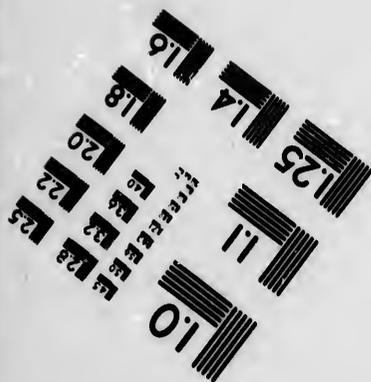
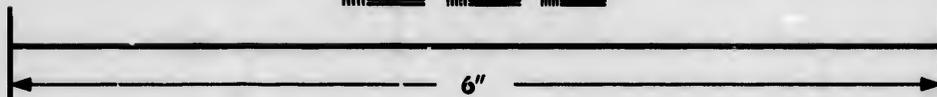
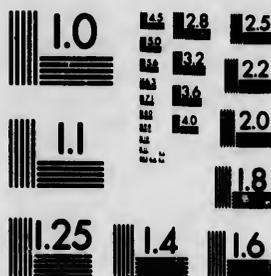


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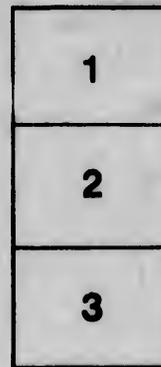
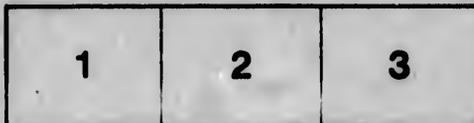
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W

A BRIEF SKETCH

OF THE

Present State

OF

THE PROVINCE OF

NOVA-SCOTIA,

WITH A PROJECT OFFERED FOR ITS RELIEF,

BY JOHN HOMER, ESQ.

6 Sept 3, 1782 d. March 3, 1836.

M. P. FOR BARRINGTON.



HALIFAX, N. S.

1834.

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Printed by G. S. ...
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TO
JOHN MORTON, Esq.

M. P. FOR CORNWALLIS.

SIR,

HAVING always felt a deep interest in the welfare of this our native country—and being under the firm conviction that its agricultural interests have been too much neglected, especially the growing of bread corn; and that a fatal dependance on other countries for that essential article would eventually draw from us all our monies, and bring the whole province to a state of penury, a melancholy event which every day's experience teaches us has now arrived. And being, with you, placed in a situation where it becomes our duty both to think and act, on any important subject which interests our country, I have determined not to remain an idle spectator and brood over our misfortunes, but have presumed to write my idea on the subject, and to offer a scheme for our relief, which I have taken the liberty to inscribe to you, though I confess it is written in a very bad style of composition; this may be attributed to the want of an academical education, and I must beg those who feel a disposition to criticise my work, to be a little charitable, and to take into consideration that I was born more than half a century ago, here among the woods, when we had neither schools, roads, horses nor carts, which must plead my excuse for inaccuracies in writing. Our population was then about five hundred, which is now increased to three thousand, and

being by their suffrages appointed to represent them in the General Assembly, perhaps a too ardent zeal for their interest and future welfare, as well as the future prosperity of the whole people of the province, may have caused me to write rather presumptuously.

Nearly eight years have elapsed since I first met you at the House of Assembly, where I always found you a warm friend to the agricultural interest, and on that subject we have acted in concert. It may be by some supposed a little singular, as my constituents are mostly engaged in the fisheries, that I should take an active part in behalf of agricultural pursuits. But I think every representative ought to take into consideration the well established maxim, that he is both interested with the interest of his constituents, and the general interest of his country; and where they clash, the local interest must give way to the general good. And feeling an anxiety to become instrumental in prevailing on the country, to adopt some well digested system, for the encouragement of growing our own bread, and thus reclaim ourselves from a state of dependance; I commenced writing on the present state of the province, and intended only a short epistle explanatory of my views; but as I proceeded I found so many different interests—causes and effects, to enquire into—that I could only give an abridged statement, and left the subject sufficiently prolific, to furnish both matter and importance, on which more able pens may write volumes.

I am, Sir, with the highest esteem and consideration,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

JOHN HOMER.

BARRINGTON, 25th Oct. 1834.

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ER.

SKETCH, &c.

SIR,

Since the settlement of this province by the British, perhaps there never was a period when complaints of hard times, scarcity of money, stagnation of trade, bankruptcies, loss of confidence among merchants, and all the evils attendant on a general embarrassment, were so prevalent and universal as the present.

A melancholy gloom seems to pervade and hang over the whole country. The origin of these difficulties is by many attributed to Banking, and over-trading, by whom it is alledged that the Halifax Bank having been liberal in their issues of paper money, induced young men with little or no property to enter into trade, live extravagantly, pay high rents, and make extensive and wild speculations on their bank credit, which in many instances proved unsuccessful, whereby they were not able to make good their payments, and consequently ended in ruin.

Likewise those who were concerned in foreign trade, particularly that to the West Indies, may have been led to extend their business upon a larger scale than they otherwise would have done; and we see those who were managing with the strictest economy, and apparently doing well, could not withstand their misfortunes, and were obliged to surrender.

Where there is commerce, bankruptcies will occasionally occur, and perhaps the unprecedented number of failures which have taken place at Halifax within the last twelve months, may be partly attributed to the before mentioned causes, partly to the unfavourable state of the West India trade. But more especially to the want of a market for the home cargoes, originating from the great scarcity of money, or inability of the people to pay

for those necessary articles which heretofore made part of their family expenditure, and which taken collectively, was the great consumption of West India produce, purchased with fish cargoes, the product of the industry of this Province. When the outward cargoes had apparently sold well, and were invested in produce—say sugar, molasses, coffee, cocoa, and rum; in consequence of the progressive and increasing scarcity of money, the country consumption gradually dwindled away—and the demand, so very limited, that the homeward cargoes were often attended with heavy loss.

Merchants entangled in trade often meet with partial and sometimes severe losses, having their property floating in different directions, still cherishing a hope that some of their speculations may prove fortunate and extricate them from their present difficulties, until they get so far involved, any severe check will cause them to give up to their creditors.

Hence those merchants whose interests were so firmly interwoven with the general interests of the country, and whose misfortunes have in a great measure proceeded from the same cause of prevailing distress, ought by every charitable and reflecting mind to be viewed with sympathy and commiseration, rather than censure. It is not only the merchants and those engaged in trade, who are embarrassed by the present state of affairs; all classes of men, the farmer, the fisherman, the mechanic, the common labourer, are all severely distressed by the deplorable state of the times; likewise landed property within five years has fallen in value perhaps nearly one half, and the tonnage belonging to the country, either merchant or fishery vessels, will sell for but little more than one half of their first cost. I am aware of its being a thankless office to depict the poverty and necessities of our country; but before applying a specific remedy, we ought to probe the ulcer to the bottom. We have also a prevailing species of idle extravagance, which operates very much against the prosperity of the yeomanry of this province; fathers have been too fond of making gentlemen of their sons, and those sons in return have been too apt to despise the vocation of their fathers; engage in traffic or some other business which they suppose less laborious and more respectable, but with which perhaps they are unacquainted; and not possessing capital, any bad speculation or untoward event involves them in difficulties, which perhaps terminate in their ruin, when all their golden dreams are turned into mortification; and when too late, sincerely regret they had thought so lightly of the humble though honest and honorable pursuits of their fathers. Banking, over trading, pride and extravagance, are partial evils which will work their own cure.

But from the most demonstrative evidence I am firmly con-

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vinced, and give it as my solemn opinion, that the first, greatest, and most galling evil, and grand cause of all our distress, arises from the unfortunate circumstance of having so long allowed ourselves to remain dependant on other countries for most of the bread we consume; to elucidate this fact I must go back to the first settlement of the country. While Nova-Scotia remained in possession of the French, the Acadians raised their own bread corn; in the interval of time which elapsed between the year seventeen hundred and forty nine, and the commencement of the American Revolution, while the now United States were then under the British government, and consequently a fine trade existed without duties or exactions of any description between this province and all parts of that country; the bread then consumed here was purchased with the productions of the province, such as dry and pickled fish, oil, furs &c. There are here some of the oldest inhabitants, who well remember when it was a common practice for the fishing vessels of this place to load cargoes of dry and pickled fish, and go in the winter season up the rivers of Carolina and Virginia, there retail it in barter for indian corn, hams, pork, hog's lard, and other provisions the produce of that country, and return in the spring.

