

### The Nova Scotia Farmers' Association.

BY OUR SPECIAL MARITIME CORRESPONDENT.

At the recent meeting of the Nova Scotia Legislature an Act was passed for the organization of a Farmers' Association, consisting of representative delegates sent from the various Agricultural Societies, Fruit Growers' Association, Dairymen, and Poultry Societies. The meeting for organization was called by the Secretary for Agriculture, to be held in Antigonishe, in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Farmers' and Dairymen's Association, which took place July 3rd. The last-named society, which has been doing grand work for the farmers for the last eleven years, was given the opportunity to amalgamate with the new movement, which they did, thus rendering them assistance from a financial standpoint, as well as an increase of interest. The object of the new Association is to hold each year an annual meeting in some section of the Province, forming, as it were, a Farmers' Parliament, being visited by representative men from each county, and exchanging ideas of mutual worth, giving and receiving information bearing directly upon farm operations, addressed by the best lecturers to be obtained, bringing their views before the Government and the public, formulating their grievances, and suggesting any needed legislation; the Association to be under the direct management of the farmers, receiving a liberal subsidy each year from the Local Government. This seems to be a popular move in the right direction. The meeting was largely-attended. Among those present who addressed the Association was Premier Fielding; Dr. Geo. Lawson, Secretary for Agriculture; Col. Wm. Blair, Nappan Experiment Station; Prof. E. E. Faville, School of Horticulture; J. Rufus Starr, President Dairymen's Association; and A. B. Black.

At the first session J. Rufus Starr spoke of the work that had been carried on by the old Association, and of the excellent results which had accrued from steady and persistent work. He carefully reviewed the work of the Association during the past few years, of its many benefits to farmers before whom numerous and practical addresses had been given by leading men. He urged the need of an increase of education in agriculture, advocating the benefits to be derived from the amalgamation of the associations. The afternoon session was favored with an address by A. B. Black, on "Essential Principles of Successful Farming." The speaker stated four points: (1st) The importance of having a cultivated mind and ability to utilize it. (2) The need of honesty and truthfulness in farm work and farm dealings. (3) The importance of wise economy and industry in all farm practices. (4) Be thorough in all you do; avoid haphazard work; do not neglect any phase of farm duties. How shall we make farming profitable? By cultivating the mind—not merely the gaining of a large fund of knowledge. A man may have his head full of knowledge and then prove a failure. Facts obtained must be compared relatively to one another, sought out, and a process of reasoning developed. Thus stepping-stones are afforded. You may sow the best seed on an uncultivated soil with unsatisfactory results. So the mere attainment of knowledge without the cultivation of the reasoning faculties will leave a barren field. Be a slave to no man's opinions, but do not despise the logical statements of science. Honesty is the best policy. Deception, intrigue, falsehood and roguery may seem sometimes to succeed in demoralized politics, but they will not pay the farmer. Man is said to have been created upright, but by these agencies he has become fearfully twisted at times. By all means practice economy and industry; these two elements go hand-in-hand. The danger with the young farmer was "living too fast." Avoid the mortgage on the farm even at the sacrifice of appearances or a few worldly goods. Whatever is done, let it be done well. Get the best of everything within your reach: The best machinery, the best cultivation, the best crops. Think nothing too small for attention. Special attention is often necessary to keep up the flow of milk in the dairy during the dry seasons. Experience had taught that to him. The best system was: 1st, a crop of early-sowed oats, peas or vetches; 2nd, early corn; 3rd, mangolds. The speaker, in conclusion, said that farming would be made a success by every common-sense man who would adhere to the above-stated principles.

Prof. Faville then addressed the meeting on "The needs of the fruit grower," taking up the preparation of the orchard ground; planting of the orchard, and its care. Of the seventy or more elements existing in the soil and air about the plant, strange to say, the plant utilized but few of these; only fourteen appear to be essential to growth and development of plants. Nearly all of these are found in sufficient quantities except nitrogen, potash and phosphoric acid. In bearing orchards, and crops of all kinds, these substances are removed in large quantities. The virgin soil no longer existed in Nova Scotia, and its depletion by continued cropping made it necessary that the farmer should understand just what substances were needed in the soil, and their economic application. At the present time this has become a manufacturing process: the raw material being supplied, and the soil acting as a manufacturing medium. The farmer should exercise care in the preparation of compost; never permitting manure heaps to be exposed to weather; applying

