

decompose the straw and all will form one valuable mass. An old farmers' proverb says old hay, if well saved, is old gold; we may with equal truth say—well saved straw, judiciously used, is worth gold to the farmer in stock-feeding, and the refuse in the manure heap.

For other purposes besides feeding, straw has its value, and that no slight one. Colman in the Rural World, says: "Straw is an excellent thing for keeping out cold, as it is composed of long sealed tubes filled with air. A good, tight and quite durable roof may be made of thatch." To this we can bear testimony. Throughout the British Isles it is greatly used for that purpose in country places, and when put on properly by a good hand it looks well—quite in keeping with farm, farm-yard and farm buildings, and there is no roof gives greater protection from cold. A good coat of thatch will last, in good condition, for at least seven years. Colman further says:—"It is a little remarkable that more attention is not given to making thatch roofs in this country. In most European countries the roofs of cottages, as well as of stock-houses, are covered with thatch. Native farmers would do well to take lessons from foreign settlers in the construction of thatch. The Hollanders, especially, excel in making straw roofs." We have never seen a neater roof of thatch than that put on by an Irish farm labourer. They are, in fact, betimes ornamental, as well as useful, and we have known them to be good in wear for twelve years. The waste of straw is not the least of the leaks in the new world farming.

James Burnet, of Franham, Que., a butter shipper, has gone to Scotland to arrange for shipping Eastern township butter thither direct. This is doubtless a step in the right direction. He will use due precaution that the butter to be sent by him be of good quality and not a "mixty maxty queer hotch-potch" as is too often sent from country stores, till the very name of Canadian butter is enough to insure its rejection in the English markets.

Are we to have Canadian manufactures and home markets? A manufacturer from Milwaukee has been making enquiries about the inducements possible to be obtained for the establishment of a flax manufactory in Ottawa. Mr. Heale, of Utica, N. Y., has accepted the inducements offered, by the Ottawa corporation, viz.:—A lease of land for ninety-nine years, exemption from taxation for ten years, and a bonus of \$10,000, and is going to erect a woolen factory which will employ not less than 100 hands.

Mullein as a Weed and a Flower.

When I first saw the mullein in this country it was in undisturbed possession of a field not far from this city. The tall stems bearing their golden blossoms stood as near to each other as if they had been a regularly sown crop. The land being subjected to the old-time American mode of agriculture, wheat succeeded wheat, till the land was so exhausted that the proprietor left it untilled, a waste common. The mullein seed that had lain long in the soil, now sprang up in the neglected ground, and the tall, golden-blossomed stems seemed to occupy it solely. Again we saw it growing in equal luxuriance in the city. In grading, a street was plowed in the fall and the next spring brought fourth an abundant crop of mullein-plants.

If the mullein be, as some say, a weed naturalized from Europe, it is strange that its seeds are dispersed with such profusion in the soil,

awaiting the first favorable circumstances to germinate. The grading of the street above mentioned was the first plowing up of a virgin soil. In this it diffused from the field; and here in the street, beneath the old, untilled soil, slept the seed.

I had been quite familiar with the mullein in Europe. It was sown annually in shrubberies as a flower, and was considered an exotic. It was thought quite ornamental, as its tall stems bore their dozen set of golden blossoms among the evergreen and flowering shrubs, in the borders of the back grounds. It is generally known there by the name of Golden-rod, a name very appropriate to its appearance. Of the many "weeds" and native plants that might well be brought into our gardens, and add fresh charms to their loveliness, the mullein is one, not for the flower ground, but as an adjunct to a screen of evergreens, with some of our showy, hardy perennials. M. T. B., in the Tribune, well says "it may be effective in lawn planting." The mullein was reputed to be of no little value for medicinal purposes.

Agricultural Societies.

Recently, while in Toronto, we made a call upon Prof. Buckland, whom we found busily engaged in preparing his reports, which he finds much increased on account of the neglect or carelessness of some of the Secretaries of Agricultural Societies in not making returns in a proper manner and at a proper time, a few of them not having yet completed their returns, which should have been in nine months ago. Mr. Buckland is now nearly eighty years' old; his eyes are becoming dim with age, and he finds it hard labor to perform what formerly was a pleasure to him. He has served the agricultural interest of our country for over forty years. The old gentleman now uses the strongest spectacles made, and they fail to strengthen his vision sufficiently. If any person is deserving, surely this gentleman's merits are worthy of appreciation. But our legislative halls are crowded with lawyers. Judges, registrars, custom-house officers, etc., etc., many of whom have been lawyers and most of whom have had good pay for many years, have a pension granted them. Has agriculture no claim? Who pays all, feeds all, clothes all?