The first English settlers on the north coast of this province gave great attention to the growth of bread corn; they sowed their wheat in confidence, and their hopes were realized by plentiful crops; but the several circumstances which have heretofore operated against the culture of that most essential article, with the great competition it met with from the free introduction of the bread stuffs of the United States, has gradually had a tendency to dissuade the decendants of those first settlers from raising grain, until the thing is by some so far forgotten that they begin to doubt the capability of their lands to grow wheat. At Yarmouth, on the western extremity of the province, for many years wheat grew exceedingly well and seldom failed of a good crop; I have been told by some of the the old Acadians at Eel Brook, in the township of Argyle, that on a dyke which they made there about fifty years ago, they raised forty bushels per acre for several successive years; when the land became exhausted, the crop fell short until they were obliged to relinquish the pursuit altogether. During the American revolution the people in some parts of this province were at times much distressed for bread; at the termination of that war the great number of loyalists and disbanded soldiers who came to this country added much to its wealth and population, and put into circulation a great deal of money; hardly had they got themselves snugly settled when they found the province lamentably destitute of resources, and that they were dependant on the very country they had left for the bread they consumed; many of those loyalists

were men entirely unacquainted with a new country, some went to the West Indies, others to Canada, and others returned to the United States. The distanded soldiers mostly remained, and their decendants are now incorporated with the respectable yeomanry of the country; during the peace which existed between the American and French revolution, the American government were content with a small duty on the productions of Nova-Scotia; but little inconvenience was felt in purchasing our bread from that country. But the continual drain on the small resources of the province to pay for the American flour, and other bread stuff, caused a gradual and increasing scarcity of money; and for a few years previous to the commencement of that war, the times in this province were very similar to and wore the same gloomy aspect as the present. In seventeen hundred and ninety three the population was about one-fifth of the present number, with no foreign commerce except a small West India trade; however, from that period to the year eighteen hundred and fifteen, the inhabitants were progressively increasing in wealth; the long war which Great Britain sustained against France and other European powers, made it requisite to keep a respectable force on the Nova-Scotia and West India stations.

The dock-yard here was placed on the war establishment, the expenditure of the army and navy, the many valuable prizes captured from the enemy and sold at Halifax; the ready market for our fish in the British West Indies, likewise for Plaister of Paris in the United States, the great demand and high prices for fresh beef, vegetables, hay, and every other kind of country produce, all seemed to co-operate in bringing wealth into the country. Thus the continual influx of money during a twenty years' war literally surcharged the province with the precious metals; every man's pocket was lined with cash. The farming class felt the happy effects of this state of things, and turned their attention to grazing, raising vegetables. At the time of the long embargo in the United States, which continued from the twenty second December eighteen hundred and seven, until April, eighteen hundred and nine, and the non-intercourse which followed, as well as during the war with that country, flour was at times extremely high, often at five and sometimes at six pounds per barrel, which is three times the present cost; yet the people here could then much easier pay for their bread than they can at the present day; and all with one accord made use of the American flour, when it became classed with the indispensable articles of import. The cultivation of the land was viewed as a degrading employment by the very men who depended on agricultural pursuits for a livelihood, and who lived solely from the produce of their farms. The contagion found its way into all parts of the province, and the fishermen of Cape

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Sable felt mortified and degraded to be seen at work in the field, or hoeing their potatoes.

The sudden transition from a war of more than twenty years to a solid and lasting peace, caused great confusion in mercantile affairs; the return of all commercial commodities in a few months from war to peace prices, deranged the calculations of the keenest and most plodding merchants, and was severely felt by those engaged in the West India trade which caused a general stagnation of business, although the money was yet plenty. From the termination of the war until September eighteen hundred and eighteen, the vessels of this province, which carried cargoes of fish to the West Indies, invested the proceeds in produce, and went to the United States, where they purchased flour and other bread stuff, and returned to Halifax. These perhaps may be called the halcyon days of Nova-Scotia, when cargoes of fish which proceeded from the industry of our fishermen, were carried to the West Indies, and brought home, by way of the United States, cargoes of flour. After that period British vessels from the colonies were no longer allowed to enter the ports of the United States, and all the commercial intercourse fell into the hands of the Americans. Their stars and stripes soon made their appearance at the port of Halifax; each vessel, when lying at the wharves, became a retailing store, without paying scot or lot of any kind, and sold her cargo by the single barrel or otherwise. The wharves were at all times loaded with these flour barrels, and their buntin waving triumphantly over; as if to guard it, until the hard dollars of the purchaser were paid down as a licence to take it away. Packets or regular traders were established to run between Halifax and Boston, who made their voyages in two or three weeks, and often in less time; these, besides the many transient vessels from different parts of the United States, were constantly employed in bringing flour and other American produce, the proceeds of which were mostly carried away in hard money.

During the five years preceding eighteen hundred and twenty two, I was myself master of one or other of those regular traders; at first I sailed in vessels belonging to this province, until Sept. eighteen hundred and eighteen, when our vessels were no longer admitted to an entry in their ports. I then went in vessels belonging to Boston, ostensibly as pilot, but in reality as master. I mention this circumstance to show that I have some data to be governed by, and that the extensive shipment of dollars from hence to Boston to pay for flour is not mere imagination; during the time before mentioned I made between forty-five or fifty voyages, and carried each time from three to thirty-thousand dollars, averaging about six thousand; when at the same time there were several other regular traders, one of

which carried more money than myself; indeed every vessel that went to the States carried more or less hard dollars. I am confident that I do not overrate the thing when I say the merchants of Halifax shipped by me to Boston, two hundred and seventy thousand dollars in five years; and judging from my own knowledge and observation, there was carried in the same time by other vessels, much more than double that sum, amounting altogether, to about nine hundred thousand dollars; and this to Boston alone, exclusive of those shipped to other parts of that country. These regular traders were continued with spirit for several succeeding years; at length when money became scarce they gradually dwindled away, and the last three years one vessel is all the trade will support.

In the year eighteen hundred and twenty six the Imperial Parliament passed the famous free port bill, which extended the commerce of the colonies, by making one or more free ports, and closing foreign commerce to all the other ports of each colonial possession; they likewise made a new tariff, which, among other alterations, imposed a duty of five shillings sterling per barrel on all foreign flour imported into the colonies. This free port bill, as it concerned Nova-Scotia, was for several years confined to the port of Halifax, and proved very unequal and unjust in its operation; as all foreign flour legally imported must come through Halifax, which subjected the people of the outports and country generally not only to pay the five shillings duty, but to double freight with the profits, commissions, storage, wharfage, truckage, &c. on nearly all the bread stuff we consumed; and often the flour, which in Baltimore, Alexandria, Richmond, and other sea-ports of the middle States, was purchased for five and six dollars per barrel, was sold to the consumer in the outports of this province for nearly double the first cost. This caused a general discontent and murmuring, and acted as a direct bounty on illicit trade; many sober reflecting men, who would otherwise have scorned to have any thing to do with smuggling, on viewing the monopoly granted to Halifax at the expense of the country, felt a degree of indignation, and determined to get their bread the cheapest way they could; others, who were less scrupulous, took advantage of this feeling, and made a merit of importing flour in a clandestine manner; when the thing became so popular and general in the outports, that almost every man was ready to assist in evading the vigilance of the officers of the Customs; and I am told that in some parts of the province this business was carried on with the most barefaced impunity; consequently much of the flour consumed in the different ports around the coast of Nova-Scotia paid no duty, and the measure that seemingly was intended to benefit the metropolis at the expense of the out ports, had the effect of causing

the good people of Halifax and its vicinity to pay the five shillings sterling duty per barrel on their legally imported flour, while the people of the out ports eat much of their bread duty free. Whether the parliament of Great Britain intended to grant a boon to the capital of Nova-Scotia, by causing all the foreign bread stuff imported into the province to be entered there, thus taxing the people of the whole country to benefit the metropolis; or whether, when adopting the general colonial system, it was merely accidental, is a matter of conjecture; I am inclined to believe the latter is the fact.

