

The Mimico Farm.

Having devoted our time entirely to our agricultural affairs for many years past, and having endeavored to attain information in regard to them in their various bearings, we deem it our duty to explain to our readers the result of our observations. We cannot expect all of you to see things with our eyes, or to agree with all our views.

Should we be in error our pages are open for you to express your views. We have always asked for open and free discussions. However, there are two other agricultural papers in Canada in which you may reply to or confute anything in which we may be in error, namely, the *Canada Farmer*, and the *Colonial Farmer*, of New Brunswick.

THE ORIGIN OF THE MIMICO FARM.

We have given years, in fact, we have devoted the most vigorous part of our life in endeavoring to establish a test, experimental, educational and sale farm; we brought forward our plans and commenced operations long before we commenced this paper. Addresses were given in regard to it at Toronto, Hamilton, London, St. Catharines, Grimsby, Brantford, Paris, Yorkville, Princeton, Woodstock, &c., &c. Commendatory resolutions were passed at almost all these places; leading gentlemen said it was a subject the Government should support.

In Delaware and in this city two of the (at that time) strongest political party men opposed us in every way, stooping to the most degrading positions for such purpose. They had power; they led others. Had they not taken such a course, most probably they would be in the Legislature at the present time. One would, and perhaps the other.

We are quite sure that politics was the cause of their opposition. Their individual attempts might not have been of much injury, but as these persons have had Government pay, and both had great influence with the small fry and Government powers, they have been enabled to do much to thwart the project.

Still, they find that all the powers they were able to bring in every imaginable way, were unavailing to thwart the undertaking. The next attempt made was to purchase our conscience. The leading power had said that it would require \$100,000 to establish the farm, and he at length made this proposition to us, no doubt from authority: that he could establish it if we would place him at the head, (we knowing that it was for political ends.) Just at the time that the Mimico Farm received its birth from the Legislature, we were consulted by leading gentlemen having considerable influence with the Minister of Agriculture, and were offered the immediate increase of the circulation of our paper to five times the number issued at that time, if we would support their plans.

We have looked on the Western Fair as a political engine more than an agricultural institution. Its object, we considered, was to rival the Provincial Exhibition.—It was to have been held up as an example of local enterprise, and upheld by the press; the Provincial Exhibition was to have been permanently established on the Mimico Farm, and all the local exhibitions and agricultural interests, as far as possible, made subservient to it. The power that such a course would throw into the hands of a Government would have been great. The principal mover in the Western Fair was to have been the manager of the Mimico Farm: this we are convinced of.

The opposing party, or Mimico Farm sympathizers, have attended meetings to injure private enterprise, and an intentionally damaging resolution has been passed and published in party papers. The press has been used and parties rewarded for services. We have challenged an open discussion to establish these facts, but no one has yet ventured to take it up.

The reason of this opposition was not because we have taken part with the opposing political party, but because we attempted to carry out our own views in regard to keeping agricultural interests independent of party politics, and did not yield to serve the ends of the party in power when inducements were offered.

Thus the Mimico Farm has been established to check private enterprise, and make positions for political friends; rather to enchain and entammel agriculturists than to aid them. *Is it not rather a sandy foundation to build on?*

The Provincial Exhibition.

Attempts have been and still are made to establish the Exhibition permanently on the Mimico Farm. We are not aware that any farmers ever suggested this plan, but some influential persons have, and, perhaps some farmers within forty or fifty miles of it who might be benefitted by its adoption. But the majority of the farmers in the Province would be opposed to it if it were permanently settled there, and very few farmers living beyond a day's drive of it would ever go there to the Exhibition.

The interest in it would fall into the hands of a few. The novelty, perhaps, might attract a fair attendance for one or two years; then it would become stale, and probably be almost as poor as the recent agricultural exhibitions in Toronto.—They have been nearly total failures (the Provincial Exhibition excepted), very sparsely attended by buyers, sellers, exhibitors or spectators, and did not half equal in interest or utility scores of county or township exhibitions held at a distance from the city.

The cities and city members may advocate and centre the Exhibition at Toronto; they are powerful, and large sums of money have been expended in various cities, nominally for the public good, but often to gain political power, and Toronto must be favored as well as other places.—The attempt to take the Exhibition away from the farmers we cannot approve of. The perambulatory system in its great annual visits awakens in each locality fresh energies, and gives the farmers of the surrounding country an opportunity to visit it and profit by it.

Having attended it for years, we have always been astonished at the very few whom we know that come from a long distance to see it. For instance, when it is held even in Hamilton, scarcely a farmer from this county is to be seen there, except a few who may be appointed as judges, or who are exhibitors. Very few real practical farmers who do not receive cash payment in some way, will attend it, unless they can go and return the same day to their homes; 50 miles by rail is about the greatest distance that farmers can go in a day and return, that is to give them an opportunity of seeing the Exhibition. As for staying over night, that is out of the question, as accommodation at \$2 to \$4 per day is too heavy an item.

The Provincial Exhibition is a school, and a school should be placed where scholars can attend. We all pay for it and all want it. It might, perhaps, be looked forward to with greater interest if it only visited a section once in 7 years. There are very large tracts of country from which the inhabitants cannot afford to come to see it. The locations for holding it might justly and with advantage be increased.

If it is for the mere gratification of the citizens, it would be right for us farmers to abandon it. What is the sum of \$10,000 per annum for such a useful institution. It would be very trifling compared to the expenditure of the Mimico Farm project, if carried out as originally designed.

Very little has been expended for agriculture in comparison to the expenditures for other purposes, but the farmers directly or indirectly pay for all. We know of no person who has asked for the

Mimico Farm or for the centralization of the Exhibition there. The farmers should be consulted in regard to their interests.—At our annual meetings their opinions might be obtained.

