

The Provincial Board of Agriculture and Arts.

The first meeting of the new Board was held in Toronto on Thursday and Friday, the 23rd and 24th days of March. We call this the new Board because the alterations in the Act or the new clauses have reduced the number of members of the Board to the elected officers alone. The Mechanics' Institutes, Dairymen's and Fruit Growers' Associations, Agricultural Associations, Entomological Society and honorary members have no longer seats at the Board. Although the present is virtually a new Board, there is no change in the members, every old member having been re-elected. By this many might argue that the old Board have done the best that they could for the farmers; but the difficulty the Board has had in conducting the Provincial Exhibition, the Herd Book, etc., etc., does not warrant such a conclusion. Whether the Act should be so altered as to give the farmers more power in sending representatives to the Board, or what means should be taken to make this Board more popular and more useful, are subjects deserving attention and discussion. We do not pretend to say that some of the old members who represented other branches of industry, were not quite as able and as good as the present Board, and there are many farmers just as fit to represent their interests as those who now occupy the honorable positions. There are good men on the present Board, perhaps as good as can be selected; but we must try them and hope that they may take warning from the past, and that each one will honorably fill the positions they now occupy. There is but one way for them to get to regain the lost confidence, that is, for each one to consider what he is elected to that position for. If he attempts to foster another interest in preference to the interest of agriculture and arts, he occupies a position that he is not entitled to fill, and the interest of agriculture and arts must suffer from his acts. Should there be any one member on the Board who feels in any way bound or who desires to serve other interests in preference to that which the law has laid down as the duty of members, we would strongly recommend the honorable retirement of such a member.

The members present were Messrs. Aylesworth, Drury, Carnegie, Graham, Hunter, Legge, McKinnon, Morgan, Rykert, Shipley and White; one member, Mr. Moore, was absent in Manitoba. The Commissioner, Mr. Wood, took his seat with them during part of the time. Mr. Drury was appointed President, and Mr. McKinnon Vice-President.

The principal business done was the selection of the locality for holding the Provincial Exhibition. A deputation from Ottawa desired to secure it for that city. The Mayor of Kingston also desired to secure it. The contest was strong, and Kingston gained by one vote, the vote being six for Kingston and five against.

Mr. Aylesworth said that the member for Kingston announced that he would move that the grant be withheld, and that many members would have supported the motion had not Mr. Wood, the Commissioner of agriculture informed them that the Exhibition should be held in Kingston this year.

Senator Skead, of Ottawa, on retiring, said the Government had no right to say where the Exhibition should be held.

The Exhibition is to be opened in Kingston on the 18th of September, and to continue one week.

There was a discussion about fixing the date, as Toronto had announced that the Industrial would be held in that week. The Board considered that Toronto had no right to insult them by fixing the date of its exhibition at the time the Provincial has been held for a long series of years. There exists a strong feeling against the steps taken by

the proprietors of the Industrial Exhibition, for in reality the institution appears to be in the hands of a body of speculators, and the citizens of Toronto appear to have aided them in their attempt to secure the whole grant for their own personal aggrandizement and to the injury of the farmers of Ontario. They have played their cards long and well, but they have lost the game, and the honorable farmers of their own immediate vicinity will not support them, as soon as they understand the full particulars. From statements made at this meeting we are led to understand that by some means or other the right, title and interest that the farmers had in the old exhibition buildings and grounds, have been transferred to these grasping speculators. Can you believe that such a trick could have been practiced in this century, particularly in Toronto, bristling as it is with churches? The Association still say they have a right on the new grounds, but say they cannot get their right without a chancery suit; and some clauses that have been inserted in the transfer papers without their knowledge, make the prospects of obtaining your rights for you so doubtful that they are afraid of losing what property they now have in attempting it. Farmers, enquire where all your lands and buildings you once had in Toronto are gone. Do you consent to see your interest wrested from you forever to suit the whims of mountebank exhibitors? We say, no, unless your honor and spirit are undeserving of your calling, and you are willing to become serfs and slaves. Do not let the glitter, or paint, or gilding lead you astray. Have nothing to do with the Industrial Exhibition until they make honorable and just concessions of your rights to the unanimous consent of the Board of Agriculture and Arts.

Prizes are to be awarded to the best farms again this year, but to be in other localities. Mr. White strongly recommended the Committee on farm prizes to work early and work persistently to induce farmers to enter their farm for competition. There had existed so strong a feeling against entering farms that they had a difficulty in getting farmers to award the prizes to. Even the winner of the first prize had been most reluctant to enter for competition.