Nova-Scotia, however, in a commercial point of view, is differently situated from any other British colony; She has a number of flourishing out-ports, fast increasing in population, which carry on a great proportion of the commerce of the country; and bear a great resemblance to Great Britain herself, indeed she may be called Great Britain in miniature. Then what would the people of England say, supposing they were dependant on foreign countries for bread, if their parliament were to confine all foreign trade to the metropolis, and allow no imported bread stuff to go to Portsmouth, Plymouth, Bristol, Liverpool, Manchester or Birmingham; and the other great commercial and manufacturing sea-ports, and in inland towns and cities, without first passing through the warehouse of London. The cash we are necessarily compelled to pay for bread is not the only drain on our country for money; we are necessitated to make extensive imports of staple articles wanted for the fisheries and other purposes; but the large amount of fancy goods annually imported into this province is a solemn proof of our pride, extravagance and folly, and one of the principal causes of the great disparity between our exports and imports, which leaves a vacuum, that in time of war is filled up by the expenditure of the navy and army; bills of exchange being ranked as exports. But in time of peace this expenditure becomes quite limited, the different restoratives to wealth which are occasioned by war having been withdrawn. So long as we can pay for the American flour, or the gaudy ribbons, a continual tide of money is ebbing from the country, and notwithstanding the great accumulation of wealth in time of war, the continual demand requisite to pay the annual balance standing against our export during a series of years, has at length brought us into a state of penury, from which to extricate ourselves, requires the collective wisdom, firmness and perseverance of the whole province. I am not acquainted with any correct method of ascertaining the difference between the annual amount of our imports and exports; but on examining the returns on the journals of the House of Assembly, —I find that between the first day of October 1690 and the 31st

of December 1831. The amount of dutiable goods imported in the five quarters was

403,248 0

Being in year ending the 31st Jan. 1831

323,199 8

Goods imported duty free for the fishery

4,588 6

£327,787 14

Then I will suppose the product of the }
different fisheries of Nova-Scotia }

65,000

Timber boards, deals, and all other lumber

12,000

Gypsum or plaister paris 50,00 tons at 4s.

10,000

Grind Stones, &c.

2,000

Beef, pork, butter and cheese

2,000

£91,000

Ballance of imports

236,707 14

This perhaps may be wide from the truth, but I think it rather over than underates the export of our domestic productions; I likewise find, on the journals of the House of Assembly, the custom house returns dated the second of March, 1830, signed by the collector and comptroller of his majesty's customs, stating that the importation of bread stuff during the year ending 5th Jan. 1831, were as follows. From the United States

71,866 bbls.—and 2250 half bbls. flour.

Canada and

5,564 bbls.

3 half do. do.

New-Brunswick

Total 77,430 bbls.

2253 half bbls. flour,

and during the same period there was duly paid on

29,209 bbls. wheat flour.

Duty

8012 9 6

14,461 bbls. rye flour.

1989 15 3

4,051 bbls. Indian meal

555 0 3

47,721

10,357 5 0

The probable cost of this flour when landed in Nova-Scotia :

29,209 bbls. wheat flour at 30s.

43,813

14,461 bbls. rye flour at 25s.

18,026

4,051 bbls. corn meal at 15s.

3,038

47,721

£64,877

15,000 bbls. illegally imported

22,500

5,000 do. rye,

6,250

2,000 bags Indian and rye, corn and meal

350

and if I add beef, pork, boots, shoes and leather which this province ought to produce.

£93,977

6023

100,000

Thus it appears we pay to other countries the enormous sum of one hundred thousand pounds annually for bread stuff, beef, shoes, boots, leather, &c. all of which, under wise and prudent management, could be produced in our own country by our own industry.

Having arrived up to the present period of gloom and dismay, a deplorable scene presents itself, which every thinking mind who retains a wish to serve himself, his posterity or his country, ought seriously to reflect on; then, after mature deliberation, let us by a slight retrospect of the past endeavour to benefit the future, and by guarding against those errors and illusions which had insensibly led the inhabitants of this promising young country into a mad career of extravagance and folly, heedlessly neglecting the first and most important duties which self preservation imposes on a free people. In twenty years of peace we have paid mostly to the middle and slave holding states of America, nearly two millions of pounds sterling, for bread and other articles which ought to have been produced here by our own industry; meanwhile this government exact from us on every article the production of this province (gypsum or plaister of paris excepted), duties which amount to a prohibition; not even the potatoe is exempted; nothing will serve them but our hard dollars, until they have them all, and completely drain the country of money. Then let us make this solemn enquiry, will the lands of Nova Scotia, with judicious management and persevering industry, produce a sufficiency of bread corn to sustain the population; I answer in the affirmative, we have the most demonstrative and convincing proof of the capability of our soil to grow bread corn in abundance.

On the southwest and southeast sections of the province the land is better adapted to the growth of barley, oats, rye, and the coarser kind of grain; the north and north east sections, are more congenial to the growth of wheat. From the expulsion of the unfortunate Acadians to the present day, the farmers in many places raise wheat sufficient for themselves, and could produce any quantity were they sure of a market that would pay them equivalent to their labour. It appears, by the statistical return of the province of Nova-Scotia, not including Cape Breton, for the year ending 31st Dec. 1827, the wheat raised that year in the different counties amounted to one hundred and fifty-two thousand eight hundred and sixty three bushels, and the other grain to four hundred and forty nine thousand six hundred and twenty-six bushels; allowing this return may a little overrate the real produce of the country, though I can see no cause to doubt its correctness, we have the most positive proof that the soil of Nova Scotia will grow bread corn in abundance and perfection, and it is a libel on the country to assert to the contrary. In this township of Barrington, where the male population are

mostly fishermen, and until latterly have given but little attention to agricultural pursuits, wheat has generally been found to do well ; at Clyde river, in the time of the embargo, non intercourse and war with the United States, when flour was very high, the people raised very good wheat ; three years ago several persons here joined and purchased two or three shaker boxes, containing a variety of seeds, among which were some wheat, which was found by those who tried it to grow exceedingly well ; and having been continued by small spots sowed by different persons, it is found to have grown well, and much improved from the first seed ; indeed the old lands here are well adapted for grain, and will grow as great a crop of barley or oats as any lands whatever.

In the year eighteen hundred and thirty one, in my immediate neighbourhood, one hundred and seventy-eight bushels of oats of a very superior quality were raised on two and a half acres of land. Although there are many here who raise a small quantity of oats and barley, but not having any mills or kilns to convert it into meal, it is only used as food for cattle, hogs and horses. Formerly most of the bread consumed here was of the coarser kind, and was supposed to be cheaper and more wholesome than that made from superfine flour ; from the scarcity of grist mills, as is always the case in a new thinly inhabited country, many of the people must necessarily be settled a long distance from mill, it was found here that the time and expense required in getting indian and rye corn made into meal, caused it to come higher to the consumer than superfine flour ; consequently the present generation, having from their infancy known hardly any other bread, but that made from the best superfine flour, such as the slaveholding wheat growers of Virginia seldom afford themselves, and it is but rarely seen on their tables, yet such is the force of habit contracted by peculiar circumstances, that the poorest fisherman on the shores of Nova-Scotia consumes none but the best superfine flour of the United States ; what I have stated respecting the district of Shelburne, will fairly apply to any other part of the south coast of the province. I have taken some pains to inform myself on the capability of this country to grow its own bread corn, and made frequent inquiries of the several members of the House of Assembly who reside in the different sections of the province ; on that subject all agree that the country is fully capable, under judicious regulations, to grow bread corn sufficient to support a dense population ; I have likewise visited several places both in the north and south of Europe, some of which lay many hundred miles north of us, and in more frigid climes ; and I know of no part of those countries which do not produce bread corn, and generally in great abundance. It is true, the coarser kind of bread in Norway, Den-

mark, Sweden, and Russia, consumed by the troops and peasantry, is made mostly of rye, and rather black; and likewise that which sailors call "the anchor stock bread of Holland." Yet these countries produce good wheat, which makes the finest of bread.

But it is useless to compare countries or climates. Is there a spot on earth which lies within the temperate zone, supposing it not to exceed one tenth the size of Nova Scotia, that is fitting for the habitation of man, where he performs his part; that nature has not rewarded him with a sufficient supply of bread corn for his sustenance. Then, is nature unkind to us and us alone? No; with the most convincing and demonstrable proofs before us—not conscious what we were doing—we have trifled with its bounties, cheated ourselves, defamed our country, and brought it to the verge of ruin, which seems to proceed rather from inconsiderate blindness, than inferiority of intellect. ✕

Writers on political economy agree that the true power of any State consists in a population, proportionate to the means the country enjoys, when directed by a wise government, so as to ensure to its inhabitants the necessary subsistence as well as other desirable property, and that it is to agriculture we are indebted for all kind of grain, either for the subsistence of man or beast. Then, with the most satisfactory evidence of the ability of our soil to afford bread corn sufficient for our own consumption, and relieve ourselves from a state of dependance, why is this important object not attempted? I answer, although our country is in every point of view fully capable of producing wheat and other bread corn in the greatest abundance and perfection, yet there are many untoward circumstances which operate against applying our industry to that profession; and which nothing can remedy, without the intervention of the legislature of the province; from fatal experience of the past, which has taught us a most instructive admonitory lesson.

