

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING
SKELETON LEAVES.

Mr. Sallor read a communication from Dr. G. Dickson on the preparation of skeleton leaves. A solution of caustic soda is made by dissolving 3 oz. of carbonate soda (washing soda) in 40 oz. (2 pints) of boiling water, and adding 1½ oz. of quick lime previously slacked; boil for ten minutes, decant the clear solution and bring it to the boil. During ebullition add the leaves; boil briskly for some time, say an hour, occasionally adding hot water to supply the place of that lost by evaporation. Take out a leaf and put into a vessel of water, rub it between the fingers under the water. If the epidermis and parenchyma separate easily, the rest of the leaves may be removed from the solution and treated in the same way, but if not, then the boiling must be continued for some time longer. To bleach the skeletons mix about a drachm of chloride of lime with a pint of water, adding sufficient acetic acid to liberate the chlorine. Steep the leaves in this till they are whitened (about ten minutes), taking care not to let them stay in too long, otherwise they are apt to become brittle. Put them into clean water and float them out on pieces of paper. Lastly, remove them from the paper before they are quite dry, and place them in a book or botanical press. Specimens so prepared by Dr. Dickson were exhibited, and presented to the Museum.—*Proc. Bot. Society, Edin.*

Communications.

SYDNEY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY.

IMPROVEMENT OF PIGS, SHEEP AND CATTLE—FOREIGN GRASSES—THE CROPS—THE PROVINCIAL EXHIBITION OF 1868.

Sydney, C. B., Dec. 4th, 1866.

The President and Directors of the "Sydney Agricultural Society," in presenting their annual report, have reason to congratulate you on the increased interest taken in agriculture, as evidenced by the very large accession in the number of applicants to become members; altho' from local circumstances, which in future must be provided against, many have not yet signed the prescribed declaration roll, and it will be for your consideration whether a second society, to embrace the southern shore and mining districts, shall not be formed, still the addition is sufficient to place you in the first rank of similar societies in the Province.

The intention of holding an exhibition, expressed last year, has not been carried out, because on seeking the co-operation of other County Societies it was found they preferred to apply all their available funds to the purchase of improved breeds

of stock; and your directors, feeling a local show in the present state of our agriculture, without such co-operation, would disappoint expectations, and could do very little, if any good, resolved to adopt a similar course. In pursuance your President has visited several places, and been in correspondence with breeders of pure stock both in the Provinces and United States, which has resulted in the purchase of a pure Berkshire boar pig and three Cotswold rams from the very superior stock of H. E. Decie, Esq., Wilmot; of three Leicester rams from F. R. Parker, Esq., Shubenacadie, N.S.; and at the recent government sale in Halifax, a Cotswold ewe and ram, a Southdown and Leicester ram from the flocks of breeders in Canada of great repute,—these have been drafted out in the various sections as applied for, and your directors hope to witness a very speedy improvement in this important branch of our industry. The cattle offered brought prices so much above the authorized limits that your President was reluctantly compelled to allow some valuable animals to pass into other hands; but it will be for your consideration whether any of five bulls offered shall be purchased, and you will also have the offer of Suffolk and Yorkshire pigs, with some Southdowns from the United States.

The Central Board and its estimable Secretary have our thanks for the attention paid to some complaints we were compelled in the last report to make; on the recent occasion such ample time was given that the Cape Breton societies have been enabled to make arrangements and secure a fair proportion of sheep and cattle. As these importations have reimbursed the Province, been so eagerly purchased and given such general satisfaction, it is hoped the Central Board may be induced to continue them, and that in future selections improved Gallows may not be overlooked,—and further that grains and grasses may be introduced. Your directors are of opinion that Italian rye grass, blue Kentucky grass, English cow grass, with some of the fescues, (*Festuca liliacea* for instance) might be found of great advantage, as in New Zealand and the Australian Colonies, we learn from private reports, they have evoked a revolution in grazing districts; and it is evident our grass lands are not what they might be for want of greater variety in seeding. So many obstacles present themselves to a local society operating on its own account, that it can scarcely be done unless through the Central Board.

We have also to report thankfully of the state of our crops; heavy rains at periods retarded farming operations, and in exposed or wet situations did some damage, still, the general yield has been above an average. Hay has yielded a larger crop

than in 1865. Grains of all kinds are also in excess. Potatoes are better in quality and more abundant in quantity than for many past seasons, although the rot has been excessive in "Jenny Linds," and prevalent in many varieties of whites, blacks of all kinds are universally good; the Gooderich Seedlings yielded enormously. Turnips and vegetables generally have done well, whilst fruits are abundant.

Your directors cannot close this report without reminding you that in 1868 a Provincial Exhibition will be held.—Local committees will very early next year be organized, and intending exhibitors will do well to commence their arrangements and as early as possible mature their plans. The efforts now making to disseminate more enlightened views on the science of agriculture, the introduction of improved breeds of cattle, sheep and swine, of grains, grasses, &c., with the great natural capabilities of Cape Breton, ought to place you as competitors in a high position.

Nor ought we to fail in reminding you that as our mining resources are becoming year by year more fully developed, a population will gather round them equal to one-half the present County as taken at the last census; these will be dependent on you for supplies, whilst the coal trade with the States at no distant day will be carried, partially at least, in steam vessels, thus affording a rapid transit for various farm products to the large cities on the Atlantic sea-board. Whenever, then, you are in a position to supply articles of first rate quality in mutton, beef, butter, &c., you will unquestionably command a ready market at very remunerative rates.

Gentlemen, appended, is your Treasurer's account.

H. DAVENPORT, *Pres.*

C. H. HARRINGTON, *Sec'y.*

LUNENBURG AGRICULTURAL
SOCIETY.

THE CROPS IN LUNENBURG—MARKETS.

Lunenburg, Dec. 14th, 1866.

SIR,—I have to report for the information of the Board of Agriculture that the annual meeting of the Lunenburg Society was held in the Court House, on Tuesday, 4th inst., when the following officers were appointed for the ensuing year:—

John N. Kaulback, High Sheriff, *Pres.*

F. W. George, Esq., *Vice Pres.*

Daniel Owen, Esq., *Sec'y. and Treas.*

Rev. N. L. Owen, N. M. Meyle and

Robert Lindsay, Esqrs., *Directors.*

The accounts of Secretary were submitted and approved of by the Board.

Brief addresses were made by several