

Agricultural Politics—The Elections.

You will again be called on within a few weeks to record your votes. We must repeat what we have said before—endeavor to send more farmers to the Legislature.

We do not wish to interfere with your party lines, but attempt to direct you to act in that manner we think more for your interest. Thus we say—send more farmers to the Legislature. There is, however, one important subject that you should make a particular point of; that is, this Government Farm. The disclosures recently made must have convinced you of the correctness of our remarks, namely, that this institution was not for the farmers' interest. This is an undertaking that the Government itself would willingly abandon if it could be done honorably. The best way for us to aid the present Government to abandon it is to take a pledge from the candidates we vote for to use their influence to stay any further expenditure on it. We have spoken to several members of Parliament about it; very few favored it; by far the greater number were opposed to it, but for party purposes many voted for it.

The Hon. G. Brown told us about two years ago that he would not care if it was knocked on the head. The Hon. D. Christie, when we spoke to him about it, said it was a legacy left to them by the former Government, therefore they must do something with it. Our late President of the Board of Agriculture said that many members of the Board did not believe it would do any good. Nearly all the members of Parliament we spoke to declaimed against it. This was before the late investigation.

Remember, if this institution is carried on it will cost us an immense sum. One of the leading gentlemen in the Government mentioned to us the sum of a half-million as the amount that was contemplated being expended on it. Shall we pay this, or possibly four times this sum, if it is carried out?

It has checked, and will continue to check private enterprise. In such bad esteem is it now held that no one will go there unless they are paid for it. Even the students must be paid, with our money, to fill this College. We say aid the present Government by taking a pledge from the person you vote for to use his influence to check any further expenditure on this institution. The Government might give it up to a body of farmers that would undertake to do more good than the Government can possibly do, and such a body can be found. If the Government would leave agricultural affairs in the hands of the farmers, the interest of the country would be better served. Stone's, Miller's, Snell's, Brown's, Christie's and Cochran's farms have each done more good to the country than this Government affair, and, what is most probable, the Government will never do any good with it; therefore, we say use your endeavors to stay it at once.

Fertilizers—Value of Experiments.

[NOTES FROM A LECTURE BY PROFESSOR STOCK-BRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS.]

The subject proposed by the lecturer was to lay before the audience some account of various experiments recently made for determining the answer to certain questions which had been asked of nature.

His address is the more deserving the serious consideration of agriculturists, that he does not confine himself to mere theory, as too many votaries of science are in the habit of doing. The lessons most useful to farmers are taught by experience. He has seen and observed the carrying out of systems of agriculture. He has noted the

results, and he acts accordingly. The following extracts from the lecture will be found interesting and profitable:

"His own idea of experimenting is first to learn just what you are searching for. Everybody knows already that draining is a good operation, and that it pays, too. No experiments are needed to prove that. Experimenting with different breeds of cattle to know which are best is thoroughly absurd. As well might we ask which machine or farm implement is the most valuable. It depends in both cases upon what use is to be made of the machine or the animal.

"Experiments with fertilizers had been of little use further than to show that they were not to be depended upon. In conducting experiments, with fertilizers for instance, it is necessary in order to have the experiments of any value, to know absolutely what one is experimenting with. Then the land on which fertilizers are applied for experiment must be in a suitable condition for fairly conducting these experiments. Unless land is sufficiently drained, either naturally or artificially, we can never know whether the fertilizers applied are good for anything or not."

NOTE.—This latter fact, for a fact it is, should not be lost sight of by farmers, whether trying fertilizers, new seeds, or some system new to them, or an experiment in agriculture; it is of first importance that the land and its condition, the season and other circumstances be such as to justify us in expecting fair results.

"One way to prevent the running down of the fertility of the soil is to buy farm yard manure, but we cannot buy enough of it to work a great change in this direction. It is not to be bought, except in very limited quantities, and not even then by farmers located far from large towns or cities. Barn yard manure costs too much for purposes of general farming. Something else must be found, if possible, to take its place. Chemistry has taught us that something. It has taught us absolutely what our plants are made of, that the constituents are always the same, that they never change and never vary. The proportions, too, are always the same in well-ripened plants."