The Secretary's salary was advanced to \$1,800 per annum, and an assistant was to receive a salary of \$200 to aid him. Mr. Smith, of the Veterinary College, applied for \$500, part of a promised grant given some years ago; this is in addition to his annual grant. Professor Mills applied for a grant of \$500 to commence a plan of examining farmers' sons. The Council hold their next meeting in Kingston, on the 12th of April.

Prize Essay.

"WILL IT PAY TO SOW WITH CLOVER IN THE SPRING TO PLOW UNDER IN THE FALL."

To answer this question, sir, and prove in writing to your agricultural readers that this system pays, or does not pay, how it pays, and the exact return by so doing, I must confess I cannot use accurate figures to prove that money spent upon this course of farming makes a good return in every instance, knowing that many difficulties are to be overcome (especially in this irregular climate) before a very large balance sheet can be shown in its favor.

But, sir, if you will allow that two of these difficulties are overcome, viz., that this clover seed gets a good catch, and that the farmer, after plowing clover under in the fall, will keep his land lying dry and clear of dormant water, I will endeavor to write and make a few remarks which may tend to have some influence toward showing a decided balance in favor of sowing clover in the spring to plow under in the fall, as I firmly believe this course pays, especially where so many farmers have caused their soil to be unproductive by allowing the plant food it naturally contained to be removed and the land thereby becoming exhausted.

Now, as I said, many farmers have allowed that active ingredient or soluble inorganic matter in the soil naturally, to be removed by their unreasonable system of farming. It now becomes us to consider how to replace this plant food, which natural decomposition in many instances does not or can not supply, to the present cropping system which our bad farmers follow up and carry away from the soil of this country. There is one blessing attached, viz., that the bad farmers have only robbed the land of the active matter required in vegetation and checked its immediate fertility, but cannot get matter in a dormant condition. This is kept as a reserve fund for the future. This deficiency of inorganic matter, and the replacing it in our surface soils, is the matter at stake, that a grain crop sown may be supplied with soluble matter furnishing all the food which the crop requires.

It has been proved to my mind frequently that almost any kind of vegetation established or growing on land, if plowed under in due course, decays and adds matter which becomes fitted for the support of higher forms of vegetation. Even thistles, before seeding, if plowed under in due course, decay and add food which they searched from the subsoil, and are also fitted for encouraging vegetation. Food in the soil fitted for healthy vegetation is what our worn-out soil in Ontario requires, and as our manure manufacturers have not tempted the farmers to consume their article largely, and consider its money value, but hold aloft and allow the bone and sinew to be sent to Britain and United States, and sold at lower prices to agriculturists there, whose soil is enriched and profit made from it. Seeing this to be the case, we cannot fall back upon any course of improvement more adapted to have good results than by sowing clover more extensively.

When we consider the sowing of clover in this country, it has a two-fold advantage, viz., harvest being early, allows a clover crop to grow luxuriantly through July, August and September, and offers a very tempting pasture for sheep, which are every year coming to the front as a good investment in farming and making a good price in the form of meat. Now, by allowing your flock of sheep to overrun for a few weeks this portion of your clover which you intend to plow under, they will more than repay you for labor and cost of clover seed, in the meat they make and enhancement in value generally. And the excrements of sheep convey to the soil those portions of food (or the clover) which have not been added to their bodies or used in support of warmth, and thereby check exhaustion of soil. Secondly, this clover which sheep have trod under foot is quite as good in the form of a manure to plow under in the fall. Now, according to the best authority and opinion of the leading agricultural chemists, a clover crop draws an abundant supply of food from the atmosphere in an organic form. It also contains a more abundant supply of food than any other plant (which is required to support every farm crop) in an inorganic form, derived from the soil, especially the subsoil. Now, if these clover roots strike deeper into the soil and draw more matter from the subsoil than any other crop, also collect organic matter from the atmosphere, by plowing this plant food under in the fall we must secure and enrich the surface soil and create plant food ready to help the growth of succeeding crops.

If by securing a supply of food for plant life from nature, and correct application, as I have endeavored to explain, allow it to decay, by the dissolving influence of moisture and the formation of gases assisting the dormant ingredients to become active and soluble, I consider by so doing I show a balance in favor of sowing clover in spring to plow under in the fall, and encourage a system of farming which may tend to enlighten us and bring about some improvement among us agricultural people in British North America.

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Evaporating Fruit.

There need be no more apples rotting in the bearing year for apples, and as there are now excellent small and cheap evaporating machines, by which fruit is dried in the best manner, it will be an economy to prepare the orchard for bearing a good crop. Prune it close, give the tree a dressing of lime and ashes, or of prepared orchard fertilizer, and when the fruit appears, thin it out by knocking off all the gnarled and defective fruit as far as possible.