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BOARD OF AGRICULTURE.

CONFERENCE WITH THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE.

The Agricultural College proposition, Frost-Proof Warehouse, and other matters discussed.

11th March.

The Central Board of Agriculture met at 10 o'clock, this, Thursday morning. Present: Major-General Laurie, president, Hon. Isidore Leblanc, I. Longworth, V. P., D. Matheson, John McKeen, W. E. Starratt, C. E. Brown and Prof. Lawson, secretary.

Mr. Longworth reported that the treasurer's accounts had been audited and found correct and properly vouched, the balance at credit being \$465.98; the stock farm fund, on deposit, with interest, \$1,898.34. On motion of Col. Starratt, seconded by Mr. Brown, the auditors' report was received and adopted. In consequence of a notice from the bank that interest was reduced to 3 per cent., the treasurer was directed to transfer the stock farm deposit to the savings bank.

Mr. Matheson presented an application from Messrs. John and J. N. Cameron, Pictou, for compensation for the introduction of Holsteins into the province, which was ordered to lie over until other similar applications were taken up.

At 11 a. m., the members of the agricultural committee of the house of assembly met with the board. Present: Hon. A. Gayton, chairman, Col. Blair, Messrs. Whidden, Black Munro, Cook. The president expressed regret at the absence of Hon. Mr. Leblanc, in consequence of another important meeting, and Mr. Gayton stated that for the same reason the Cape Breton member of the committee unfortunately could not be present.

The president called attention to the several matters that were at present engaging the attention of the board, particularly the Dairy association, which it was thought might well be encouraged by a small grant to defray expense of printing; the necessity of a frost-proof warehouse at Halifax; the operations of agricultural societies, which were fortunately increasing in number and efficiency; the system of district exhibitions, which had not fully realized expectations and might more profitably be

reduced to county exhibitions; the desirability of stock importation; applications from private parties for reimbursements on importations made by them; want of quarantine stations in Nova Scotia; agricultural education, in regard to which he pointed out the importance of taking means to arouse the people to the necessity of improvement before launching an expensive agricultural college.

Mr. Longworth favored a college for the three Maritime Provinces, and urged a grant to enable the Dairy association to print the papers read at the Windsor meeting.

Mr. Matheson corroborated the statements and views of the president, and thought the Dairy association well worthy of encouragement.

Col. Starratt spoke specially of the proposal for a frost-proof warehouse. One had been erected by Annapolis at great expense, and three shipments of apples were made two years ago, and one would be shortly; but the steamboat and railway arrangements did not favor Annapolis. He recommended a renewal of bonuses on horses and sheep.

Mr. McKeen, being essentially a farmer, thought he ought to know what was wanted. He was not convinced that an agricultural college was a necessity or would be a success in this province. Ontario cannot supply more than half enough students for Guelph, the other half being from other provinces and England. The difficulties with us were twofold—first, money; second, pupils. On the other hand, a system of travelling lecturers, to visit the agricultural districts, was feasible and attainable, and might be expected to work beneficially all over the country. A college at Annapolis would be of very little benefit to the people of Mabou, whereas a good scientific and practical lecturer might be of great use in awakening and instructing all classes of the people in the several departments of agriculture.

The president, referring to Mr. Matheson's observations on the importance of providing reading matter, expressed a desire that the *Journal of Agriculture* should be so enlarged and improved as to be a credit to the province, but it would cost money, and he hoped something would be given for this purpose. He stated that Ontario would derive much benefit from the English pupils at Guelph, as many would become settlers.

In answer to an inquiry from a member of the committee, the secretary stated that the total circulation of the *Journal of Agriculture*, including free copies, was about 1,100, and the cost to the province for the past year was four dollars and three cents.

Mr. Blair was pleased at the success of the Dairymen's association. It had, no doubt, been worked up by a few earnest men at great personal labor and expense, and they ought to be encouraged. The committee, he hoped, would be at one in the matter. He explained how it came that the district exhibitions were established, and showed that their real utility, as that of county exhibitions, consisted in their being preparers for and leaders of the provincial exhibitions, and in providing for isolated districts beyond reach of the latter. He thought it was well to encourage importations by private individuals by means of premiums on horses and sheep. The agricultural college was a big question, but, in view of the province running into a large debt, he could not see how it was to be carried out, except by union with other provinces. At Guelph, much money had been spent, and much dissatisfaction had been expressed with it in Ontario, but it was, nevertheless, a great benefit to that province. In Nova Scotia we want a system of Agricultural Education, and the best way seems to be to appoint a Lecturer to the Normal School, who could also perform the work now done by the secretary of the Central Board. He referred to the operations of a society in England engaged in sending out young men to be trained as Nova Scotian farmers, with a view to buying farms and settling here. Mr. Gurney, who is acting as their agent here, is now locating young men with farmers in Nova Scotia for that purpose. In conclusion, Mr. Blair observed that one great difficulty we had to contend with was the indifference of the people generally, which had the effect of throwing all the work upon a few willing men, whenever any movement was made. Even at the dairy meeting the number of farmers present was much less than we had a right to expect.

Mr. Black observed that we must bear in mind that we are in a very different position now than we were a few years ago. Improved machinery had enabled men of means to take hold of farming, and the importation of thoroughbred stock had enabled the farmers to take the rearing of such stock into their own hands. Farming could thus be carried on now on a greater scale, and in a way worthy of the attention and labor of intelligent, educated agriculturists. From information he had obtained, and the results observed so far, he thought the best way to promote improvement in stock was to encourage individuals. Pye Brothers have imported and brought forth about eleven head of Holstein cattle, entirely by private enterprise. Would it not be wise to encourage such, as a means of securing the best results at small public expenditure? In regard to agricul-