

**On the Wing.**

On the 13th of April we went to Harriston, a thriving town in the township of Minto, on the W. G. & B. Railway. This town has an organ and furniture factories, grist and saw mills, and other important works. The inhabitants appear to be thriving and prosperous, and claim to have no poor among them. The land in this part of the country is fertile and the farmers are enterprising. One of the most noticeable features is, that the farmers have established and have kept up an annual dinner for the last twenty-four years. This we believe to be the oldest one in Canada. We formerly thought the Hullett Agricultural Society to have been the oldest, but their annual dinner has only been established for twenty years. The results of both these social gatherings have been in laying the foundations of enlightenment and prosperity to the farmers in these localities. The deliberations and discussions held at these dinners have been the means of establishing and maintaining agricultural societies and exhibitions, procuring land and erecting buildings, annual stock sales, and also a farmers' club. The agricultural societies have been doing good service to the country, but the debatable question arises, Which are likely to do most good, farmers' clubs or agricultural societies? The latter supported or aided by Government taxation, the other maintained entirely by voluntary means. One must always be more or less under the control of the partisans of those who are in power, and favors granted to partisans have been felt in some instances to have been used to the apparent advantage of party, and to the detriment of perhaps those more deserving. In farmers' clubs the partizan feelings have, we believe, been less influential, and we trust that rules and regulations may be so framed and carried out that they may never supersede the true object for which they are established, namely, the advancement and interest of the farmer.

The members of the farmers' club met in the evening. One of the most important subjects mooted was introduced by Mr Moor, of Waterloo, one of the members of the Board of Agriculture, and a member of the late Agricultural Commission, and is a very successful hop-raiser. He proposed the appointment of a veterinary surgeon for each county, to examine, approve or condemn any stallion for service in the locality, and the placing of a tax on all stallions. Nearly all the proprietors of CLYDESDALE stallions approve of placing a tax on stallions; but the appointment of Government veterinary surgeons at a salary of \$500 per annum each, for each county, was not approved of by the majority of the farmers. We quietly asked the Vice-President, a plain, practical farmer, his opinion about the matter (the President being absent, having met with an accident). He considered that it would be better to leave the choice of stallions to the farmers. This we believe nearly every practical farmer would approve of, for just as soon as the Government takes the control, some particular class would be favored to the detriment of the other classes. The country is large and varied, and the requirements are for all classes. The general purpose horse must always be in the greatest demand, but not being thorough-bred or pure-bred animals, that class would be rejected by the combined influence of associations. The great demand at the present time appears to be for heavy draught horses; the prices they command are such as to turn the attention of farmers and importers to them and to the establishment of registers. This is a good plan if kept from under the control of the Government. The Secretary of the Board of Agriculture, whose

salary has been thrice doubled, introduces a new Clydesdale stud book. If the Government does not pay him sufficient for his whole services let them double it again rather than to allow our farmers to be injured as they have been by the Government control of the Shorthorn herd book, which has caused much loss and has cost us far too much, and is now worthless as a record—condemned by our breeders. If money is granted for agricultural advancement, it should be under the control of practical farmers in the township, not to please members and speculators.

The horse, bull, and seed show was well attended by spectators, but few exhibitors. Owing to the almost impassable condition of the roads many who would have shown seeds were prevented from doing so. The entries in this class were few. The grain was very good. Some of the horses and cattle were fine animals. The judges apparently gave satisfaction to all except some of the exhibitors who failed in receiving prizes in accordance with their own judgment, Mr. Bell and Mr. Adams indignantly refusing to take any second prizes.

The following is a list of the prize takers:

**HORSES.**

Imported heavy draught stallion, 1st, R. Leitch; 2nd, L. Bell.  
Best Canadian draught stallion, 1st, C. Valentine—only one entry.  
Best general purpose stallion, 1st, J. Brady; 2nd, W. Adams.  
Best draught stallion under three years, 1st, R. Leitch—only one entry.

**BULLS.**

Durham bulls, two years old and upwards, 1st, Jas. Moore; 2nd, P. Fife.  
Durham bulls, under two years old, 1st, R. & W. Scott; 2nd, E. Atcheson.

