making hitherto. One man there, Mr. Tillis, has and operates half a dozen or more factories. In Antigonish, Nova Scotia, Mr. L. C. Archibald introduced co-operative cheese making a few years ago, and has himself established and now operates eight factories in different parts of the county. Prof. Robertson, dairy commissioner for the Dominion, assisted by a staff of forty experts, has been instrumental in establishing cheese factories and creameries in much new ground. The Provincial Government of New Brunswick affords encouragement for the establishment of these factories, besides giving the services of its Commissioners and several experts. The Federal Government affords some assistance towards the introduction of co-operative dairying in new localities.

Other industries allied to farming are establishments for the preparation of condensed milk, whereof there are three in Nova Scotia, and factories for canning fruit and vegetables which are numerous in all the provinces, starch making, which is carried on in Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick and Quebec, meat curing which is an important business in Prince Edward Island and is carried on exclusively in several localities in Quebec, at St. John, and other parts of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

(Continued in our next.)