The Professor proceeds to detail experiments made by him of manures purchased to prevent the running down of the fertility of the soil. In so doing he only takes into account commercial fertilizers; but this, though interesting to farmers where they are compelled to purchase them that they may make every acre produce to its utmost capability, if they are to make farming fairly remunerative, will not be of much interest to the farmers here.

In England the rise and fall in the prices of commercial fertilizers and their real value to farmers are as carefully studied by them as the comparative value of Short-Horns and Hereford or red Norfolk cattle, or the nutritive properties of turnips and Kohl Rabi. Canadian farmers generally cannot, in the present mode of farming and at the prices obtainable for their produce, purchase high-priced fertilizers, except on a small scale; and the Professor himself, in his lecture, shows the necessity of using great caution in expending money on them at all. He says:

"Potash was purchased of a dealer in Boston. It was certified over the signature of a chemist to contain thirty-two per cent. of potassa oxide. A sample was laid by for analysis by Prof. Goessmann, but the potash was used in such proportion as would be required if it had been up to the standard. The result was that, long before the crops all matured, it was noticed that something was going wrong. An analysis was made from the sample reserved, and instead of thirty-two per cent., only eight per cent. of potassa oxide was found, making the potash cost not eight cents, but thirty-two cents per pound. On the crops which had matured, like oats and grass, it was too late to supply a remedy."

The value of commercial fertilizers, when genuine, we admit are great. But in the existing state of agriculture in Canada, we must try to keep our soil from losing its fertility, and this we can do without any extraneous aid. We have but to fol-

low a suitable rotation of cropping, cultivate the soil thoroughly, feed as much stock on the farm as it will bear by judicious treatment, save and prepare every pound of manure from cattle and every other source, and apply it in the proportion and in such manner as we know will bring the largest returns, and we may, for some time at least, avoid the cost and risk of deception attendant on the purchase of guano, potash, nitre and all the other fertilizers applied to the soil in high farming, such as we may hope to attain to in time. A continued demand for all the products of the farm will induce farmers to use every available means for increasing the yield of those products, and as one of the means to add to the fertility of the soil, the commercial fertilizers that have been found beneficial in older farmed countries. Let us first make the best use of all the means to be acquired from the soil itself, and when they are found insufficient, we must, as others have done, supply the deficiency as best we can.

We purpose in the next issue of the ADVOCATE to take up the subjects of manures, the best method and fittest time for their application—a subject of paramount importance to the interests of agriculture.

To Agricultural Societies, to Patrons of Husbandry, and to Agents.

We thank you all for your aid, and solicit a continuance of it. Applications are being continually made for reduced rates. This paper never received Government support, and what is more, you will be pleased to know, it does not want it. There was a time when its manager struggled hard and really needed it, but the Government preferred spending money on the Agricultural Farm, on several other papers, and on several injurious institutions; but this journal was indirectly taxed to crush us. That tax now amounts to \$600 per annum. We pay it in cash received from you. We give you for your money the only paper published in Canada that is in no way allied to, or bound to, or trammelled by some political party or religious sect. We have received no bribe or bonus, although it has been offered. To keep up this paper it costs us an immense sum. We cannot afford to give illustrations, the best quality of paper, the best ink, and pay for talent to aid us, if we give our paper below cost. We wish to make this paper the best agricultural paper in the world. We may not be able to obtain our aim, but we believe we are progressing rapidly towards it. As far as Canada is concerned, and the voice of the farmers, we claim it at the present time. We have offered great inducements to clubs and to agricultural societies to commence taking our paper, so that they may be able to judge of its merits. We still offer great inducements to new subscribers, as after farmers once begin to see the utility of our undertaking, and the benefit of the paper, they are willing to let us live. The paper is honestly worth \$1 to every farmer in Canada. It expresses their cause fearlessly, and is their standard-bearer. No farmer that has the spirit of a man will begrudge paying us \$1 per annum. If he is below the \$1 standard, after one year's trial, we do not crave his money. Besides, we wish to act fairly to all, as many that are in the habit of getting their paper at the lowest cost price are not aiding to improve it or carry out our plans. We, therefore, give the following

NOTICE:

After this date no old subscribers should receive this paper for less than \$1, per annum. Any person may send us in a list of four new subscribers at 75 cents. They may retain the other 25 cents for their trouble. If agricultural societies, or patrons of husbandry, or agents, send us in ten names