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FARMER'S ADVOCATE

VOL. XII.

LONDON, ONT., APRIL, 1877.

NO. 4.

The Farmer's Advocate!

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY WILLIAM WELD.

OFFICE: RICHMOND STREET, EAST SIDE, BETWEEN THE MARKET AND G.W.R. STATION, LONDON, ONT.

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CANADA.

Present, Past and Future.

On the 20th of February, just as we had finished our labors in preparing your paper for March, we stepped on the cars for Clinton, in Huron Co.

The last Wednesday in February was the day appointed for the great annual agricultural dinner of the Dominion.

This, the Hallet Branch Agricultural Society, is the only agricultural society that has adopted the plan of having an annual agricultural dinner, and has kept it up for 14 years. It was commenced and is kept up by some whole-souled John Bulls, and people of all nations may now join with them. The dinner takes place at 7 o'clock in the evening; this allows all to attend to their daily labors, and affords an opportunity for more to attend than by holding it at an earlier hour. The time of the year is well chosen, being the time of greatest leisure, as the last year's crops are marketed, and no important farm operations are pressing on our time. A sumptuous repast was provided; the loyal toasts were proposed and appropriately replied to; short speeches were delivered; political and religious subjects were avoided; agricultural subjects were discussed, and a most enjoyable, social, pleasing and useful evening was passed; all met and parted on good terms, and all must have been improved, as people cannot have friendly discussions without being improved; it takes off the dull rust, mould and mildew that accumulates on persons that confine themselves to their own thoughts.

Space will not permit us to report all the speeches; even were we to do so we could not impart the life, joy and merriment that the speeches reflected and the songs inspired.

We hope this society may continue to hold such meetings, and that the rising generation will not

through any fastidious scruples allow such to flag, but that the spirit of social progress may spread to every county and township in our Dominion. There are many features in the association that make it freer and more beneficial than any agricultural meetings we have yet attended.

The farmers in this locality are quite as prosperous as in any part of Canada, and much more so than in most parts. The farmers here have devoted more attention to good, heavy, useful horses, and a more valuable class of horses, taking them on an average, are to be found there than in most parts of Canada. There are a few good farmers here who are raising herds of Durham cattle that are of great benefit to this part of the country. The soil in this locality is unsurpassed in fertility, and improvements are being rapidly made; in fact, this comparatively new country is far surpassing many of the older settled parts of Canada. No one will have a correct knowledge of the richness and fertility of Canada so well impressed upon them as by seeing this locality and the country about it.

Messrs. McPherson have a good foundry at this place. Their principal business is constructing threshing machines of a large size. Independent of their local trade, they shipped nine threshing machines to Manitoba last year, three of which were accompanied by steam engines to drive them.

The Past.

In the foregoing portion we have touched briefly on the present. Mr. J. W. Biggins was the first mover in establishing this old English custom—an agricultural dinner. Mr. H. Snell, the Huron-Durham man, has been his right wing. Of the left wing, we now introduce the present President of the Association,

MR. SILAS ANDREWS.

Mr. Haskett Andrews came to Canada in the year 1800, and settled a few miles north of where Prescott now stands. He was one of the old U. E. Loyalists. He had a little money to begin with. In 1805 Silas Andrews was born. In 1816 a most fearful calamity befell the pioneers of our country on the 16th day of June; a frost swept over the country such as has never been heard of since. The corn, wheat, potatoes, &c., were totally destroyed; starvation swept off many of the first settlers. This may have been a blessing sent to our country, as none but the most hardy could exist. The weakly, sickly and shiftless class perished from starvation.

Wherever you meet one of the old U. E. Loyalists now, they are generally more hardy than many of the newly imported stock. In the spring of 1817 Mr. H. Andrews, sr., sent his son Silas on horseback to Port Wellington, near where Prescott now stands, to their store-keeper, who had been furnished with money to procure flour from Ogdensburg. Silas, or Mr. Andrews, as we shall term him, returned with 20 lbs., with the message that this was all that could be had. His father sat down and cried, and said: "We shall all be starved." His mother— "We shall try to live."

And from that time for many weeks they had nothing but basswood twigs to eat. One farmer some miles away had a piece of rye; it ripened before any other grain. While it stood in the field, the settlers wanted to get some to boil. He would not let any one have a handful. Some of the settlers got together, with their reap-hooks, and threatened to bind the old crab, and each took some to keep their wives and children, that were left, alive.

There were no white settlers known to exist for thousands of miles to the north or north-west of Mr. A.'s birth-place at that time. His father used to haul the fire-wood into the house in logging lengths, and roll the logs up with hand-spikes, two doors being opposite each other for that purpose. The family did their own spinning, weaving, dyeing, &c. His sisters wore linen dresses made entirely by themselves; the dresses looked to Mr. Andrews just as good and handsome as any of the fashionable dresses now worn. Up to the age of eighteen, he never wore anything but home-made clothes; the first pair of made or fine boots he wore was a pair he got to get married in. Subsequently Mr. Andrews moved to near Ottawa, and went into the lumbering business. He made a lot of money, then lost \$400,000, and concluded to try his luck in the West. He went on an exploring expedition for five months, thought Clinton to be the best place to settle, and purchased a good farm there. He considers he made the best choice, and would not exchange for any locality or any business; he has every comfort and luxury he requires. To show the profits that can be realized from a small piece of ground in his garden, he has two rows of plum trees which have realized him an average of \$150 per annum, besides supplying his house and his friends.

Mr. Andrews is now 72 years old, stout, active and happy, without ache or pain. He appears now a better man than one-fourth of the men we now see at 30-years of age. Let some of your fantastic epicures compare their food with his; perhaps a few weeks' feed on browse or basswood twigs would be a good dose for some of our grumblers who make such a fearful howl because the wheat crop has not been over half a crop the first year.

The Future.

The time is coming when the present destruction of timber in this locality will cease; flowers and vines will be trained in the fronts of the houses in the town or city of Clinton, without fences to protect them; the rail fences, or fences of any kind, will not be required to fence the farms, but only to enclose stock where they are wanted. Avenues of fruit and ornamental trees will flank the public roads; trees will be planted to protect the crops and increase the yield of grain and grass; flowers will be found on every table and in every fair dame's hand in Clinton and many other parts of Canada. We have seen fruit and flowers in towns, cities and villages within hand's reach of the passer-by, without being touched; we have also seen the