the general manures, and piecing out with commercial fertilizers. Sow peas or clover in orchards, and turn under to supply nitrogen. Cultivate the orchard deep in the spring, and gradually shallow towards the fall. Cultivation also serves as a mulch during dry spells. See that your orchard is thoroughly underdrained. In planting, where trees are from the nursery they should be heeled-in before setting out. Observe that a balance is obtained between the roots and the top; firm the earth about the roots when planting the trees. Prune and train the tree each year, never leaving it until old age has claimed it. If this has been neglected, remove old limbs judiciously in winter, letting the light into the top, and treat the wounds with a coating of paint, or shellac and alcohol. Spraying for the prevention and destruction of insects and fungous growths is the only remedy for these pests, and must be commenced early in spring before buds open, and be continued until after fruit sets. "Eternal vigilance" must be the watchword. By a series of charts, the Professor illustrated the essential points in his address.

At the evening meeting Dr. Lawson explained the provisions of the Act under which the Farmer's Association was to be organized, and the rules and regulations of the Government concerning the grant. He also explained the salient features of the organization, and introduced Premier Fielding, who said that the new organization was designed to meet the wants of the farmer and to promote the agricultural interests of the province. The farmers were at the base of all industries, comprising the largest part of our population. It was hard to find just what the farmers wanted; a common ground was needed where they could meet and combine ideas. A "Farmer's Parliament" was the outcome, and in its formation the Government were striving to fill a long-felt want. With this end in view, the Government were willing to provide funds. His presence added greatly to the encouragement of the new organization.

Col. Blair then addressed the Association on "Practical Farming." He heartily believed in the amalgamation of the Dairymen's Association and the new one. He believed that farmers should regard their calling as a profession, putting it side by side with other professions. He referred to experiments carried on at the Farm at Nappan. If farmers desired to raise good grain, the land must not only be put in good condition by underdraining, but care must be taken to sow good seed. The failure in growing oats in this country is owing to either poor and badly-prepared soil, or poor seed; they had found best results from drilling oats. In planting potatoes use three eyes for best results. In manuring potatoes work the manure into the soil rather than placing it in the hills. The spraying of potatoes with Bordeaux mixture for the prevention of potato rot had met with good results. In referring to manures, Col. Blair spoke of the slipshod way in which many farmers had of composting manure heaps out of doors. Cut straw was the best absorbent of liquid manure. He advocated the manuring of meadow lands as soon as hay is cut, giving a liberal top-dressing. He said that experience had taught him that if a farmer had an acre of land that needed draining, and manure as well, and the farmer had sixty tons of manure, worth one dollar a ton, it would be cheaper to sell fifty tons and drain the land, and apply the remaining ten tons, than to leave the land undrained and apply the manure instead. The address was listened to with much interest, and many questions were asked.

The Association was duly formed, and the following officers elected:—President, J. B. McKay, Stellerton; 1st Vice-President, S. C. Parker, Berwick; 2nd Vice-President, Geo. C. Lawrence, Hastings, C. B. Directors—Wm. Corning, E. B. Elderkin, D. M. Johnston, Wm. A. Ferguson, Isadore Le Blanc. Auditors—Wm. Young, L. C. Archibald. Paul C. Black, Falmouth, secretary and treasurer.

### Lucerne (or Alfalfa) -- Its Value in Drought.

SIR, In this climate, in which it seems we are increasingly subject to long-continued drouth in summer, it is necessary to have some reliable soiling crop with which to supplement the pasture when it becomes parched. For this purpose I know of nothing equal to the lucerne clover; especially is it a boon to those who have a light, sandy soil. From earliest spring to latest autumn it is ever green, furnishing a constant supply of green feed, fit to cut before the fall-sown rye, a much more nourishing food, and lasting until the autumn frosts put an end to growth. From a piece on the writer's place, even in the very dry season of last year, three crops were cut, two for hay and one for soiling, remaining green at a time when the red clover on adjoining farms was quite parched. Although by no means a new plant, it seems, as yet, to be but little known in Canada. There are some erroneous ideas current with regard to it, which may have deterred farmers from sowing it. It is only a couple of years ago since we were told in the seed catalogues that it must be sown alone; that is, not in connection with any grain; also that it must be sown in drills and hoed. Now, this is all nonsense, as it may be sown with any grain with which red clover is usually sown, and requiring no more care, except that it should not be sown with timothy or any other grass. The writer's first attempt at sowing it was made with oats, in the spring of '92, and was most successful; the piece is still flourishing. The next attempt was in the

