

an interest in them, so he strove with all his might to improve their lot. Through his efforts, the first agricultural Society in Canada was founded in the spring of 1789.

The leading men of the period became members of the society. (1)

At the first meeting, held on the 6th April, 1789, at the Château St. Louis, Henry Caldwell, the president, in a speech delivered first in English and then in French, explained the society's general plan. Subscriptions were to be taken throughout the province; the society was to be divided into branches and every branch was to elect 16 directors, a secretary and a treasurer every year. The branches were to communicate the results of their experiments to one another as well as such discoveries that might be made which would be of interest to the society. The reports on the work were to be published in *Quebec Gazette* and be printed in pamphlet form. The society was to give prizes to incite farmers to greater industry and create a spirit of emulation among them; seed grain adapted to the soil and climate of Canada was to be imported. Lastly, it was intended to encourage flax-growing and the improvement of breeds of live stock. A yearly subscription of one guinean was to be exacted from every member.

On the whole, the general situation of the country was excellent, but a less despotic and less arbitrary Government was desired. A great change in society had taken place. The Canadians had come into contact with the English population, and, although the rapprochement was not absolutely close, it had enabled them to become acquainted with the aspirations of the race that lived beside them. Therefore the roll of the seignior and noble gradually lost its importance and the ascendancy of the gentleman over the peasant disappeared. The *bourgeoisie*, the merchants, the members of the liberal professions were to dominate. The Bedards, Parents, Panets and Papineaus, who were soon to figure so honourably in the political area, were to come from the ranks of the *bourgeoisie* and the people, and the seigniors of the old regime, among whom the Taschereau family stood in the first rank, were to still retain some prestige by allying themselves with both classes.

---

(1) Their names will be found in the *Quebec Gazette* of the 23rd April, 1789.