THE ORIGIN OF OUR AGRICULTURAL SOCIETIES.

The Professor informed us that he was at the first Royal Agricultural Exhibition ever held in England. It was held in Oxford. At that time six ox-carts could have hauled everything that was exhibited. Oxen were generally in use at that time for agricultural purposes. [An uncle of the writer kept forty yoke. We well remember seeing many teams of five yoke of oxen on a wagon, although ox-carts were more generally used. We undertook in England, when a stripling, to drive a pair of large oxen; although the oxen were well broke, we drove them bang up against a gate-post, and we did not get our ears boxed for it either. When in England last summer we did not see an ox-team at work any where. What a change!]

Prof. Buckland was among the first to inaugurate Agricultural Exhibitions in our Dominion, and perhaps on this continent. The following are the gentlemen who first established the Provincial Exhibition over forty years ago, nearly all of whom are now gathered to their fathers: Col. Thompson, of Toronto; Adam Ferguson, of Hamilton; John Wetherall, of Waterloo; Sheriff Ruthen, of Cobourg; Col. Marks, of Kingston, and Prof. Buckland. There was no Government aid given to establish it. The gentlemen above named subscribed liberally. Captain Cameron, a Highland Scotchman, and Mr. Buckland went round with a subscription book to take up subscriptions

for it. Of course the Exhibition at that time was different to what it now is; for several years the Association subsidized a Rochester manufacturer to bring some plows and harrows from the States to show our manufacturers and farmers what good implements were. Canadian implements formerly consisted of rough wooden plows, with but little iron, and wooden harrows, some of which had only wooden teeth; also, the scythe, flail and sickle.

The first Exhibition was held on the ground now occupied by the Lieut.-Governor's residence in Toronto. It is a corner lot, and is now called "Ation Corner;" one portion is occupied by a Presbyterian church, one by the Governor's residence, one by a College, and one by a low hotel: thus salvation, legislation, education and education occupy the different corners, and hence the name "Ation Corner."

The first crystal palace was built at Kingston. The first Government grant to aid it was given in Baldwin's time; it was \$2,000. Our Government at that time had no money, but gave a note, which the Society got discounted.

Prof. Buckland is a man of thought and consideration, and a real gentleman; no one ever heard of him injuring another by word or deed. He is too modest and unassuming to force his way in the brow-beating manner too often followed by our place-seekers. If our offices were filled with more such gentlemen a much higher tone would be given to our Society, frauds and falsehoods would receive their just deserts, and confidence would take the place of mistrust. We know he would not wish us to publish this, but there is a duty we have to perform. We say that no legislator in Ontario should neglect his duty to agriculture, and if that gentleman must still hold office he should have an able assistant.

When in Toronto we went into Mr. Rennie's seed ware-room. That gentleman was as mad as a hatter because Canada had only carried off the Silver Medal for cereals at the Paris Exposition. He produced an Indiana paper in which that State was lauded as Americans know how to praise their conquests, because Indiana had gained the Gold Medal for the best display of cereals. Mr. Rennie said that the Canadian grain was superior to any exhibited by Indiana, except the winter wheat; that grain drew more attention than any spring grain. But he was quite sure the winter wheat was the ground on which the decision of the judges was based, and that the grain exhibited by Indiana was not raised in that State, but brought from California. If we had brought some of our winter wheat from British Columbia and exhibited it, he is quite sure that Indiana would have had to have taken a back seat instead of making such a crow.

Mr. J. A. Bruce, the Hamilton seedsman, inquires of us about the statement made in the September issue to the effect that some New Zealand farmers raised three thousand acres of turnips, and that a farmer sowed in one season twenty-five thousand dollars worth of grass seed. Our informants were a Mr. Drummond, a Scotchman, and Mr. Cable, an Englishman. They had farmed one hundred and sixty-five thousand acres; they were partners, and no one was more respected or better credited than these two gentlemen on the vessel of the steamship "Nevada." To be quite sure about the statements made in that issue, we inquired of the Bishop of New Zealand, who was a passenger on the vessel, and he said that we could place implicit reliance on the accounts received from the above-mentioned gentlemen. The quantity appears enormous to us, but we have no reason to doubt the truth of the statements made in Sept. issue.