



The Board of Agriculture and the Sheep Department of the Provincial Exhibition.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER :

Sir,—I would like, through your columns, to call the attention of the members of the Board of Agriculture to the necessity of making it publicly known what rules they intend this year to adopt in order to prevent sheep, that have been unfairly shorn, being allowed to compete at the next Provincial Fair—if they have any intentions in that direction. In 1861, they stated in their Rules and By-laws that a committee be appointed to inspect the sheep offered for competition, with power to throw out such as were not fairly shorn; but that committee, if it was ever appointed, did not carry out the law, and the consequence was that sheep that had not been shorn that year, were allowed to compete and were awarded prizes. In some of the classes the judges used their own discretion, and threw out such as were unfairly shorn; but in other classes they were allowed to pass. In 1865, the rule that all sheep exhibited must have been shorn bare after the first of April, appeared in the prize list; but the list and the rule were not issued till long after shearing time, so that exhibitors did not know what the rule would be, and consequently while some of the sheep shorn at London were honestly and fairly shorn, many were not; and sheep that had been the most unfairly shorn, won prizes there.

Now, I hold that if the Board intend to put any restrictions upon the time and manner of shearing for exhibition this year, that intention should be made known in due time, before the season for shearing arrives. And unless they mean to enforce the rule uniformly and impartially, the sooner they give up those pretensions to restriction the better, both for the credit of the Board and of exhibitors; for it is only a mockery to publish rules and not abide by them, and is manifestly unjust to honest competitors. Whether the Board or any committee is competent to decide in September whether a sheep was fairly shorn in April or not, I leave for themselves to say.

AN EXHIBITOR.

The Hawthorn as a Live Fence.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER :

Sir,—In your issue of February 15th, 1866, I notice a letter from C. Yale, Esq., St. Catharines, on the above subject, in which he advocates the adoption of Professor Buckland's suggestion, viz:—"Making the English Hawthorn Hedge a substitute for our present snake rail-fence."

No one can question the benefit. As to the feasibility, I beg to corroborate the testimony of Professor Buckland and Mr. Yale.

English Hawthorn Hedges have been raised, have been trimmed, and made a perfect wall of living green, securing the usefulness of a fence with the beauty of a hedge, in this vicinity. The difficulty we experienced in raising the hedge was very little; but unfortunately a Yankee Rochester fruit-tree seller came along with some fruit-trees. My father bought some. They had the borer in. The borer has killed almost the whole orchard. It got into the two hedges of English Hawthorn, and killed them also, so that they had to be cut down. The destruction of the orchard and the hedges arose from the same cause, and if there be any argument in the one case, the same argument will hold good for not planting any trees at all.

From this experience, learn two lessons:—

1st. Plant your English Hawthorn Hedge, and take care of it, and trim it, and it will grow.

2nd: Never buy fruit-trees, or anything else, from a Yankee-Rochester fruit peddler, or the hedge will not grow much longer. Yours, &c.

ROBT. C. JONES.

Rockford, Brockville, Feb. 20th, 1866.

HORTICULTURAL QUERIES.—"Cultus" solicits information from practical nurserymen, on the following topics:—

1. Has the Dwarf Walnut (*Juglans procumbens*) been tried in Canada; and if so, with what success? Is it kept in stock by any nurseryman in the Province?

2. Has the Mountain Ash been tried as a stock for the Pear by any horticulturist in the Province? If so, how did it succeed?

3. Can you inform me what the Mahaleb stock is?

GATE BALANCE: REPAIRING BOARD FENCES.—"Samuel Hall," inventor and patentee of "Hall's Portable Straight Fence," communicates the following: "My invention of a Gate Balance is to mortice a piece of timber into the back side of the gate post, as a counter balance. Its size and length in proportion to the gate. It will not be in the way, it hangs along the side of the fence. By putting a weight on the end of it when the ground is wet it will bring the post upright. When setting posts sharp the ends so that if the frost lifts them the weight of the gate and the balance will set it down, if it is kept upright. This is a valuable invention to prevent the breaking of gates and hinges.

"My mode of repairing board fences when the posts are rotten, or were too small to stand up. First remove the earth 8 or 10 inches deep from both side of the posts; then right them and get sawed or split wood 3 or 3½ feet long, and wider than the old posts, drive one in each side of the posts, then nail two pieces from one to the other on each side of the posts, above the first or second boards of the fence, or put wire round them. I have seen so many fences falling down that I believe it a duty to give that which will be a benefit to many, though it may prevent some of a present need of buying my invention."

Subscribers will please notice that owing to a new regulation in the P. O. Department it is necessary to pay postage on numbers of The Canada Farmer returned to this Office for binding,—and 30 cents must be remitted to the Publisher, to defray binding expenses.

