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FIRST ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE.

Halifax, 23rd Feb., 1865.

To the Hon. CHARLES TUPPER, M. D.,
PROVINCIAL SECRETARY.

Sir.—

The Board of Agriculture has the honor to submit, for the information of the Legislature, the following Report of the proceedings of the Board for the past year, together with an Account of the Receipts and Expenditure, and relative vouchers.

In accordance with the provisions of the Act of last Session "for Encouragement of Agriculture," His Excellency the Governor in Council appointed fourteen gentlemen to represent the City and County of Halifax, and the five Rural Districts into which the Province was divided by the Act. These gentlemen, together with the Superintendent of Education and the Principal of the Normal School (members *ex officio*), met on 11th

August, 1864, and organized themselves into a Board for carrying out the purposes of the Act. The following Officers were elected, viz.: Hon. Alexander McFarlane, President; Captain R. Hugonin, Vice President; William Cunard, Esq., Treasurer. The Board appointed as paid Secretary, Dr. Lawson, Professor of Chemistry.

The first matter that engaged attention was the provision of the Act for the organization of County and District Societies throughout the Province, entitled to receive aid from the Provincial Grant for Agriculture. It was known to the Members of the Board that there already existed a number of Agricultural Societies in an active and efficient state, that there were others in a languishing condition, and that not a few had practically ceased to exist. As the new Act provided for certain alterations in the constitution of Societies, and afforded increased facilities for their surveillance, the Board directed an explanatory Abstract of the Act to be prepared, with special reference to the conditions necessary to be complied with to entitle Societies to participate in the grant, and copies of the same were distributed throughout all the Agricultural Districts of the Province, and wherever the information was likely to be of service. The Secretary was despatched to Cape Breton to enquire into the working of Societies in that Island, to reorganize the old Societies in accordance with the Act,

and, where practicable, to organize new ones. He was likewise directed to enter into correspondence with, and visit, as far as possible, the officers of Societies in other parts of the Province, to examine the Accounts of Societies and to ascertain that their funds were being devoted to the purposes contemplated by the Legislature in awarding to them annual grants from the public Treasury. In some cases abuses and irregularities had to be corrected; but it is gratifying to be able to state that, in nearly all parts of the Province, the Board and its officers have found a strong disposition, on the part of the farmers, to enter warmly into their views, to lend their aid in carrying out strictly the requirements of the Act, and to adopt generally all practicable measures for the improvement of agriculture in their respective districts.

After much labor, the Board succeeded in organizing in accordance with the terms of the Act, 87 Societies, in 15 Counties, of which number, 34 participated in the Grant for the past year.—A few other Societies are in course of formation, and during the ensuing season it is the intention of the Board to direct its efforts towards those Counties where there still seems to be room for useful effort in the way of organizing Societies. There is appended to this Report a list of Societies that have been organized and have furnished the requisite returns, together with a statement of the amount of sub-