With the example from our mother country, and the many concurring circumstances comparatively analagous to other countries, from the most ancient times down to the present day, likewise the melancholy state of our present affairs, all unite to convince us of this solemn fact, that Nova-Scotia never can nor will prosper, and keep pace with the other British provinces in north America, while we thus continue dependant on foreign countries for the bread we consume; and I may add, while the agricultural interest remains entirely unprotected by the legislature of the province. Then let us first inquire what are the untoward circumstances, or those causes which operate so powerfully on the farming class as to prevent them from raising the staff of life.

First,—The proximity of this province to the United States,

a populous, rich and flourishing country, which abounds with productions, more especially that of bread corn where part of the population are black slaves, consequently can grow bread corn much cheaper than we can ; but as a British colony in point of government we are perhaps forever severed from them, yet it must be acknowledged we have heretofore been to that country a good cash customer, and have given every facility to the introduction of their flour and other bread stuff, while they have not met us on those principles of reciprocity which we had a right to expect.

Secondly,—The flour of the United States is said to exceed any other in the known world, and being put up in the most superior and portable manner, always gives it a preference ; while we have no wholesome judicious legislative enactments to regulate the hulling, grinding, bolting, barreling, quality, weight, &c. of our flour ; consequently it is not known as a merchantable article, and not seen beyond the precincts of the farm where it is grown. This want of method in putting up the flour made in the north eastern sections of this country has hitherto prevented its being carried abroad, nor do the inhabitants of the south shore know or see any thing more of the flour of Annapolis, Kings, Hants, Colchester and Pictou, than they do of the flour made in China.

Thirdly,—The want of that protection to the wheat growers of the northern section of Nova-Scotia which would ensure them a steady market for their grain, caused them in time of war, when beef was much in demand, and commanded a high price, to turn their whole attention to grazing. But on the return of a solid peace, when the navy and part of the army left Halifax ; beef became low, and grazing and fattening cattle an unprofitable business, and with the formidable competition occasioned by the flour of the United States, but very few farmers thought of raising wheat for sale.

Fourthly,—The freight or carriage of bread corn from the north eastern sections of the province to the different ports along the south shore, would, under present circumstances, cost nearly as much as that from Virginia, and for want of some judicious and well regulated system to encourage the people who inhabit the southern shores to consume the wheat of the north, the northern farmers are deprived of a market ; and the benefits that would arise from their industry are now transferred to the Slaveholders of the United States. But it is said our wheat in this country often fails, granted it is so, does it not fail in England and in the United States ? and does it not in all countries, sometimes in one county or state produce heavy crops, while in others it entirely fails, and do not other crops of all descriptions fail ? then what is there which is not of a permanent nature that does

not fail, does not our fisheries occasionally fail, Merchants and Bankers and all kind of speculators fail; then are we to remain forever dependant on other countries, whose crop is equally liable to be cut off by the vicissitudes of the seasons?

Fifthly,—Gypsum or plaister of paris being the only production of this province worthy of notice which is admitted into the United States duty free, and an article of comparatively little value, that will seldom pay more than the labour and expense of transportation; while for want of an adequate encouragement to the growth of bread corn, little else is raised for sale by the agriculturalist but beef, pork, butter, cheese, hay, potatoes, apples, cider, &c. for these there is no other market but Halifax; which, being often overstocked, it frequently happens to cargoes of country produce shipped from Annapolis, King's or Hants counties to Halifax, that when arrived there they will not sell for enough to pay the freight; markets so dangerous often prove ruinous, and are at all times discouraging to the farmer; when, from the same cause, the absence of that legislative protection which ought at all times to ensure to the wheat grower a due market for his grain, he is under the necessity of carrying or shipping it to Halifax; if after it is made into flour, and perhaps put into sacks or bags, when it is liable to be damaged and become stale after all his expense and trouble, he is compelled to compete with the superfine flour of Virginia, which obliges the grower of Nova-Scotia bread corn to sell his domestic flour for a much lower price than he can afford; under these disheartening circumstances, many men who own farms which, if properly encouraged by a steady and firm market, would find profitable employ by giving their whole attention to raising bread corn, have despaired of gaining a comfortable livelihood by the cultivation of the soil; sold their farms, purchased vessels, and entered into the more precarious business of carrying plaister of paris from the Bason of Minas to the lines, or perhaps to Boston or New-York, by which the trade is so overdone, that commonly when in one season it has borne a fair price, so much is carried to those markets, they become overstocked, and two or three years must elapse before it will again bear a price which will pay a fair freight; witness in the year eighteen hundred and thirty-three the transportation of plaister of paris to the States became brisk, which caused many to build and purchase vessels with a view of entering more extensively into the business, when in eighteen hundred and thirty-four the trade is not worth following. A master of a vessel recently arrived from carrying a load from Windsor to Boston informed me, that his plaister cost him three shillings and sold for seven and sixpence, which caused him to come home and give up the business for this season.

Sixthly,—The facility with which the people of the southern

shores of this province obtain the American superfine flour, causes them to reject the coarser kind of bread stuff, consequently there are but very few grist mills, and these are intended only for rye and indian corn; no such thing as an oat mill is to be found in this part of the province, yet there are many here who, descended from Scotch and Irish parents, still retain that fondness for oat and barley meal so peculiar to the country from whence they originated; but the prevalent want of mills to convert oats and barley into meal having continued many years, meanwhile the American superfine, with all its seductive qualities, being substituted in its place, the use of oat and barley meal was almost entirely forgotten. The American flour, however, having taken away all the people's money even to the last shilling, and now having nothing left, either to purchase superfine, or erect oat mills; we look back on our past folly with melancholy sensations, and regret that we had not provided those mills, and in some measure secured our independance while it was yet in our power.

Seventhly,—The necessity of experienced agriculturalists, who understand the wants of the soil—the nature and quality of manure requisite to invigorate and give it strength to bear a wholesome crop, with the many important improvements known to the practical wheat growers of Great Britain, and which from the almost total neglect of growing grain in this Province, can be but imperfectly understood by our farmers. Likewise, in a new country, where every man holds the fee simple of the land, they cultivate, and commonly own, much more than they can improve with advantage; those farmers and their sons are apt to shrink back and condemn any improvement which requires additional labour; such as that of gathering and making manure in the proper season; consequently by this neglect, and for want of nourishment, the soil becomes debilitated, and affords only a sickly crop of grain, when it is too often attributed to the incapability of the lands—severity of the climate—shortness of the season—or to some unavoidable cause, rather than their neglect.

Eighthly,—The most respectable part of the loyalists who came to this Province at the close of the American Revolution, were men that had been always resident in large cities, and belonging to the commercial class, who knew nothing of cultivating the land; and others, who were mostly sons of wealthy farmers in the most fertile parts of the now United States, whose lands were cultivated by their black slaves. Many of these young gentlemen entered the British Army in quest of military fame, whose lofty aspiring minds were ill-adapted for cultivators and improvers of the lands. On landing upon the southern shore of this Province, which was then, in reality, a dreary wil-

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derness in a state of nature, without roads or indications of cultivation, and doubtless wore a most forbidding appearance; not understanding the method of proceeding in new countries, or possessing the indefatigable perseverance requisite to ensure success, many of them began to despond, and imbibed a deep-rooted prejudice against the fertility of Nova Scotia: Thus condemning the soil they had never condescended to cultivate, as barren and ungrateful, and quite incapable of yielding to the husbandman a fair remuneration for his labour. And as these loyalists left the country they circulated these erroneous opinions, which were very generally believed both here and elsewhere, and have been one of the causes which helped to discourage the growth of bread corn in this Province.

It has also been supposed that mercantile policy has heretofore had a tendency to dissuade the people of the south from improving and cultivating their lands; but this I think to be an unfounded accusation. It is, undoubtedly, the interest of the mercantile body to encourage our fisheries, as the grand staple of our commerce, and they ought to be commended for their laudable zeal in promoting that branch of industry, which serves most to improve the revenue. Neither do I believe there has ever been in this Province any combination of mercantile policy to discourage the fishermen from cultivating the lands. Indeed there is no occasion for any jealousy of that kind. We have plenty of men to answer both purposes. The object is to find profitable employ for the whole male population, which must be done by encouraging both Agriculture and the Fisheries in such a manner that they may be of mutual advantage to each other. There may be, perhaps, other causes which operate against growing our own bread corn, and I think it requires no explanation to show, or argument to prove, that the greatest obstacles we have to surmount are our proximity to the United States, and to secure to the agriculturalist of Nova Scotia, a sure and steady market for his grain. Were we situated two or three thousand miles from the United States, or any other bread country, we would then find the soil of Nova Scotia capable of affording Bread Corn sufficient to sustain a large population, and our object would be accomplished without any other exertion; but these are impossibilities, and we must be far removed from the United States, by a barrier of wise and prudent laws, to take place and be enforced at such times and periods as the future circumstances of the country may require, or as the wisdom of posterity may dictate. Then, which are the most effectual and feasible methods we possibly can adopt to bring about such a reformation in rural affairs, as will cause the sons of Nova Scotia to grow their own Bread Corn, and thus become independent of other countries? This subject requires wiser heads and abler pens than

mine. But, in the absence of all other projects to relieve the country, with the utmost diffidence, I will take the liberty to advance a theory, which, perhaps, others may improve upon, and bring it to that perfection which may eventually relieve us from our present state of humiliation and disgrace.

