

offers no fewer than sixty prizes for essays and reports upon agricultural subjects, varying in value from fifty sovereigns to five, in addition to a number of gold and silver medals. You might like to know upon what subjects so many prizes are offered. It would occupy too much time to enumerate them all. Some report upon the best and most economical management of a farm; others more particularly describe the most approved method, founded upon actual experiment, of the application of manures or the cultivation of the various kinds of crops, or of the rearing or feeding of stock. A large number of prizes are offered for reports detailing the most approved method of planting and bringing to maturity fruit and forest trees, while still others having reference to mechanics elicit reliable information as to the value of new agricultural implements as well as the method of using them. The amount of money offered for reports during 1862, is 695 sovereigns, equal to \$3,375. What comes of all the reports that must in this way deluge the Secretary's Office? What result follows? Let me tell you: they are carefully examined by juries of scientific and practical men, many of them doubtless come to grief, while those of them that are adjudged worthy of a prize are printed in the Journal of the Society, and so distributed among its members. It may be stated that the journals of these two national societies, composed chiefly of prize essays, stand at the head of our present agricultural literature; the one published quarterly, the other semi-annually. Both are entirely made up of original contributions, and contain a mine of valuable information, which finds its way piecemeal into the columns of newspapers and magazines all over the civilized world.

Perhaps the time has not yet arrived in the history of our county societies when it would be either advisable or practicable to devote much of their funds to the advancement of agricultural literature. I do think, however, that the Provincial Association of Upper Canada, liberally subsidized as it is by the Canadian Government, might do more in that way than it has hitherto done. I think, sir, that the Provincial Association might very safely entrust, if needs be, the encouragement due to quilts and counterpanes, wax-work and worsted work, and raised work, embroidery, fancy needle-work, tatting and tambooning, to the fostering care of county and township societies, where they are certainly very attractive, and will doubtless receive every encouragement, in order that a portion, small though it might be, of the funds of that great and useful association might be annually devoted to the improvement of the minds of our farmers by the diffusion of useful and reliable information, and the encouragement of agricultural literature.

If any one is disposed to question the propriety of such a procedure, it is likely that his objections are founded either upon that proverbial

antipathy to book-farming, which has been erroneously, I think, laid at the door of the practical farmer, or from the conflicting evidence and imperfectly recorded evidence of a certain class of agricultural writers whose ignorance as to the simple, every-day practice of agriculture is surpassed only by their ambition to see themselves flourish conspicuously in print. To the reflecting mind, however, it will appear evident that the kind of writing to which reference has been made, must possess an intrinsic value of its own, ere it can find a place in a journal of acknowledged authority. The fact of fifty or twenty-five, or even five sovereigns being offered for an essay upon a given subject, will ensure competition, while the scrutiny and approval of the board by whom they are examined, afford the best guarantee possible that what you read in the prize report is reliable. A capital safe-guard are such reports when placed between the rash experimenter and the illiterate, yet enquiring practical farmer. Let me give you a simple, very homely illustration of this: Not long since I was conversing with a farmer who in most things displays a good deal of intelligence. Conversation turned upon the difficulty of growing apple trees, and the cause of their decay. I asked him if he had tried any remedy. "Tried anything?" said he, "Why neighbour, I have tried *every thing*, and now I am fairly discouraged. My last experiment was this: When at the store one day I met with neighbour A—, and he told me my young apple trees were all dying off; he said *his'n was, too!* but that he had just heard of a plan of saving their lives, in which he had great faith, especially so because it came from 'Mr. so-and-so,' a man, in which he had every confidence, and who knew a *great deal about apple trees*. It was simply this: 'Cut off the trees to the level of the ground, and in a short time the old blackened and shrivelled stem would be replaced by a vigorous, healthy young shoot from the old root. I had,' he continued, "two hundred young apple trees,—they were not doing well, and, to cut a long story short, the first thing I did on coming home, was to cut off every one of their heads; there was not one that survived the operation. From that day to this I haven't seen the first shoot, so there was an end of my trees and my experiment." Now here is a subject which at this present time would be a very fitting one for an elaborate report, and if the Agricultural Association of Upper Canada would offer a liberal prize for the best essay on the cultivation and treatment of the apple tree, having special reference to the disease which is now devastating our orchards, and threatens soon to annihilate them, I think, sir, some more humane and probably successful treatment would be suggested, than that of chopping off their heads.

The purposes, then, to which these National Societies of Scotland and England apply their money, differs somewhat from the Canadian sys-