

# Agricultural Journal

AND  
TRANSACTIONS  
OF THE  
LOWER CANADA AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY.

MONTREAL, NOVEMBER, 1851.

## PROVINCIAL PLOUGHING MATCH NEAR QUEBEC.

In conformity to previous advertisement, this Ploughing Match came off on Wednesday the 15th of October, upon the farm of Mr. Bell, about 3 miles from Quebec, on the bank of the River St. Charles. The day was fine, and the land in good condition, but the attendance was not so numerous as might have been expected from the number and amount of prizes offered by the Directors of the Lower Canada Agricultural Society. The number of ploughs upon the ground was 26, of which, we believe, there was an equal number of European and Canadian ploughmen, but one of the Canadians gave up soon after he commenced. The County of Quebec Agricultural Society, under whose management the Ploughing Match was conducted, made every necessary arrangements, as to the measurement and making out of the lots previous to the day for ploughing, and the President, Vice-president, Secretary, and several members of the Committee, were present to see that all went on regularly, and it was impossible the management could be better in every respect. It happened unfortunately, that the County of Montreal, the County of St. Hyacinthe, and that of Three Rivers, had their Ploughing Matches upon the same or the following day, and hence, prevented many from going to the Quebec Ploughing Match. The worthy Secretary of the County of Quebec Agricultural Society, J. B. Trudelle, Esq., requested us to procure some gentlemen to act as judges at Quebec, but the only person who consented to go was Mr. Hardy of

grain tops and butts, as after reapers, but this was found quite impracticable: a man could have reaped and tied a sheaf much sooner and better than he could have settled the heaps as they left the machine. A very important experiment was made in the field by some gentlemen, to ascertain the loss sustained by loose heads, gleanings, &c., left on the ground after the grain had been bound up. An average square yard was measured, the loose heads collected upon it, the grain and straw separated and weighed. Of grain there was  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an ounce, being at the rate of 226 $\frac{3}{4}$  lbs. per acre; of straw, 1 $\frac{1}{4}$  ounce, or 378 lbs. per ditto—a quantity the value of which would have reaped, bound, and carried it to the stack-yard. After witnessing these trials, the facts are incontrovertible, that this implement is not, at present, calculated to meet circumstances. All circumstances must suit it; the ground must be perfectly level, without ridge or furrow; the grain must be a moderately light crop, and all standing. Even taking these matters into consideration, the crop can be much cheaper and better reaped by the scythe or sickle. On this head there were not two opinions in the field that day, nor have I heard any other since; the implement was acknowledged on all hands to be a decided failure. I am not prepared to say that it may not be much improved; in this country I should think it will. But there are serious difficulties in the way, in making a machine to do the work correctly and cheaply, in various localities, under different circumstances, and with different crops. My own impression is, it will be a long time ere it can come in competition with the scythe and the sharpening sickle.

On this head I may mention, that a very important experiment was made in this neighbourhood a few days ago, by the members of the Penrith Agricultural Society, to test the merits of the scythe and sickle in reaping grain. An English mower and an Irish reaper contested for a prize, and our countryman won easy. From this we may infer that there are still hopes for Ireland.—Yours, &c., THOMAS SKILLING, *Louthier Costle, Sept. 22, 1851.*

### THE CLAUSSEN FLAX PROCESS.

The *Belfast Mercury* states, on authority, that Dr. Hoeges, Professor of Agriculture, Queen's College, Belfast; Dr. Blythe, Professor of Chemistry; and Mr. Murphy, Professor of Agriculture, Queen's College, Cork, have been appointed as a commission to investigate the merits of the process of preparing flax patented by the Chevalier Claussen. The experiments are being conducted at the flax-steeping establishment of Mr. Dargan, the eminent railway contractor, about 17 miles from the city of Cork.