On taking a view of the map of Nova Scotia, it will be seen, that to draw a line from the northern extremity of Yarmouth, to the north-eastern extremity of Sydney, it will divide the Province into nearly two equal parts, both as to territory and population, and may be called the northern and southern sections of the Province. I find by the census of Eighteen Hundred and Twenty-seven, the Counties of the north exceed those of the south, thirteen hundred and sixty; but for the sake of brevity I will call them equal; and as the population of the whole Province is now about one hundred and seventy thousand, consequently, we have on the south shore of Nova Scotia eighty-five thousand people, who get at least nine-tenths of their bread from the United States; most of which is paid for in hard cash, besides that purchased with Plaister Paris and carried to the northern sections of the country; and also, a large amount of flour purchased in New Brunswick with country produce.

I would advise, in the first instance, say in the session of Eighteen Hundred and Thirty-five, that a large sum be granted for the erection of efficient mills—with all the apparatus for hulling, fanning, grinding, kiln drying, &c. oat, barley, and buck-wheat, with the other coarse kind of bread corn, and as it is well known the people have no money, and can only pay their proportions in labour; and that the real intention of the expenditure is to cause them to adopt oat-meal and other kinds of bread stuff which they can grow themselves, in lieu of the American superfine flour; the paltry sum of twenty pounds cash will go but a very little way towards building a mill that will answer all the purposes required; and paltry mills, which only make inferior meal, would serve to create a general disgust against the system, and defeat the intended object, while the more efficient mills that would manufacture the oats, barley, buck-wheat and rye, into meal of a superior quality would tend to create a spirit of emulation among the people; to raise their own bread corn,—when they would soon learn to eat the bread of independence. But to carry this laudable purpose into full effect—will require a large sum of money, more, perhaps, than common prudence would admit of granting as a free gift. I will then suggest the propriety of loaning for a term of years, sums in aid of erecting such efficient mills, as will answer the intended purpose, in the Province to advance the cash equal to one half the cost of each mill, and to have security thereon, payable at some future period; and as the oat, barley and rye meal, were brought more

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into common use, the mills will increase in value, and at all times sell for much more than the first cost. The people not possessing any money would then subscribe and do their part in labor, when, by receiving payment in toll until they had received the amount of their subscription, it would be a great convenience as well as general benefit to the country. I am confident, were a mill of this description erected here, it would in two years do away with more than one half the present consumption of American superfine flour, and, as before stated, I consider this part of the coast a fair sample of the whole of the Nova Scotia South shore. Therefore, if we could afford to erect a sufficient number of those mills, it would save to the industry of the people on the southern section of the province alone, about forty thousand pounds currency annually, which would remain and form part of circulating medium.

In the Session of eighteen hundred and thirty three, I had it in contemplation to try to obtain an act of the legislature, to regulate by law, the putting up and manufacturing the flour made on the northern sections of this country, to be put in barrels, made here of a different size from the American flour barrel, but equally portable; to pass a rigid inspection and be branded according to quality, when it would become a merchantable article; then, after a strict compliance with all the rules and regulations, such flour, so branded and sold at the town of Halifax, should be entitled to a blank sum per barrel bounty; hoping the bounty on the flour of this province, and the duty of five shillings sterling per barrel imposed by the Imperial Parliament on foreign flour, would be a sufficient protection to the domestic flour. But, on conversing with gentlemen interested in mills, they informed me that much of the flour, made from domestic wheat, would not keep well, and was apt to get stale when put into barrels; I am told by others that it is not attributed to any defect in the wheat, but by neglect in manufacturing the article; and taking into view the importance of adopting a general and efficient system for the protection of our long neglected agricultural interest, when to patch it up by piece meals, would perhaps prove injurious to the cause without helping to remedy the evil, consequently I relinquished the design until a more favourable juncture.

The next weighty considerations are these, what measure shall we embrace, or what principle shall we act on, to secure to the farmers in the northern section of the country a steady and safe market for their wheat; likewise to ensure to the people of the south, a fair supply without paying extortionate prices—or indeed paying any higher for our superfine flour, than we heretofore paid to the United States? with the most mature deliberation, cautiously weighing in my mind the different interests it will affect, and the many obstacles we have to encounter; I

have come to this conclusion, that individual effort can be but of little avail, nor ever can obtain the desired object (even if taken collectively) without the cordial assistance and voluntary guardianship of the legislature, to whom the country must look up, both for those wholesome judicious enactments, or other wise code of protecting bread laws, and liberal pecuniary aid, when we must adopt something like a granary system, by forming an establishment in the town of Halifax at the expence and under the protection of the province; by erecting granaries and mills, with all the apparatus requisite for manufacturing flour — which flour must be put into barrels made in Nova-Scotia, pass a rigid inspection as before mentioned, and be branded accordingly. It will likewise require a Store-keeper, millers, labourers, and every thing equivalent to manage all the ramifications of such an establishment with success; the storekeeper to be authorized to purchase domestic wheat, have it manufactured into flour, and issued out at stated periods, as may be directed by the Legislature: likewise a committee of the Legislature to annually inspect his accounts, and investigate the whole proceeding of the establishment for each preceding year, and to make a full and explanatory report thereon; when, if it were found abuses of any description prevail, it would become the duty of the Legislature to order a strict and rigid scrutiny into the offence, and to bring such offenders to such punishment as the nature of the crime may require.

The next protective enactments required, will be something similar to the Corn Laws of England; not to admit any foreign bread stuff until scarcity, short crop, or some other unforeseen circumstance, cause domestic bread corn to rise to a limited price, when a supply of foreign bread stuff can always be admitted by order of the Governor and Council; such a law would be aided by the present bonding system. The day having arrived when our country can furnish part of our own bread, we may then be guided by circumstances; but I think if a wise policy is pursued, the foreign bread stuff imported here, should be purchased with the productions of Nova-Scotia and the British West Indies. Taking into view our relation with the Canadas, that much of our West India produce is carried thither for a market, and the hard terms on which the United States deal with us, I think it best policy for Nova-Scotia to cultivate a commercial friendship with the Canadians.

We will suppose a liberal grant in aid of mills made in the session of eighteen hundred and thirty-five; and likewise the flour inspection and granary system, to go into operation at the same time; much cannot be expected the first year, but if the system recommended were fully acted on, in eighteen hundred and twenty-eight, the then living patriots of Nova-Scotia, may

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expect to have the happiness of seeing some demonstrations of the emancipation of our country, and in a few years it would cause the growing of bread corn to be the principal employment of the yeomanry of the province, and so develop our resources, and establish the capability of our lands to grow bread, when the granary system may be gradually withdrawn, and the corn trade between the northern and southern sections be carried on by individuals in its natural channel. The happy announcement of that day having arrived, when we are amply supplied from our own soil, and no longer dependant on foreign countries for the staff of life; the specie heretofore paid for bread will then be retained, and become a circulating medium—when the Province will again become surcharged with money, and enjoy its wonted prosperity. By the lesson taught us in eighteen hundred and thirty four, our descendants may be warned of the danger of leaving the growth of their own bread unprotected from foreign competition, and can pass from time to time such protecting bread laws, as the wisdom of future ages may dictate.

I would likewise recommend that liberal encouragement be offered to the middling class of farmers from Great Britain to settle in this Province; whose experience in agricultural pursuits, and practical acquaintance with all the different branches belonging to the growing of bread corn—likewise their perseverance and knowledge of manure, change of crops, and the general practical information these men possess, would, when put into practice, fairly try the test, as to the capability of our lands to afford wheat, which I trust will be established in the affirmative, and forever silence the opposition of croakers.

The Agricultural Societies, formed in eighteen hundred and eighteen, by the efforts of John Young, Esq. Secretary to the Provincial Agricultural Society, would be of great advantage in facilitating the growth of bread corn and all other agricultural pursuits, in this country, and I view the re-establishment of them and others, as part and parcel of my theory.

