

The New Agricultural Societies Act.

As the dates for the annual meetings of Ontario Agricultural and Horticultural Societies are near at hand, our readers will doubtless be interested in learning something of the laws that will govern the procedure of these organizations. The new laws come into force on February 1st, 1907, but the next annual meetings of these organizations will be held on the dates fixed under the old act, viz., Horticultural and Township societies on January 9th, and District societies on January 16th, and the usual two weeks' notice must be given in local newspapers, together with bills posted in places of common resort.

In future societies will no longer be known as "District" and "Township," but every society in the Province will be placed on the same basis in regard to the receipt of its Government grant, and will receive such grant in proportion to its expenditure for agricultural purposes during the past three years, as shown by their sworn annual statement to the Department of Agriculture. A definition of what may be considered "Expenditure for Agricultural Purposes" is given in the act. Societies will be known by the name and place where they held their last annual exhibition, unless they prefer some other; then the new name must be determined by the members thereof, and approved by the Minister of Agriculture. Under the new law it will not be permissible for horticultural societies to offer prizes for competition at exhibitions held under the auspices of agricultural societies. These last-named organizations, however, may use their own funds for the offering of prizes for horticultural exhibits. Hereafter no prizes can be offered for grade male stock. Spring stallion and cattle shows shall receive a special grant equal to one-half the sum expended, but such sum shall not exceed \$50. Where seed fairs are held the maximum grant shall be \$25. Societies investing in horses, cattle, sheep and hogs, for the improvement of stock, will receive a grant ranging from \$50 downward for each registered male animal in these classes. No society shall be entitled to receive a grant exceeding \$800. Under the new act restrictions in regard to the conducting of games of chance have been made more stringent. The annual meetings to be held in January of district, township and horticultural societies, which for the last time will be convened under the old act, will be the most important ones in the history of these organizations. All who are interested in making of primal importance the educational features of these societies, and in improving the quality and quantity of the products of farm, factory and garden, should attend these meetings on January 9th and 16th.

Copies of the new act governing agricultural societies may be had on application to Mr. J. Lockie Wilson, Superintendent of Agricultural and Horticultural Societies, Parliament Buildings, Toronto.

Birmingham Fat-stock Show.

At the Birmingham (England) Fat-stock Show, held the first week in December, the grand championship and the President's cup for the best cattle beast in the show was awarded the King's pure-bred two-year-old steer, sired by Royal Duke; age, 2 years 6½ months; weight, 2,028 lbs.; daily gain from birth, 1.88 lbs. The reserve number was Mr. R. W. Hudson's cross-bred heifer, Danesfield Honey Bee (Aberdeen-Angus and Dexter), whose weight at 1,067 days was 1,774 lbs.; daily gain, 1.66 lbs.

The best Hereford was W. H. Cooke's two-year-old steer; weight at 1,013 days, 1,820 lbs.; daily gain, 1.74 lbs. The best two-year-old Aberdeen-Angus steer, Capt. Tounshend's, at 983 days weighed 1,941 lbs.; daily gain, 1.97 lbs. The best cross-bred steer, two-year-old, was Jas. McWilliams' Aberdeen-Angus-Short-horn, weighing at 1,060 days 1,849 lbs.; daily gain, 1.74 lbs.

The special prize, the Cooper challenge cup, for the best pen of mutton sheep, went to Sir R. P. Cooper's three yearling wethers, weighing at 630 days 268 lbs. each; average daily gain, 0.42 lbs. The reserve number was Mr. James Flowers' Hampshire yearling wethers, weighing at 660 days 281 lbs. each; daily gain, 0.42 lbs. As an example of the greater daily gains made by younger animals, it is worthy of note that the first-prize pen of Shropshire wether lambs made an average daily gain of 0.61 lbs., as compared with 0.42 lbs. in the case of the first-prize yearling wethers of the same breed. In the Hampshire class the corresponding figures were 0.42 and 0.66. In the Oxford's, 0.53 and 0.62. In the Southdowns, 0.31 and 0.57. In the cross-breeds, 0.32 and 0.57 lbs.

It Stands Supreme.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

We desire to send you our best wishes for the Christmas season and the coming year, and to express our satisfaction in respect to the cover page advt. in colors in your excellent Christmas number. We have never yet seen any other farm journal which would bear comparison with "The Farmer's Advocate," and as an advertising medium it is, undoubtedly, one of the best, and holds a position, in our estimation, occupied by no other journal in Canada. Yours very truly,

The London Fence Machine Co., Limited,
London, Ont. A. E. BLASHILL, President.