spring of '94, on a piece of rye sown the previous fall, about 1½ acres, the intention being to cut the rye green for hay; this also was a good catch, but when the time came to cut the rye, it was so showery that there was no chance to cure it, and I was obliged to let it ripen. In the meantime, the dry, hot weather set in, and the rye being an exceedingly heavy crop, the lucerne died out, but so did the red clover under the same circumstances; on that portion of the field, however, from which the rye had been cut green for soiling, the lucerne did well, withstanding the severe drouth perfectly. That sown this spring with oats is looking splendidly so far, being at this writing (June 27th) nearly as high as the oats. It not only yields a large amount of feed in a season, but, like all leguminous plants, it is a great fertilizer; it derives its sustenance, in a large measure, not only from the atmosphere, but through its immense, succulent roots, from the lower soil, which it penetrates to a very great depth; this is also the secret of its ability to resist the drouth to so great a degree. As hay, it is readily eaten both by horses and cattle; but of its value, compared with other hay, I am not prepared to speak, not having specially tested the matter. Perhaps the authorities at some of our experimental farms would turn their attention to this question for the public benefit, if they have not already done so. It is said that it will not succeed on heavy soil, perhaps not where the subsoil is a heavy clay, but the writer has seen it growing luxuriantly on a clay loam. It certainly will not succeed where water lies, even for a short time. Lucerne is not properly a clover, it belongs to the Medick species (*Medicago Sativa*). It resembles the Melilot in foliage, having the narrow triple leaf of that plant, but not so coarse in the stem. The flower is a dark purple, approaching a blue. It should be cut as soon as the first flowers appear, as, if allowed to stand too long, it loses its succulent quality and becomes hard and woody. If sown sufficiently thick it is an excellent crop to clean the soil, as few weeds can resist its dense and rapid growth, and with such frequent mowings, even the Canada thistle would find it hard to survive. It may be said to be a permanent crop, lasting from eight to ten years, which perhaps is longer than would generally be considered desirable to allow it to occupy the ground at one time. We can safely commend this plant, with the merits which so few seem to be acquainted, to the attention of farmers. Middlesex Co., Ont. G. W. FERGUSON.

### Rye--Its Various Uses.

BY W. A. M'GEACHY, KENT CO., ONT.

Agriculturists in the older provinces of our Dominion seem to have come to the conclusion that they cannot compete in wheat raising with the young and fertile provinces of the West, at the prices which have heretofore prevailed, and consequently they are turning their attention to fruit, dairying, stock raising, and other branches of farming that are more profitable, and at the same time give their impoverished farms a chance to gain in fertility.

Rye, on account of the numerous ways in which it can be utilized, should prove itself a very profitable crop to the average farmer, and especially so to the stock and dairy man, and were its merits and uses better known, it would be more widely grown. In the first place, it makes splendid early fall pasture. A stubble field that would otherwise be unemployed, when turned over and seeded at the rate of two bushels per acre, more or less, according to the strength of the soil, will, in the course of a few weeks, furnish excellent pasture that is relished by all farm stock, and thus help to tide over a time when other pasture is scarce.

In our section rye is very often sown broadcast ahead of the cultivator, when going through the corn the last time. In times of scarcity of pasture, spring lambs may be turned in at weaning time, with very little damage to the corn. This answers the purpose just as well as the stubble field (especially if the corn be for the silo), except that the larger stock must be kept out until the corn is harvested, thus making later pasture. For spring pasture or green manuring, we have had excellent results by drilling it into our corn fields, as soon as possible after the corn was cut. By cutting the shocks large, and in straight rows, very little ground remains unseeded. If the pumpkin vines are large and rank, an extra man will be required to keep the drill free of them.

As spring pasture it is unexcelled, its rapid growth placing it in the front rank for earliness. The first few warm days in spring will brighten it up, and it will be fit for grazing long in advance of ordinary blue grass pasture. At this time it is splendid for sheep with early lambs. With it, and a little grain night and morning, we have been able to place our February lambs on the market in May, and thus procure the top figure for them.

I might mention just here that a small patch near the poultry-house will make the hens "sing songs of health and contentment," and also help them fill the egg basket in the bargain. Several in this vicinity drill oats into their rye field. They do not ripen exactly together, the rye ripening a little sooner, but as it shells very little, only a small quantity is lost, and this, when threshed and ground, makes good, strong food for work horses, or, in fact, for stock of any kind.

For green manuring it is said to be excellent. One of our neighbors claims it increased his bean crop by one-third. When so used it should be ploughed under at least a week or two before the