These, Sir, are the projects which I take the liberty to offer to the public, for the purpose of relieving this our native country from its present state of penury and dependence. But however feasible it may appear to us, or beneficial the result if acted on and put into operation, we shall find many objections made by croakers and oppositionists, some of which I think I can clearly foresee. These questions will naturally occur—where is the money to come from? what is to defray the expenditure of this undertaking? Why give to Halifax the preference of holding the granary of the Province, and of manufacturing flour for the consumers on the southern section of the country? Why grant to the metropolis another monopoly after that conferred on it by the free port bill? Why establish the Agricultural Societies, which have so long lain dormant?

To the first I answer, that according to the present state of our commerce our revenue must be limited, and the treasury cannot afford any very large expenditure, without borrowing, which we are told can be done at 3 per cent. Then taking into view the unhappy consequences resulting from a heretofore total neglect of our agricultural interest; the magnitude of the proposed undertaking, with the numerous circumstances which seem to dictate and persuade us that now is the proper juncture for carrying this important business into operation; and trusting in Heaven for the success of the enterprise—for this, and this only, without any violation of principle, we may be justified in borrowing a large amount of money, on the credit of succeeding generations; when, by affording due protection to the growing of bread corn in this province, we secure to the people one hundred thousand pounds annually, which was heretofore paid to the United States—which will naturally have a tendency to increase the value of all kinds of property, and place our posterity in an attitude to pay the debt without any inconvenience.

In answer to the metropolis being made the depot for granaries, &c. the intention of the project being to encourage the people of the south to consume the wheat grown by the farmers of the north, and thereby create a steady and safe market; as before stated, the population of the Province being nearly equally divided, one half on the northern the other half on the southern section of the country; besides the facilities conferred on such an establishment, by being placed among commercial men, and in the centre of business: These indisputable facts may be offered in favour of the town of Halifax. Any person of the least penetration, who will take a view of the map of this Province, may see that its local situation makes it the natural depot, for the trade between the north and south sections of the country. Halifax, the metropolis of Nova-Scotia, is situated in the very centre of the Province: The roads which lead from it expand in every direction, and extend to the remotest village. Being the mart of commerce, the vessels and small craft of every description, from every harbour, bay and creek, along the shores of the Province, are continually sailing to and from, bringing in their products and carrying away their supplies; and while we contemplate on its many peculiar advantages, in aid of the proposed scheme, it seems to convince us that the all wise Creator of the universe, in his infinite wisdom, had ordained the harbour of Halifax to be destined for the grand thoroughfare of intercourse between the people of the northern and southern sections of the country.

The distance from the capital to the further extremities of the Province, is not, perhaps, half so far, as much of the wheat of the middle States is brought in waggons, before it can be

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shipped, and being a peninsula, with a free safe navigation all around the sea-coast, much of the wheat brought to market, especially that from Annapolis and Pictou; would come by water-carriage; indeed to carry this theory into successful operation, there must be a focus somewhere, and happily for us, none possess equal advantages, can be more desirable, and give more general satisfaction to those who are not too much warped by local prejudices, than our metropolis.

The Roads of this province are now in a forward state; very few new countries possess better; had our revenues held out so that the same annual amount paid to that service these last seven years, could be applied for the seven succeeding years, both our great roads throughout the country, and the cross roads in the different townships, would be so far completed, that the statute labour ought to keep them in repair; when greater attention could be directed (and more monies applied) to the roads of the interior and new settlements; however, I am not one of those who think, that expending the whole of the public money on the road service, is the best possible purpose to which it can be applied. It is said that nearly five hundred thousand pounds have been expended on the road service within thirty eight years; supposing part of this money, say sixty or one hundred thousand, had been twenty years ago, judiciously applied to encourage the growth of bread corn, would it not in all probability have answered a nobler purpose? Give the free yeomanry cash for their wheat, and they will both raise it, and find a way to bring it to market; where there is no road, but only a foot path, they will take in bags a few bushels at a time, sling them over the backs of their horses, and cheerfully trot off to the mill, the country store on the great post road, or to the nearest town or village; where they can dispose of their grain, and purchase with the proceeds, their sugar, molasses, coffee, or any other little necessaries. Indeed, wheat, always commanding cash, will itself become part of a circulating medium. I know of no country on earth, in its natural state, which has less obstruction to contend with; there are only a few gentle risings of hills and valleys; what we call mountains are mere morehills, and our great roads are sufficiently level to admit of carrying produce to market with the greatest facility, especially an article so easily made portable as that of bread corn. Contrast Nova-Scotia with the mountains in the West India Islands, particularly Jamaica; there we see a number of yoke of oxen, tackled to a sled with runners, the same as we have to draw on snow, heavy laden with sugar or rum, attended by a gang of negroes, at one time rising up steep hills, or the sides of mountains, requiring all the power and strength of the oxen and slaves, then plunging into valleys and foundering in the clay mud, where they must unload, or re-

lieve the vehicle by digging it clear ; yet by dint of perseverance they get their produce to the sea shore ; and in most mountainous countries, particularly in Spain, all the produce is brought out of the country on the backs of beasts, such as jackasses, mules and horses. But it must be acknowledged that the farming class, both as it regards rural and political economy, are far behind our neighbors in the New England States ; although a very large proportion of our people descended from them, and are evidently the same class of men, yet there appears to be something wanting. Although the farming class have given much attention to grazing and fattening cattle, we see but little beef for exportation. The peculiar kind of heavy strong fisherman's boots, made in Massachusetts, are always much preferred by our fishermen ; and although we have a great number of men employed in the fishery who cannot well do without them, and will have them if possible, yet, though we make good leather, we never see a pair made in this Province to equal or imitate them. Consequently that article, amounting to many hundred pounds annually, our fishermen are necessitated to obtain—either legally imported or otherwise.

The province likewise produces the very richest and most nutritive kind of potatoes in great abundance, as well as other food requisite for fattening pork, yet we seldom see a fat hog brought to market, and although the duty, freight, commission, profits, &c. on American clear pork, amounts to five and six dollars per barrel, it comes cheaper to the fishermen here, than the pork of this province ; indeed our Labrador fishermen have to pay higher here for the thin pork of this country, which to them is almost entirely useless, than the American fishermen pay in Boston for their clear share ; rural economy has perhaps one meaning and political economy another ; the way I define them in the business of making pork, is that rural economy is that close attention and frugal husbandry, so requisite in raising the proper food in the proper season, and attending generally to the comforts of the swine while fattening. Political economy, are those wholesome Legislative enactments, or inspection laws, so essential to establish the value of pork or any other commodity, which are intended for a merchantable article, either for home consumption or exportation ; both the essentials are much wanting here, and call it energy, enterprise, industry, perseverance or what you may, there is evidently something wanting, which I ascribe to nearly the same causes, want of frugality and industry in time of war, want of money which palsies all our energy in time of peace, and likewise want of those wholesome Legislative enactments, to guard against foreign competition at all times.

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nue, a great source of wealth to this country ; but those who have made it their principal vocation, have had many obstacles to contend with, and without the aid of what they get from the land, but few men can support their families ; forty years ago, cod-fishing was the calling by which nearly every man along this coast expected to gain his livelihood, they then vied with each other in exertions ; he that could catch the greatest share of fish, was viewed as a man of superior merit ; and to be master of a fishing-schooner, was thought to be a berth of importance ; agricultural pursuits were hardly known and but little attended to, except keeping a few cattle ; lands were considered as of no value, and a smart fisherman felt himself degraded to be seen hoeing his potatoes ; but the manners and customs of the people have been gradually improving since that period, the vocation which was then the principal dependance is now by many altogether abandoned, and by those who yet follow it, being considered only a secondary business, the spirit which actuated the fishermen of former days is now entirely extinct, and that old fashioned perseverance nearly forgotten ; no man will neglect his little farm, which is now his principal dependance, to go fishing, until his crop is in the ground ; and in the month of April and May no wages that our fishery can afford will induce a man to go fishing, except occasionally of a fine day in a small boat. Meanwhile the Americans line the coast from Cape Sable to Canso, with their vessels, at anchor, and have latterly hired as many young men from the shore as they can obtain, paid them high wages, and make their voyages, before our vessels get out in the spring. These Americans of the new England States, receiving a bounty from their government of four dollars per ton on their vessels, and their outfits of every description, salt excepted, costing perhaps twenty-five or thirty per cent less than our fishermen have to pay for the same articles, enables them to take every advantage of us in the the cod and makarel fishery ; even to hiring our own men to take fish on our own coast, when if owners of vessels here hire the same men, at the same wages paid them on board of vessels of the States, it would prove ruinous. At Newfoundland their local and other advantages enable them prosecute the cod-fishery with greater facility and certainty of success, than we can possibly do in this province ; consequently they can supply our merchants with fish—for foreign export, at a much cheaper rate ; in consequence of the general failure of the Labrador fishery the present season, thirteen sail of vessels from this port, returned with less than half their usual fares, which will not pay their outfits, and there are here about one hundred and thirty men who have not earned one shilling during the season, except what they get from their little farms ; nor will the vessels earn enough to pay the

light duty imposed on them by an act of the Legislature in the last session. The abolition of slavery in all the British dominions, although an act of benevolence and humanity, which will forever redound to the honor and magnanimity of the British nation, yet there hardly can be a doubt that it will eventually lessen the demand for our fish in the British West Indies.