Of course those in or near Toronto would favor the centralization of business there, and may influence many to support them.

The Butter Question.

Such is the heading of many articles we meet with from time to time in our exchanges. It is a subject occupying much of the attention of farmers, and, still more, of the farmers' newspapers, and the produce merchants of the country at the present time.

It is one of no little importance, tending as it does to add to or subtract from the profits of those whose wealth is in the produce of their flocks and herds, no less than in their cereals.

Though we have no means of ascertaining the statistics of the butter trade, all know that for this one article of produce a very large amount of money is received by the farmers of Canada, for export as well as for home consumption; and the amount is continually increasing. As the population of our cities and towns increases, and as the ability of their inhabitants to buy whatever is conducive to their comfort becomes greater, in like proportion must the demands be greater for the products of our flocks and folds. The ready sale met with by farmers for meat and butter, and the high prices that have been paid for some time back, are unprecedented here.

This question pressing itself upon the minds of both producers and merchants of produce is, when we take into account the sums of money paid for this single item of our industrial pursuits, one of much moment. There can be no doubt of the fact that very large sums—thousands and thousands of dollars—are lost to the country by sending to the market butter of very inferior quality. Even in our home market we every week see butter sold at a great difference in prices. We have within the last few days seen butter offered in this market (London) for 15 cts. a pound, and not sold, and at the same time butter was sold in rolls at from 22 to 25c., in corks at from 18 to 20c. There was a direct loss in the sale of the inferior article of not less than twenty-five per cent.

But it is not in the home market, it is in the export trade that there is the greatest loss. Some butter sent to the English markets is absolutely unsaleable there, except as grease. In one of our exchanges we find the following item:—

"One of our leading buyers received a letter from a commission merchant in Montreal, the other day, in which he states there are still 40,000 kegs of Canadian butter of last year's production in England, unsold, and it is entirely unsaleable, except as *sheep's grease*, at perhaps five cents per pound. The same letter stated that there were over 10,000 kegs of the same kind of grease left over in the Montreal markets, which were also unsaleable."

Five cents per pound for butter!—a loss of not less than 75 per cent! Cannot this ruinous waste be avoided? We believe it can; we are certain that every cent so wasted might have been saved to the country.

One movement in this direction has been taken. The butter dealers in some places, as for instance, in Elora, Seaford, Clinton, as our exchanges from these places inform us, have determined to pay for butter only such prices as it is really worth. The *Elora Observer* tells us that the prices there ranged during the past week at from eight to sixteen cents per pound, and some that was brought in they refused altogether to buy. In some places they have resolved to appoint inspectors of butter, who are to brand it according to its quality.

This subject has for some time engaged

our serious attention. In our issue of October, under the head, "Stock & Dairy," page 158, we gave two articles on the subject—"Making Butter," and "The Secret of Good Butter." Both will repay the attention of the reader. There is no article of food, no product of the farm, requires so great care and such scrupulous cleanliness, not only of the person making and handling it, but also of everything that may come in contact with it, as butter. And, with the most exact methods and the strictest cleanliness, butter may sometimes be sent to market in a bad condition. Then our housewives and dairymaids have not the advantage of having milk-houses with a temperature at all times equal, having in them a spring of cool, clean water, as other places have. But they have cellars and milk rooms that may be made to answer every purpose required. They can be so made and arranged, but they are not always so; they are too often deficient in ventilation. On entering them we are at once made sensible of their unsuitableness for keeping milk and butter by the unpleasant, fetid odor and the stifling unhealthy air. It is necessary that any place where milk is kept shall have a free circulation of air; that it be in ceiling, walls and floor, perfectly clean; that no vegetables or meat be kept there—in short, that it be a milk room and nothing else.

There is yet another cause of the inferior quality of some of our butter—it is, we believe the cause of the worst specimens being *grease*. It is the little care taken of it after being bought, by those who buy it and take it in trade in country stores. They put it together in kegs and corks regardless of quality, sometimes almost melted, when they get it from their customers. This butter, exposed to heat and foul smells, and different in color and preparation, always brings low prices.

Farmers here are beginning to realize the fact so well known to English farmers that stock farms are the most profitable.—For all the meat and butter they can bring to market there is ready sale at remunerative prices. The supply, as well as the demand, is increasing, and will increase. May we hope that the increased supply will be in products that will pay the producer. An inferior article is a sure source of loss.—As't Ed.

Sheep vs. Dogs, and City vs. Country.

Mr. Jas. Gibson, of London Township, imported a very fine flock of Lincoln sheep, some of which he exhibited in the States and some at our Exhibitions, carrying off first prizes at both places.

It is well known that the confinement of sheep in close pens for a length of time is injurious to their health. Mr. Gibson sought for pasture to turn his sheep into during the night, which all sheep owners are desirous of doing when exhibiting, and he had one very valuable sheep killed and others injured.

By the city protecting regulations no remuneration for his loss could be recovered, as in the country.

We do not consider this is acting just towards the farmers. A dog tax is levied in both city and country, and the money was intended to defray damage done by dogs to sheep. The cities incorporate large tracts of arable and grazing lands in their suburbs, preventing farmers from using the land within any distance from the exhibition grounds that the sheep could be taken to if folded within the city limits. We see the results.

The cities receive the money for the dog tax and retain it. The city dogs can go into the country and feast themselves on our mutton, but there is no pay from the city for the feasts these useless curs get.

Again, a farmer may have a most valuable and useful dog, and he may allow his dog to come to the city to aid him in driving his cattle or sheep, but should it happen to be on a day that the citizens

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