**SEEDS.**

Best four bushels white Russian wheat, 1st, A. Patterson; 2nd, T. Grills.  
Best four bushels barley, 1st, P. Fife; 2nd, T. Grills.  
Best four bushels white oats, 1st, P. Fife; 2nd, T. Grills.  
Best four bushels peas, 1st, T. Grills—only one entry.

The following were the judges:

For horses, S. McKenzie, Huron; Geo. Moore, Waterloo; J. McNab, Ayr; and James Alexander, Guelph.  
For bulls, Wm. Thompson, and W. Dickison, Carrick; and James Slemmon, Peel.  
For grain, G. Anderson, W. Hinds, and James Cummings, Harriston.

**The Root Crop.**

The cultivation of roots is one of the main stays of successful farming in a country where stock raising and feeding takes such an important stand as it does at present in Canada. Root culture should be considered, besides, as one of the essentials in a proper rotation of crops. We are fully persuaded that the average farmer does not pay sufficient attention to this branch of industry. In any rotation roots and corn should be prominent. What pays better than a good crop of potatoes, mangolds, turnips and carrots? Not only do they pay as a crop in themselves, but the culture fits the ground for a future crop. The present month should see the land prepared, and in the case of carrots, mangolds and potatoes, the seed should be sown. Preparation and thorough culture are the main points in successful root tillage. Fall plowing and manuring at the same time is the most commendable course. Where the majority of farmers fail in their roots is the bad condition of their land, and the manuring in the spring with probably half rotted dung. To produce the best effects from manure, it should be thoroughly incorporated with the soil to become available to the plant. Fresh barn-yard manure thrown on this

spring cannot produce the best results, as the process of decomposition will not be sufficient to obtain the greatest amount of plant food.

Carrots should be sown as quickly as possible, as the seed takes a long time to germinate, and the plant makes but slow progress in the early part of the season. The growth, however, may be accelerated by soaking and then mixing with dry sand; indeed, this way is preferable, if only to get the seed evenly sown. Carrots are the best paying root crop we have, and are less cultivated than any other.

Mangolds should be sown as soon as the frost is out of the ground, and on well manured land. As a food crop they are superior to turnips, especially for milk cows and horned stock. There is another advantage that mangolds have, and that is, they are not subject to the ravages of insects, and on any kind of ground in respectable tillage make an abundant yield.

Turnip land should be well worked, and preparation made to get them in by the 20th of June. But more about this next month.

Potato planting should be attended to, and as so much has been said in our prize essay for last month, it is needless to go over the ground again.

**Agricultural College for the Northwest.**

We notice that a Winnipeg paper advocates the establishment of an agricultural college in the Northwest. We would advise every farmer who expects to be taxed for such an institution to enquire closely into the working and results of agricultural colleges and model farms that have been established, both in Canada and the U. S. Do not listen to those interested individuals who intend to make their money from the tax-payer, and are expecting fat offices. Agricultural colleges in themselves, if properly managed, and were necessary demands, are beneficial. But what would be the use of going to the expenditure of thousands of dollars to build an institution in a country where any man who can turn a furrow can raise a crop from the virgin fertility of the soil? Such an institution we certainly consider premature in a new country, where the main object of legislation should be to keep the taxes at a minimum, and thus enable the farmer to lay out money for the necessary improvements on his land. The argument that land would be increased in value in the immediate neighborhood of the college by the expenditure of Government money, is so absurd that it is undeserving of further comment.

From our own observations for the last 20 years, agriculture has been more benefited by private enterprise than by Government grants. The establishment of these institutions in Canada has, in our opinion, tended more to the injury than to the benefit of the practical farmer; and the parties having control of positions and power, have, perhaps unintentionally, attempted to check any kind of private enterprise that would have tended to do as much or more good than Government officials have done. Leave the farmers alone and at liberty to act as they please with regard to agricultural affairs. Keep down the taxes. Let not our farmers listen or heed the paid subservient tools of speculative office-seekers. Let our farmers take a greater interest in the legislation of the country, by electing representatives from amongst themselves, and they will have a controlling voice in matters pertaining to agriculture. Then we shall have continuous prosperity in the country.

But, on the contrary, if these institutions are established, and officials with high salaries are to be paid out of the farmers' taxes, then the farmers must become as the serfs of Russia.

The real farmers of Ontario and Quebec never asked for model farms to be established in their Provinces.

We say again, Northwest farmers, act with caution, and do not check private enterprise!