Bound Volumes.

The Second Volume of "The Canada Farmer" is now ready, consisting of 24 numbers, and comprising 384 pages of reading matter in a bound form. The binding will be charged 30 cents in addition to the subscription price, making \$1 30 in all for the volume. Parties desirous of having their Nos. for the past year bound, will please send them to us, securely packed, with their name and address, together with 30 cents in stamps or otherwise, and we shall return them bound, free by post. Vol. 1, containing the numbers for the year 1864, may also be had at the same price.

The Canada Farmer.

TORONTO, UPPER CANADA, MARCH 1, 1866.

Agriculture of Maine.

The recently issued Report of the Secretary of the Maine Board of Agriculture, forms a neat volume of over 400 pages, abounding with useful information and valuable suggestions. Most of the discussions on important agricultural and horticultural questions, which the volume contains, bear satisfactory evidence that those who took part in them really had something to say, and knew how to say it. We can, of course, do little more within the limits of a short article, than give a bare outline of the principal topics which we find treated in the Report.

The minutes of a meeting, at which the propriety of imposing a tax on each dog kept in the State was discussed and warmly supported, occupy the first place in the transactions. A suggestive, but slightly bombastic essay on "Improved Agriculture" follows. The use of "Salt as a Fertilizer" is then considered. Several members had seen good effects follow the use of salt on barley and mangold crops. Others had found it to be of great service to plum trees—one party "had never seen a black knot on any of his trees, where he had used salt." Some

fifteen pages are then devoted to the "Culture of Small Fruit"—in which we find nothing particularly worth quoting. "Feeding Fish Offal to Sheep" is the heading of the next paper. The writer states that the sheep is "an omnivorous animal, living not upon vegetables alone, but greedily eating and thriving upon animal food as part of its diet." The carnivorous muttons, we are informed, are in no way fastidious. They are perfectly indifferent whether the fish be fresh, or rank and stinking. A discussion followed the reading of this paper, in which the Secretary is reported to have said: "Mutton, fed in this way, might be too high flavoured to be agreeable." This is putting it much too mildly. He might have safely stated, that mutton fed upon fish, offal, &c., would be little better than carrion.

We are next treated to an instructive essay on the "Influence of Manufactures on Agriculture." The writer well says "Agriculture, manufactures, and commerce comprehend all the multifarious branches of industry prosecuted among mankind. Their varied interests are one and inseparable, now and forever. They are not antagonistic, but so entirely entwined and dependent upon each other, that it is impossible to benefit either without advancing the interests of each, or to injure one without embarrassing all."

The Report of the Committee to whom was referred the question, "What have been the most profitable branches of husbandry the past year?" then follows. It states that "hay crop of your State, is by far the most valuable and important crop that we produce." And again, "We have \$12,215,790 as the value of the hay crop in this State the past season, an amount three times the value of all the corn, wheat, rye, barley, and oats that are produced in the State."

Next we have an able paper on "Bones and Superphosphate of Lime;" from which we learn that the discovery of the fertilizing properties of crushed bones was due to an accident. The cutlers of Sheffield, who used bones largely in the manufacture of handles for knives and forks, threw the refuse of their turning, scrapings and planings into large heaps, which remained undisturbed for a long time. This refuse was carted away and spread on grass land, when its fertilizing effect astonished the natives.

Nearly fifty pages are then occupied by the subject of "Aquaculture"—which, for the present, at least, we must leave unnoticed.

"Fruit Culture," with some very indifferent cuts, follows. Respecting the Curculio and black knot pests, the writer knows no better method of destroying the former than by shaking the insects from the trees, and summarily destroying them. Of the latter it is remarked, "There is a strong probability that the disease is a constitutional one, and that it affects the whole circulation." Removal of diseased portions, and amputation of limbs, when necessary, are recommended. Some of the common errors in grape culture are noted as follows:—Neglect of pruning and training during the earlier years of its growth;—allowing too many upright canes;—failing to thin out the weaker shoots from the spurs early in the season; and neglect of properly thinning out the fruit. In a paper on "Beet Root as a source of Sugar," the writer sagaciously remarks: "Not much success can be expected from making sugar from beets in small quantities. Experience abroad has shown that nearly every factory which used less than two thousand tons of roots, has, one after another, given up the business." The writer states that the "White Silesian" is the best variety for the production of sugar. It succeeds best in a mellow, deeply cultivated loam; and is an ameliorating rather than exhausting crop, as it derives much of its support from the atmosphere. It forms a succulent and nutritive food for stock, and in many districts rivals the mangold in popular estimation. Several other papers of less importance close the Secretary's Report. The second division of the volume is occupied with Abstracts of Returns from District Societies, to which we may probably advert at no distant day.