

before participating in the Provincial Grant they have complied with the provisions of the Act; (3.) To publish a Journal for the diffusion of agricultural and horticultural information adapted to the condition and circumstances of the country, and to cause the same to be distributed as generally as possible; (4.) To take measures to obtain from other countries animals of new and improved breeds, new varieties of grain, seeds, vegetables, plants, or other agricultural productions, for general and equitable distribution throughout the several counties; and (5.) To hold every third year, or oftener, should the Board deem it advisable, in some central and suitable locality, a General Provincial Exhibition of agricultural and horticultural products, animals, and domestic manufactures.

The Board has now been in existence for a period of nearly five years, and the several objects just enumerated have been steadily kept in view, and carried out as fully as the funds placed at disposal by the Legislature would allow. The successful carrying out of these objects has required from the members of the Board a very large amount of time and attention, not so much in attending Board meetings at Halifax, which under usual circumstances are held only twice a year, as in the several districts which they represent, where their personal exertions have been necessary to stimulate the local Societies to activity and induce the farmers to second the efforts of the Board by entering with spirit into the raising of improved stock and the adoption of improved methods of culture. In order to represent the present position of the Board, it may be proper to refer to their labours under the several heads above mentioned, stating under each the efforts that have been made in the past, the results obtained, and the course of procedure that seems to be indicated by experience as the most promising for future exertion.

The duty enumerated first in order in the Act is the formation of Agricultural Societies, and it is the one to which the Members first directed their attention when they met five years ago to constitute the Board. It has been found by experience in every country that a Central Board is comparatively powerless unless it be provided with an effective

organization of working local societies through which its efforts in improvement may be extended over the whole country, and brought home to the door of every farmer. The Board have therefore spared no pains in their attempts to form new societies and to infuse vigour into the old. Their first act in 1864 was to despatch one of their officers to the most distant parts of the Province; a large number of Societies were formed by this means under the regulations of the new Act, old Societies that had gone to decay were resuscitated, and others in which abuses had grown up were remodeled and brought under the control of the Board. During the first year, the Board had organized 37 Societies, comprising 1744 members, whose subscriptions for the year actually paid and attested, amounted to \$1859.00.

In 1865 the number had increased to 48 Societies, 2198 members, subscriptions \$2384.00.

In 1866 there was a still further increase to 52 Societies, 2543 members, subscriptions \$2800.50.

In 1867 there was still an increase in the number and strength of Societies the numbers being 58 societies, 2833 members, subscriptions \$3051.50.

Whilst this continued increase in the number of societies was highly gratifying to the Board, it was not without its difficulties and embarrassments, for the provisions made under the Act five years ago for a membership of 1700, which was then considered large, was found to be inadequate to the wants of Societies with a membership of nearly 3000. The annual appropriation for Agriculture provided for by the Act is \$6000. Of this sum \$4000 is paid over to Agricultural Societies in rateable proportion to the subscriptions of members, the amount to each County being limited to \$240; and the balance of \$2000 is devoted to the general purposes of the Board, expenses of management, printing, importation of grains and seeds, &c. This appropriation of \$1000, whilst it was deemed adequate to meet the wants of the limited number of Societies in 1864, is now found to be insufficient to afford adequate encouragement to local effort. Thus several of the Societies in the fine agricultural counties of Colchester and Kings do not receive more than \$30 per annum, a sum too small even to pay the subscription which

they are naturally expected to give towards a Provincial Exhibition, or to defray the expense of transit into the Province of a thorough bred animal. It will thus be seen that on account of the stated sum at the disposal of the Board for the encouragement of Agricultural Societies, their efforts in this direction were limited; as the Societies increased in numbers and in strength, the legislative encouragement decreased. It is to these circumstances clearly, aided no doubt by a discouraging rumour that the Legislative Grant, small as it was, would be still farther reduced, that the Board have this year to report, not a continuation of the progressive increase observable through the four previous years, but a slight decrease in the number of Societies, the number of members, and the amount of subscriptions. The detailed statement appended to this Report shows that there have qualified for participation in the Legislative Grant during the year 45 Societies, comprising 2246 members, who have paid subscriptions to the extent of \$2519.75. There is thus a decrease as compared with last year of 13 Societies, 297 members and \$531.75 of subscriptions. The appropriations made to Societies this year in proportion to subscriptions, and under the limitations of the Act, amount to \$3232.50. It is to be observed that a large number of these local Societies, depending upon the Legislative Grants being proportionate in amount to their own subscriptions, made purchases of valuable thorough-bred animals; these were in many cases bought by use of borrowed money, and the officers of Societies have thus come under pecuniary obligations in order to promote the general interest. The animals have likewise to be maintained at considerable expense; and considering the great benefits which accrue to the Province from the possession of them in the rural districts, the Board desire to represent the strong claims which these Societies have upon the liberality of the Legislature, and the importance of enabling them to retain their stock and continue the course of improvement upon which they have so auspiciously entered. Every Nova Scotian who had an opportunity of seeing the large and respectable assemblage of thorough-bred animals congregated in the Governor's field, from all parts of the