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THE PROVINCIAL EXHIBITION.

The approaching Exhibition, to be held in Kingston, in September next, suggests a brief review of the progress of Canada in these annual displays of the development of her agricultural and manufacturing industry.*

Upper Canada dates its existence as a distinct Province, previously to the Union, from the year 1791. Before that period it formed part of the Province of Quebec; as soon, however, as it had acquired a separate political status, it was divided into four districts, the Eastern, Midland, Home and Western, each of which, in course of time, established agricultural societies. In 1782, or exactly eighty years ago, Upper Canada had barely 10,000 inhabitants. In 1824, the numbers had increased to 152,000, and in 1829 to 225,000; but it was not until the year 1820 that the government of the province took any decisive step to foster the agriculture of the country by "An Act to encourage the establishment of Agricultural Societies in the several Districts of the Province." As early as the year 1825, agricultural societies, it is believed, existed in two or three districts, but no records have been handed down to show the condition of husbandry at that period.

The indirect assistance given by the Imperial Government to Agriculture in Upper Canada, dates from a much earlier period than the encouragement given to Agricultural Societies by the Provincial Government; for we find among the donations of George III. to the U. E. Loyalists the old English plough. It consisted of a small piece of iron fixed to the colter, having the shape of the letter L, the shank of which went through the wooden beam, the foot forming the point, which was sharpened for use. One handle and a plank split from a curved piece of timber, which did the duty of a mould board, completed the rude implement. At that time the traces and leading lines were made of the bark of the elm or bass-wood, which was manufactured by the early settlers into a strong rope. About the year 1808 the "hog-plough" was imported from the United States; and

in 1815 a plough, with a cast iron share and mould-board, all in one piece, was one of the first implements requiring more than ordinary degree of skill, which was manufactured in the province. The seeds of improvement were then sown, and while in the address of the President at the Frontenac Cattle Show in 1833, we observe attention called to the necessity for further improvement in the ploughs common throughout the country, we witness, in 1855, splendid fruit at the Paris Exhibition. In a notice of the trial of ploughs at Trappes, the *Journal d'Agriculture Pratique* makes the following reference to a Canadian plough: "The ploughing tests were brought to a close by a trial of two ploughs equally remarkable—to wit, the plough of Ranson and Simms, of Suffolk, England, and that of Bingham, of Norwich, Upper Canada." The first is of wood and iron, like all the English ploughs, and the results which it produced seemed most satisfactory, but it appeared to require a little more draught than the Howard plough. Bingham's plough very much resembles the English plough; it is very fine and light in its build; the handles are longer than ordinary, which makes the plough much more easy to manage. The opinion of the French laborers and workmen who were there, appeared on the whole very favorable to this plough.

Before proceeding to describe, in detail, the progress of Agriculture in Upper Canada, it will be advisable to glance at the efforts made by societies and the Government of the Province to elevate the condition of husbandry in all its departments, and to induce the people at large to join hand in hand in the march of improvement.

The first public Act for the encouragement of Agriculture in Canada, which came into operation in 1830, authorizes the governor to pay one hundred pounds to any District Agricultural Society which raised the sum of £50 by subscription, for the purpose of importing valuable live stock, grain, useful implements, &c.

Several acts were passed in subsequent years, being modifications of that of 1830, all of them having for their object the encouragement of Agricultural Societies and Agriculture. In 1847 an additional step was taken, fraught with very important consequences to the interests of husbandry in Canada. An Act for the incorporation of the Provincial Agricultural Associations came into operation; and in 1850, Boards of Agriculture for Upper and Lower Canada were established by law. In 1851, an Act was passed to provide for the better organization of Agricultural Societies, and finally, in 1852, the most important step of all was taken, and "An Act to provide for the

* This article on the Provincial Exhibition forms part of a series on the progress of agriculture in Canada, written by the editor for a work entitled "Eighty Years Progress," just published by S. Stebbins, Toronto.