Nova Scotia Fruit-growers' Association Meeting.

At Wolfville, on December 12th, the Nova Scotia Fruit-growers' Association convened for its forty-third annual meeting. That is certainly a goodly record, and the present meeting was no exception to the general rule of meetings of this association in the practical value of its sessions. Indeed, practicability seemed to be the watchword all through.

The first session was given over to a discussion of orchard management, more particularly from the cultural side of the question. Prof. Macoun gave it as his experience that fruit from cultivated orchards would keep longer than that from orchards not cultivated, giving as his explanation of this that the fruit did not mature so early in the autumn, and was not, therefore, so nearly ripe when picked. This did not agree with the experience of most Nova Scotia growers present, who have found that fruit from uncultivated orchards in this Province is harder and keeps longer. Indeed, this has been one of the chief excuses of the "sod culturists." Prof. Macoun also urged the importance of aerating the soil. He believed that this was far more important than many—in fact, most—growers realize. Get air into the soil by cultivating, subsoiling, tile draining—any or all of these methods. Soils which are inclined to be damp, or which are allowed to stand year after year in "couch" sod will undoubtedly suffer from lack of oxygen about the roots; for this gas is just as necessary for the activity of root growth as it is for the life of animals. Discussion of this point brought out the fact that there were several orchards in the immediate locality which had, beyond doubt, suffered from this very cause. Prof. Macoun advised strongly against late culture in orchards, and especially with such varieties as the Gravensteins, which tend to rank growth; and he advised the planting of this variety on the driest land in the orchard, which met with most decided approval of the meeting. This splendid variety which has, perhaps, done more than any other one sort to make a name for Nova Scotia apples, has of late been coming into disfavor, because of its tendency to suffer from collar-rot and kindred troubles. But in the opinion of those who discussed the matter, if it were grown as suggested above, on dry land and not over-cultivated, there need be little trouble. Indeed, Mr. S. C. Parker, the Secretary of the Association, gave it as his opinion that practically no trees had been lost where the soil in the orchard had been given what might be termed up-to-date culture; that is, good cultivation up to July 1st, and then seeding to a cover crop. This brought on a discussion of cover crops, and several present spoke very highly of summer vetch as being a crop which will grow well in most soils, yields a larger amount of humus when plowed in, enriches the soil with nitrogen, and does not cost nearly so much as the winter vetch. The writer believes this and crimson clover to be the best two plants for this purpose in Nova Scotia.

Spraying was given an entire afternoon session, and though one might at first be inclined to say, "Can any new thing be said on the subject," yet before the afternoon was over all admitted that we don't know it all yet. The discussion took the form of an "experience meeting," and a great many of those present gave their personal opinions and experiences on the various points. The Vermorel nozzle was by far the most popular, giving a finer spray and saving in Bordeaux. Mr. F. W. Foster, of Kingston, stated that with the old Bordeaux nozzle it took 1½ casks to spray a block of 33 large Gravenstein trees, while with a Vermorel he could do the same work, and do it better, with one cask. As to the number of nozzles desirable in a cluster, opinions differed, but no one went higher than three, and some would cut it down to a single nozzle. In all cases those who spoke on the subject said they had reduced the number over what they formerly used, the reasons given being economy in putting on the spray and keeping up the pressure.

Mr. Burpee Bishop, of Greenwich, gave some very interesting experience with a hand pump in testing the pressure. He had a Spramotor No. 2, and had a pressure gauge put on so he could "know what he was doing." He found that a good man could easily generate a pressure of 120 lbs. at the end of his stroke, but that by the time he had raised the handle and was ready for the next stroke the pressure had gone down to 80 lbs.; that is, there was a fluctuation of 40 lbs. between his highest and lowest pressure. He then got an auxiliary air chamber and attached to his pump, and reduced the variation to 20 lbs. Later in talking to a pump man he was told that if he had filled his air chamber under high pressure before he put in his liquid he might probably have reduced the fluctuation to 10 lbs. Mr. Bishop thought the pressure gauge a practical benefit in keeping up the interest of the man at the end of the handle.

The value of the small quarter-inch hose was strongly urged by several speakers over the ordinary half-inch hose usually used on spray pumps. Mr. W. M. Black, of Wolfville, wore out four sets of half-inch hose on his power-sprayer in one season. He then got a set of quarter-inch hose, such as is used in hydraulic work, capable of standing a pressure of 500 lbs., and these he had used for two seasons, and they were all right yet. While this costs a little extra, it more than pays in the long run, as compared with the half-inch, or even the ordinary quarter-inch.