Likewise the happy effects arising from the late establishment and existence of the temperate Societies, in suppressing the free use of ardent spirit, and thereby discouraging the importation of rum, which I have always viewed as the poison extracted from the sweat which dropped from the brow of the unhappy negro slave. And when we contemplate on the happiness conferred on the human race, by relieving one part of mankind from slavery, who were goaded on to hard labour by the lash of the whip, and employed making material for brutalizing their fellow men, we may rejoice that we live in an age of philanthropy, and cheerfully dispense with a market for a few cargoes of cod fish. However, should my theory or any other which gave a fair security to the agriculturalists of this Province, and cause them to grow bread for the whole population, be adopted and put into practice, the money retained here would become a circulating medium. The whole country both north and south would participate in the blessings arising from such a measure; it would have a tendency to recruit and supply our treasury, and become a source of much happiness. Yet it is evident that the people of the north will be more benefited by the change than those of the south, and when that happy day arrives, it is hoped the interests of the fisheries will not be forgotten; but may be so far encouraged and protected by bounties or otherwise, that we may at least compete with the Americans on our own coast, and no longer remain under the degrading and humiliating affliction of seeing ourselves hoodwinked with both our agricultural and fishing interest, extorted from us, and monopolized by the people of another nation.

The coals of Nova-Scotia and Cape-Breton I have not taken into consideration, as part of our natural resources; they being, under present circumstances, rather a foreign monopoly than of any real advantage to this Province. But I have often felt chagrined and mortified, to hear gentlemen of superior abilities, when conversing on the resources of this country, say that Nova Scotia abounds with minerals and coals to that extent which makes it the most valuable spot on earth, and that nature had destined it shortly to become a mining and manufacturing country. These conjectures and assertions are very easily made, but let us look into the improbability of these ever being verified, at least within the lapse of two or three centuries; certainly not while we continue a colony of Great-Britain. Suppose

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one half of the whole Province were a bed of coals, and the other half minerals and ores, say iron, lead, copper, tin, slates, silver and gold, and were in every point of view adapted for a mining and manufacturing country; who will work those mines; and establish those factories? surely not the present inhabitants of the province and our descendants, for we have no money, nor never can have any, until we raise our own bread corn; but those mines and factories must be established and worked with British capital. Then has the British nation so far lost sight of their own interest, as to advance capital to create manufactories and open mines which would rival themselves, and put many of their own people out of employ, to build up a little colony in North America? I think not; supposing those gentlemen's hopes were realized, and Nova-Scotia were found to contain a solid bed of coals and minerals, and mining were found to be so lucrative a business, that many mines of different descriptions were immediately opened, and worked to advantage, with a ready demand for all the products; yet the people were dependant on other countries for their bread, what would be the fate of the descendants of the present inhabitants? a fate which heaven forbid; probably in the course of twenty-five or thirty years, those of the descendants of our now free yeomanry, who had not left the country, must all become labourers in the mines, and gain their livelihood by toiling day and night covered with dirt and filth, obscured from the light of heaven; deprived of almost every earthly blessing, they must linger through a miserable existence without a hope of bettering their condition, until they by degrees become so far brutalized and incorporated with their companions in misery, which will consist of other miners, brought from the mines in Great Britain, that it will be entirely forgotten from whom they descended, or that their ancestors were once the free land holders of the country. It would then in fact become a country of lordlings and slaves, or rather petty tyrants and slaves, because the capitalists who owned or for whom those mines were worked, would probably reside and spend their wealth in Great Britain, France or Italy, while their agents here were acting the tyrant over the unfortunate descendants of the once free Nova-Scotians. Then let us turn from the disgusting picture, and pray heaven to avert so deplorable a calamity, as that which must befall our posterity, were this province ever to become a mining and manufacturing country. Let our descendants have the privilege of cultivating and decorating the surface of our mother earth, and enjoy its productions, during the lapse of two or three hundreds of years; it will then be time enough to bury themselves in its bowels in search of wealth.

The well defined principle, that agriculture is the basis of all public prosperity, is too well known to admit of a doubt—the

most profound writers on political economy, lay it down as a sound and well established maxim, that on this noble art we depend, for almost every thing which makes life agreeable. The raising of bread corn is likewise acknowledged to be the first and most important branch of agricultural pursuits; and in every country possessing a well regulated constitution, it becomes imperative on the government, to adopt such wholesome regulations, as will secure the growth of a sufficiency to feed the population. But in this province, possessing all the natural advantages requisite for raising corn in abundance, these wholesome bread protecting regulations have not been attended to; on the evil consequences resulting from this fatal neglect, the present deplorable state of Nova-Scotia speaks volumes, which plainly tells us, and makes it doubly conspicuous, that while benign providence had bestowed on us a healthy climate, and a country abounding with fertile soil, inhabited by a robust population of hardy yeomanry, possessing all the nerve and intellect requisite to cause it to yield bread corn in great profusion, as well as most of the other necessaries of life; we shamefully neglected those bounties of nature, and purchased of strangers, bread stuff amounting to nearly one hundred thousand pounds annually, until we have parted with our last shilling.

We have now arrived at a crisis, when one of two things must be done; we must adopt some efficient method to encourage the agriculturalists to turn their attention to the raising of bread corn, and thus find employment and support for the rapidly increasing population, or they must abandon the country; where are we to get one Hundred Thousand Pounds the ensuing year, to pay for our bread, and shall we go on ad infinitum, and pay at the rate of a million sterling the next ten years? no we have not, and cannot obtain the money, and we have no other alternative, but to grow the greater part of our bread, or leave the country; therefore I am firmly persuaded that this is the time when we ought to make the most strenuous efforts to accomplish one relief.

The laudable efforts of John Young, Esq. in eighteen hundred and eighteen, under the signature of Agricola, and afterwards as Secretary of the Provincial Agricultural Society, did much towards removing the then existing prejudices against rural pursuits; and it is a great satisfaction to any friend of this province to read his letters, which have since been compiled into one volume; he wrote however at an unseasonable period, immediately on the termination of war, while money was yet plenty, when every man could purchase his barrel of superfine flour without inconvenience; our Treasury was yet overflowing, but insanity had taken place in the minds of men, and cool

*See p. 100
of the
History of
Nova Scotia*

sober reason had fled from the country ; a few only, could so far demean themselves as to think, much less to act, in behalf of so vulgar a pursuit as that of growing bread corn ; nothing would serve their high minded ideas, but the most splendid gigantic enterprize, or magnificent undertaking ; agricultural pursuits were deemed unworthy of consideration, the growing of bread corn received a death blow, from which it has never yet recovered, croakers, and oppositionists having there glutted their vengeance ; it remains, now to be seen what a state of penury will bring forth. We have a few wealthy men yet in this province, but it must be acknowledged that the great mass of the people are in very needy circumstances ; any reflecting mind, who takes the least notice of passing events, must be convinced that our poverty is in a great measure owing to a neglect, which requires the most profound consideration.

Doctor Morse, in his American Geography, published in eighteen hundred and five ; says, it is computed, that three out of four of the whole male population of the United States are engaged in Agricultural pursuits. It appears in Nicholson's British Encyclopedia, that in the year eighteen hundred and one the population of Great Britain, exclusive of Ireland, were nearly eleven millions, and the then annual amount of wheat grown in that country exclusive of other grain, was computed to the amount of twenty millions of pounds sterling ; thus we see the great number of men employed in, and the weighty importance attached to, the providing of bread in the countries from whence we originated.

In England, agriculture is viewed as a proud science, which the first nobleman of the kingdom feels honored to improve ; and their wise protective Corn Laws, although disputed by interested oppositionists, have stood the test of experience, and proved to be one of the greatest safeguards of the nation ; there we see that agricultural pursuits, especially the growing of bread corn, is considered to be of the very first importance, and held in the highest estimation. In their Parliament, the most eloquent Statesmen the world affords, do not think it beneath their dignity to take a decided part, and exert their splendid talents, in behalf of those protective Bread Laws, which have proved a source of happiness and comfort to that people. Then can it be degrading to the Legislature of a little colony, to take into consideration that which in our mother country is always acted on, as a subject of vital importance ; and with their noble and patriotic example before us, shall we shrink back from our duty, and pursue only those pusillanimous measures, which have not sufficient feasibility to amuse the agricultural interest with a hope.