Mr. Black also advised drying out hose carefully at the end of the season, and storing where it will not get very cold, as it deteriorates much faster if exposed to severe cold.

Prof. Haycock, speaking of adulterated copper sulphate, gave the analysis of a sample which was sold last year in one of the chief orchard sections of the Province. It contained only 16% of copper sulphate, the balance being iron sulphate, which has little value as a fungicide. He gave a very simple test for purity of copper sulphate. Heat the sample. If it is pure it will turn white, and if put in water will dissolve. If it contains iron sulphate this will turn reddish on heating, and then will not dissolve.

The question of Paris green vs. arsenate of lead was discussed at some length. Dr. Fletcher advised against the latter. He thought its color was against it, as it was likely to be mistaken for something else, and he did not believe it had any advantage over Paris green, which he considered good enough. Several growers who had tried the arsenate of lead spoke favorably of the results in their orchards.

Dr. Fletcher then gave a spirited address on insects and insecticides, ridiculing the idea that the Tussock moth, or any other insect, was going to prove a serious obstacle to the fruit-growers of Nova Scotia. If they would spray intelligently, knowing what they were trying to fight, they would be all right.

The question of packing apples and the Fruit Marks Act brought out an animated discussion. Several speakers favored the publishing of all the names of those fined by the inspectors. This was objected to, on the ground that they were not any greater sinners than others, but merely "happened to get caught." Then this last idea was combated, by saying that we do not wait to catch all thieves before giving publicity to those caught, and the same rule should be applied to those who pack fraudulently and so injure their neighbors.

Inspector Vroom gave some very practical suggestions on packing. He said that growers should get rid of the idea that they must have a certain per cent. of No. 2's. A No. 2 apple was a certain definite thing, and a No. 1 apple was another definite thing, and the question of the percentage of each would vary with the season, and with the grower. He would face with average apples, not the largest nor the smallest in the barrel. He believed in good facing, well done, to make the barrel attractive. Asked if it was allowable to brand apples "No. 1 spotted" when they were of good size and color but spotted, he said "No." He thought more attention should be given to our local markets, which annually consume from 60,000 to 80,000 barrels of apples. Asked to define "material waste," which appears in the definition for a No. 2 apple, Mr. Vroom said he would consider it any blemish, as a worm hole or crack, which caused one to cut more deeply in peeling the apple.

Several other important matters were discussed, which the length of this report forbids reporting at length. It was voted that the Executive co-operate with the Ontario F.G. A. in an attempt to get express rates more reasonable. A strong resolution was passed, urging upon both the Dominion and Local Governments the need of an experimental fruit station in the Annapolis Valley, and that at once. If the Dominion Government will not undertake this, then the Provincial should.

The election of officers resulted in most of the incumbents of last year being re-elected. The staff is as follows: President, John Donaldson, Port Williams; Vice-President, G. C. Miller, Middleton; Secretary, S. C. Parker, Berwick; Asst. Secretary, J. Howe Cox, Cambridge; Treasurer, Geo. Munro, Wolfville. Executive—A. C. Starr, Starr's Point; E. E. Archibald, Wolfville; Col. Spurr, Melvern Sq.; P. Innes, Coldbrook; R. S. Eaton, Kentville.

Farrowing Contest—License and Liens—Teachers' Salaries.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

In reading your valuable paper I have noticed at different times reports of the sow-farrowing contest, which are good. The females of such litters should be kept for breeding purposes, especially if well bred. I have a pure-bred Berkshire sow that farrowed thirty-eight pigs in three litters. I have sold the sows from a litter of fifteen spring pigs. I sold eight hogs at six months and eleven days old that averaged 211½ lbs. They were from a Tamworth sow, crossed with a Berkshire hog. I believe this cross to be one of the best.

I have also been reading different articles on stallion license and lien act. My opinion of the Lien Act is that it will cause a great deal of trouble, and will not be satisfactory even to the stallion owner, and much less to the farmers. As for the Government inspection and licensing of stallions, I do not think it is at all called for, and should be looked upon by the farmers as a piece of imposition. I would like to see the commissioner that could choose a stallion suitable to cross on all mares in a section, even a small section. Our mares are not near enough of the same class. We must have our choice, and from as many as we can possibly see. Every farmer should study his own needs, and I believe they do in Elgin, as horses sell well, bringing \$200 each and upwards, some selling for \$1,000 and more. The last one I raised and sold