There appears to be a very general disposition to find fault

with the proceedings of the Legislature ; the newspapers continually teeming with observations ; some find fault with one measure, some with another, some are for petitioning the Governor to dissolve the House, others for triennial parliament, and others for they know not what themselves, but all for that invisible something ; much is expected, and much more is said of relieving the country from its increasing embarrassments ; many are ready to tell us, we have done the things we ought not to do, but none come forward to tell us what we are to do, or to recommend any general system. It may perhaps be thought very improper and indecorous, for one who is a member of the Legislature, to publicly make, during the recess of the House, any comments on the business to be transacted while in Session.

But convinced as I am, that the future prosperity of our common country depends on some effectual Legislative measure, to protect the agricultural interest and encourage the growth of our bread ; likewise having offered what I think to be the most practicable theory, for the consideration of the public, I must beg pardon of whom I may unintentionally offend ; and without further hesitation do hereby invite all the good people of the different towns and villages of Nova-Scotia, who may read this work and think favourably of my project, or of any other method or methods to encourage and protect the growing of bread corn, and thus save our country from impending ruin, to forward their petitions to the Legislature, in the next Session, when there cannot be a doubt of finding a very large majority, ready to second the view of the country. The object of relieving our country is a most solemn consideration, which we ought not to shrink from ; let it no longer be said, that Nova-Scotia can only prosper while the mother country is involved in all the miseries of war, and fattens only while the sailors and soldiers of Great Britain, are fighting the battles of their country among scenes of blood and carnage ; nor neither will the money earned in time of war wear well in peace, of which we have ample proof.

Twenty years ago the people of Nova-Scotia were comparatively rich, as I have before stated, every man had cash in his pocket ; it was much easier at that period to raise one hundred pounds in money by subscription for any public purpose, than it would be now raise as many pence for the same object. Our mother country had long been engaged in war, which caused an unnatural tide of wealth to flow into this province ; at length a general peace took place, and the avenues of wealth were closed, the current of prosperity turned, and continued to run in a contrary direction, until the eventful year of eighteen hundred and thirty four, when the low ebb of adversity, exposed the needy state of our finances, and brought us back to depend on

our own resources. The poorer class of people in the country, first felt the effect of a growing scarcity of money; the country retailing stores were next cramped, and obliged to deny crediting their old customers; until eighteen hundred and twenty seven, many of the country retailers, could vend from one to three thousand pounds worth of groceries and dry goods annually, and make their payments punctual, to those importing merchants who had supplied them; but subsequently they found it impossible to sell for cash, and if they let their goods go on credit, it was equally difficult to get their pay; when this class of traders were in a great measure obliged to relinquish their business, which had a serious effect on the importing merchants—who naturally depend on the vendors of their goods for a market. During the last seven years, the only circulating medium was the monies paid from the Treasury to the Road service; that and all the other monies, which could be earned by hook or by crook, must be paid away for American flour. Much of the province paper applied to the road service, was annually sent by the men who laboured on the roads to Passamaquaddy to purchase bread, were it was shaved of five per cent. and paid back to those who bring plaister paris, and to our young men who go fishing in the vessels of Eastport during the spring and summer and are returning in the winter.

The small Traders in the metropolis, assisted by a fictitious capital, were enabled to hold out a few years longer, when the general scarcity of money caused many to yield to the pressure of the times, others to give up their business, and perhaps remove to the United States; the five years preceding eighteen hundred and thirty-four, money had nearly vanished from all parts of the province, except Halifax, where commerce assisted by the aid of Banking, seemed to flourish; likewise the erection of public works employed many labourers, which helped to bring cash into circulation; country produce as at all times plentiful, and often the market overstocked, in so much that it sold at the most disheartening prices for the farmer; our fishermen often sell their fish at Halifax for cash, but very little of their money ever comes here. It is all immediately paid away for flour and other supplies, no one can pay his debts in cash, however small they may be, for it does not exist among us. Any stagnation of business in the metropolis is severely felt by the fishing class, and those who sail coastwise; nor never was it more conspicuous, or a greater proof how nearly the interest of the merchants of Halifax and those engaged in the fisheries here are allied (than at the present moment, September, eighteen hundred and thirty four) when, after much mercantile distress and embarrassment had prevailed, that dreadful pestilence the cholera raging in the capital, which seemed to

dishearten every one; our vessels could find no employ, and many of them came home, and hauled up as if it were the dead of winter; every countenance appeared gloomy, and touched with sympathy for the suffering people of the metropolis.

With a solemn conviction that many of those who may read this little work, will agree with me in opinion, that our pecuniary distress proceeds from our dependance on other countries for the staff of life, and that nothing can give lasting and permanent relief, but some well regulated system, both to grow our bread, and to ensure the agriculturalists a sure and safe market for their grain; to obtain this let every patriot write a petition, and every friend to his country heave in his mite, by placing his name thereon. Then let us turn from the gloomy picture of the present melancholy state of this province; and suppose we adopt the theory which I have here offered for the consideration of the public, and in a few years prove to the world, that the inhabitants of Nova-Scotia can, with but little exertion, grow bread sufficient for a dense population, and become completely independant of other countries for that indispensable article; what would be the happy effects, which would arise from such a "consummation so devoutly to be wished" by every patriot and friend to the country? It would make a profitable employment for more than one third of the whole male inhabitants of the province, and retain our increasing population in the country, where they may cultivate their own native soil, and enjoy the benefits derived from the industry of their ancestors; instead of migrating to foreign climes in quest of a livelihood, and settling in a land of strangers—melancholy forebodings, which always accompany a state of idleness and indigence. It would cause the inhabitants of Nova-Scotia to become a happy and thriving people; and by the agriculturalists growing a sufficiency of bread, and finding a ready cash market, they would be enabled to hire and pay such wages as the business would afford, to those unfortunate emigrants, who not knowing where to find employment, stay in Halifax during the winter, and then starve, beg and steal; with their little ones around them crying for bread, when it is not in the power of the parents to afford relief.

I ask the sons of Nova-Scotia to seriously ponder over the matter here laid before them, and to consider what must be the fate of our country, if we longer continue thus neglectful of our best interests; shall this fertile province forever remain under the stigma of being a cold barren sterile soil, incapable of growing bread corn, or fairly remunerating the husbandmen for their labour. It would cause all descriptions of real estate to raise more than treble its present value and much enhance the value of tonnage both of merchant and fishing vessels.

It would add to the respectability of our free yeomanry, whose wilderness lands are now supposed to be of but little worth; which would, by their industry, soon be converted into fields of wheat or other grain, and become valuable and permanent property; and induce young men who now live in a state of celibacy, fearful of taking a partner for life, and on the wing of migrating to some foreign country in search of lands from which they may gain a livelihood, to remain at home, marry and settle on the uncultivated lands in the neighbourhood of their fathers, clear and till the soil with the most sanguine expectation, that with a few years industry and good economy, they may be enabled to rear up a numerous family, with comfort and respectability. It would give a general spring to industry, gladdens the heart of both the young and old, do away with those desponding thoughts. It would, by retaining the money in the country, create a circulating medium; when we should again see something like the good old times, when every industrious man could have money in his pocket to pay his preacher, school master, county and town tax, take a newspaper, purchase his tea, sugar, molasses, coffee, and all other little necessaries, live comfortably, and have a few pounds to the good, at the termination of the year.

It would give life and activity to Commerce, which will replenish and support our Treasury, enable us to grant liberal bounties for the encouragement of our fisheries; apply monies to the road service, to the support of schools, and to many other purposes, which may be required for the improvement of the country. It will cause a large proportion of the business of the province to centre at Halifax, when, by furnishing domestic flour, in place of foreign flour, it will do away with the monopoly, granted by the operation of the free port bill, and silence that pretext for the nefarious business of smuggling. Then, with the assistance of divine providence, we ought to make use of all the energy, frugality, industry and perseverance, in our power, to obtain the grand object, which will decide the fate of our country, and confer countless blessings on many generations yet unborn. It will make an equal division of property among our free yeomanry, and give a competency to an industrious and virtuous people; it will likewise make Nova-Scotia the most desirable country in North America. All these and much more can be attained, by adopting some well digested system, and by adhering strictly to its principles. Then we shall have no more occasion to feed on American superfine flour, nor shall they be any longer enriched with our hard dollars; but we will take for our watch word, the motto of the Immortal Hero of Trafalgar,—ENGLAND EXPECTS EVERY MAN TO DO HIS DUTY.



